

CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Issue 146



Christ and culture
in Russia:
legacy and conflict



ICON IN THREAD This embroidery of Christ and the Virgin Mary was made by a Ukrainian woman, Hanna Protskiv-Liven, imprisoned in a Soviet gulag (for more on gulags, see the next page).

RUSSIAN VS. RUSSIAN

The Russian language distinguishes between *russkii* (Russian), which refers to ethnicity, and *rossiiskii* (Russia's or of Russia) which indicates territory as well as citizenship. The country today is called the Federation of Russia (*Rossiiskaia Federatsiia*), and the pre-1917 empire was called the Empire of Russia (*Rossiiskaia imperiia*). The term *rossiiskaia* embraces all the peoples of a multinational, multiethnic, multicultural state. "Russian citizen" in English would more accurately be "citizen of Russia," since citizens of Russia are not all ethnically Russian. (While we're at it, the Soviet Union does not = "Russia"; it had anywhere from four to sixteen member states between 1917 and 1991, only one of which was Russia.)

Russia's leaders were not always ethnically "Russian"; Catherine the Great was German, Josef Stalin was Georgian, and Nikita Khrushchev was Ukrainian. Similarly, in today's Russia, state decrees and policies rarely use *russkii*, but routinely use *rossiiskii* to, for example, speak of "traditional values of Russia"—implying the values of all of its diverse peoples, not those exclusively of ethnic Russians.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In this issue you'll find that Russian-language naming conventions look a little different from Western ones. These names (as well as those in other East Slavic languages) generally consist of a given or first name, a patronymic that connects the person to their father, and a family (last) name.

For example the writer Westerners call Leo Tolstoy was, in Russian, Lev Nikolayevich (son of Nikolay) Tolstoy. Names in the Russian language are "declined"—they take endings depending on the gender of the person—so Tolstoy's father was Nikolay Tolstoy and his mother was Mariya Tolstaya; his oldest son was Sergei Lvovich (son of Lev) Tolstoy and his oldest daughter, Tatyana Lvovna (daughter of Lev) Tolstaya.

In addition you'll notice that when some religious figures are mentioned, a name in parentheses follows, such as Patriarch Tikhon (Bellavin). Orthodox monks and nuns are given a new name of a famous saint when they take monastic vows. Tikhon, whom you'll read a lot about in the following pages, was named at birth Vasily Ivanovich Bellavin. He was given the name Tikhon in honor of an eighteenth-century saint, Tikhon of Zadonsk, when he became a monk. Calling him Tikhon (Bellavin) makes it easy to know which Tikhon we are discussing.

KREMLIN MOMENT This issue gives some background to current conflicts. Here are Patriarch Alexy II (see p. 45), Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, and President Boris Yeltsin in 1999.

Did you know?

A BRIEF GLOSSARY OF ORTHODOXY IN RUSSIA

Rather than a standard "Did you know?" for this issue, we thought it might be helpful to introduce you to a few terms and ideas that will help guide you through the story. Feel free to flip back to these front pages whenever you want to refresh your memory.





ICON IN SILVER Artist Vasilii Semenov created this icon out of enamel, silver, and pearls in the late 19th c.

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

While we're talking about Tikhon, what is a patriarch? When Christianity became the Roman Empire's official religion, the church developed an organizational structure based on the empire's governance structures. Ecclesiastical leaders of a civil province of the empire were called "metropolitans."

Leaders of the five great apostolic sees (seats of bishops), which corresponded to the five major centers of the Roman Empire of the time—Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem—had jurisdiction over a large amount of territory and the right of ordaining metropolitans. Around the sixth century, these leaders began to be called "patriarchs."

Today the Orthodox have nine patriarchates. The patriarch of Constantinople is referred to as the ecumenical patriarch with a "first-among-equals" status, since Constantinople was the capital of the Byzantine Empire. The other patriarchates are Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow, Georgia, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria. There has been considerable controversy throughout the centuries over who gets to name a patriarch and why.

MEMORY, FAITH, PHILOSOPHY The Dostoevsky Literary Memorial Museum preserves and recreates here the room in which Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote *The Brothers Karamazov*.

THINKER AND MARTYR This is theologian and philosopher Pavel Florensky after being captured by Soviet secret police in 1933 (below); you'll soon learn about the trauma of the church under the Soviets.



You will also read about Orthodox churches becoming "autocephalous," or self-governing. This means that a church's bishop does not report to a higher authority, other than a national or ecumenical council. All Orthodox churches headed by patriarchs are autocephalous, but an autocephalous church may also be headed by a metropolitan.

SENT TO THE LABOR CAMP

Finally a word about "gulag," which you will also see in the following pages. Technically it is an acronym for *Glavnoye upravleniye po delam voyennoplennykh i internirovannykh*, "Main Administration of Corrective Labor Camps," the name under which they were established by Lenin. Thanks in part to the famous book *The Gulag Archipelago* (1973) by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, today English-language speakers often colloquially use the term for any Soviet labor camp. **CH**

Thanks to Vera Shevzov for "Russian vs. Russian" and help with "Sent to the Labor Camp."



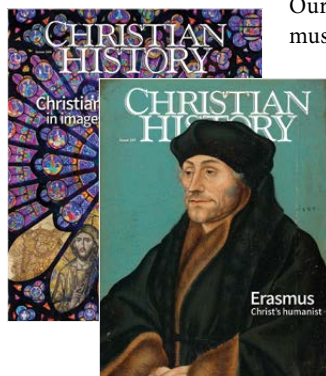
Letters to the editor

Readers respond to *Christian History*

HERO FOR OUR TIMES?

My copy of the Erasmus issue just arrived. Thanks! I write because Erasmus is one of my personal Christian heroes. I appreciate his irenic and reforming spirit, as well as his great scholarship and advocacy for the *philosophia Christi*.

Our present world needs more Erasmus in it.



The more I try to follow his path, though, I appreciate the difficulty he experienced: he was attacked and suspected by both sides. So, it's wonderful that *Christian History* would devote an issue to him. May more readers discover his deeply faithful contributions!—Jonathan Den Hartog, Birmingham, AL (advisor for #138 and #143)

I have been receiving your excellent magazine *Christian History* for many years. I have just finished reading #145 and felt a need to write and commend you on the quality and depth of information you have provided in this issue. As a retired college professor and lifelong reader I found this issue of such comprehensive depth and knowledge that I would seriously recommend it as part of a syllabus and core requirements of reading in both undergraduate and graduate level courses. If I was teaching a course in church history or biblical theology I would definitely include it in my syllabus as required reading. . . . I would also recommend the librarian to subscribe to *Christian History*.—Michael C. Young, Greensboro, NC

Thank you so much for the wonderful edition on Erasmus. As soon as we saw the cover, we knew who should play Erasmus when they make the movie version: Christoph Waltz. This edition was so informative and entertaining, that it could easily be used as the basis for putting a movie together of the life of Erasmus. Again, thank you for the wonderful work that you do.—Dale and Meg Lewis, McKinney, TX

We were also glad to share Erasmus with our readers and enjoyed getting to know him better! And at least one member of our team agrees with you that Christoph Waltz is a near doppelganger of our cover portrait of Erasmus.

NOT EVERYBODY'S HERO

Erasmus was a timid and time-serving Romanist who with all the splendor of his scholarship failed of that moral greatness which holds life and honor subservient to truth. He also approved of the burning of [Louis de] Berquin by the Romanists.—Howard Loewen, Lawrenceburg, TN

Issue advisor Edwin Woodruff Tait responds:

Erasmus was certainly cautious about saying or doing anything that might lead to his condemnation as a heretic, and he became more so late in life. As the issue shows, he disapproved of what he saw as the extremism and dogmatism of the Protestants and their willingness to create (as he saw it) a schism rather than trying to work for gradual reform.

He disagreed with them on a number of points, while also agreeing with many of their criticisms of traditional piety. Hence he was unwilling to make himself a martyr for either side. As he once put it, "I hope I would be willing to die for Christ; I am not willing to die for the paradoxes of Luther."

He was accused of cowardice in his own day, and he admitted to being a naturally timid person. However, as I hope the issue has shown, he had strong principles and a sincere commitment to the Christian faith as he understood it.

I am not aware of his having approved of the execution of Berquin. The closest he came was in the phrase, "If he did not deserve [death], I am sorrowful; if he did deserve it, I am doubly sorrowful." The "if" is a typical expression of Erasmus's caution. However, in his account of the Berquin case, he stressed Berquin's good character and the brave and pious way in which he met his death.

TOO MANY CATHOLICS?

I feel you are too obsessed with scholars of the Middle Ages, and other ancient eras—including Catholic ones. How about writing issues of true, godly men and women teachers and authors closer to our times . . . such as A. W. Tozer or Watchman Nee, etc.? I would really appreciate that.—John Herbst, Dixon, MO

From our earliest days we have always made it a point to cover all eras and all three main branches of Christianity—Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant. Our mission statement (which you can find on our website) is "Christian History Institute seeks to bring the story of the church to the people of the church, to see the best in every Christian tradition, and to acknowledge the full and honest story of the church universal." Incidentally, we've also received criticism that we spend too much time talking about modern Protestants!

BY HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED

Thank you for issue 142, Jesus the Healer. It is amazing that those who stake their reputation on his work of salvation on the cross will deny Jesus his glory for healing his flock. Do they not understand Isaiah chapter 53? I find it appalling that people fight over this glory.—Scott Swisher, Obetz, OH

We appreciate the continued responses we've gotten to this issue and hope to return to the topic in the future.

STORIES INSPIRED BY DAILY STORIES

I found the essay today on Roger Williams particularly interesting. I was recently in Plymouth, MA, and went into a restaurant called Yellow Deli. It is run by an organization called the Twelve Tribes. One of the workers told me the restaurant is one of several around the world that is owned and operated by this organization, whose members live together like the Christian disciples in the first century. He gave me a pamphlet which describes the life of Roger Williams. Williams is their hero. . . . I enjoy your daily history lessons.—*Joe McDonnell, via email*

I met Dr. [Carl] Henry at age 13 when he came to our home in Knoxville, TN. My father, Dr. C. R. Boutwell, was just starting his PhD at the University of Tennessee and was a Navigator. He graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary and introduced me to Dawson Trotman when I was six (I remember his mustache.) I had no idea until I was much older and more spiritually mature who these two men were who knew Dad. I still listen to old tapes of the Old Time Revival Hour and Dr. Charles Fuller singing "Heavenly Sunshine" and his wife, Honey, reading letters. Legacy is so important.—*Philip Boutwell, Winston-Salem, NC*

You too can sign up to receive our "This Day in Christian History" emails by going to our website!

VALIANT FOR TRUTH

We continue to pray for you and to support you in the challenges that you will face as you publish about "history" this year. Peter was facing a situation under Roman rule that is similar to ours today. As we see the foundations of our society crumble (Psalm 11), and the church feeling the pressure of an evil society bearing down, we find strength, wisdom and direction in 1 Peter 4:15–19. . . . Continue to research, write and publish truth and wisdom as we face the trials before us. . . . Your magazine has inspired us for decades.—*Richard and Lois Fisher, Byron, GA*



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MEET THE STAFF: JENNIFER WOODRUFF TAIT

How long have you been at CHI, and what is your role?

I began writing for the magazine in 2003 when it was at Christianity Today—my first article was a profile of the city of Oxford for the gallery of #78. (Edwin, at that point my fiancé, wrote a profile of Owen Barfield for the same gallery. It's the only time we've had our professional writing billed together under two different last names.) Edwin and I continued to write often for the magazine and for CTI's website—every Christmas, two blog posts that we wrote together for CTI resurface on Google: "The Real Twelve Days of Christmas" and "Why Do We Have Christmas Trees?"



When *Christian History* returned to CHI in the early 2010s with #100 and Chris Armstrong became managing editor, I wrote, proofread, and guest-edited for the first few issues and for our *History of Hell* and *History of Worship* guides. (I'm a terrible proofreader. Meg Moss is a much better one.) In the middle of #104, Chris turned his job over to me. I've been managing editor ever since. That role involves overseeing all aspects of the magazine's content: helping decide themes, communicating with advisory scholars, querying authors, editing articles, helping pick art, making sure the text fits into the layout, and, finally, looking over the proofed files.

What is your favorite part of the job?

I love editing. A quote attributed to Michelangelo says, "In every block of marble I see a statue as plain as though it stood before me, shaped and perfect in attitude and action. I have only to hew away the rough material." That's exactly how I feel about every article I edit. I want the author to sound like the absolute best version of themselves—not like me.

Also the moment when the print version arrives in my mailbox is both terrifying and exhilarating.

What do you most wish readers knew?

I couldn't have said it better than Edwin did a few issues ago when he was profiled: "Looking at our past critically can—and does for me—come out of a place of deep faith." We are not here to destroy your faith by making the past more complex, but to deepen your faith. Jesus is very faithful, and he can handle any degree of doubt and questioning we throw at him.

What do you do in your spare time?

I love watching and listening to baseball, reading mysteries and sci-fi and fantasy (especially by the Inklings and those connected to them), performing and listening to music, and building Legos. I'm also a second-degree brown belt in karate. **CHI**

Editor's note

Part of editing a magazine about Christian history is that it is, well, about Christian *history*. If you look back over our last 40 years of issues, you'll find stories about times far in the past and people far away. While we have been inspired to choose a topic because of current events—like our series connected to the five-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, or a future issue we're contemplating on the sixtieth anniversary of Vatican II—we usually shy away from confronting current events head-on.

This issue is an exception. It does reach back into time—in this case, the past few centuries. But a current event, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, inspired Chris Armstrong, our executive editor, to propose this topic. Unlike many topics we cover, however, the history of this event is still being written as we speak, and some of the articles that follow make connections between what went on “once upon a time” and what is going on now.

WHAT WE MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN

When that invasion happened, I suspect that—at least if you are, like me, a North American Protestant—you may have realized how much you did not know about the history of Russia's relationship to Ukraine and the relationship of the Russian Orthodox Church to that story.

Chris wanted this issue to serve two functions. One is to educate about Orthodoxy in Russia in a broader sense—its roots, what its worship looks like, some of its famous theologians and leaders, and the influence of the church on popular culture. In that, it serves as a long-overdue follow-up to our issue #18 from 1988, called “The Millennium of ‘Russian’ Christianity.”

Those quotation marks that we put around “Russian” 35 years ago are important, though, because the second purpose of this issue is to give readers the complex context for today's headlines and to provide a helpful reminder that Westerners lump all sorts of things under “Russian” that

are not a part of contemporary Russia—including the very Christianization of the Rus' people in 988, which, after all, took place in Kyiv long before the countries of either contemporary Russia or contemporary Ukraine existed.

As I read the articles and consulted with our scholars, though, a third main emphasis came to my mind—the trauma in religion and culture caused by the Soviet era, from the revolution in 1917 to the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991.

As a child of the 1970s and a card-carrying member of Generation X, I well remember growing up hearing stories of the terrible things that happened to Christians in the Soviet Union. It seemed in my childhood that the Soviets would always be in power. And then—it felt so sudden at the time—they were not. How do you piece back together the culture that once existed in the face of years of devastation? How do you practice faith after decades of official atheism? The various answers to these questions are deeply connected to the regime of Vladimir Putin, the role of the modern Orthodox Church in Russia, and the battles that rage even as I write.

When I was speaking with Sergei Chapnin for the interview that appears on pages 49–51, I asked him where he is located. (With Zoom, of course we can now be anywhere and still see each other's faces!) He mentioned that he was in New York, had come to the United States from Russia before February 24, 2022, and hoped to return. “I suppose the Russian emigres in 1917 thought they would be back soon,” he added, “but their grandchildren are still living in America.” (You can read about some of

those emigres on pp. 34–37). Truly this is history that is still being written. Pray for peace. **CH**



Jennifer Woodruff Tait
Managing editor

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Founder
A. K. Curtis

Senior Editor
Chris R. Armstrong

Managing Editor
Jennifer Woodruff Tait

Advisory Editors, CH 146
Vera Shevzov
Scott M. Kenworthy

Executive Editor
Bill Curtis

Director of Editorial Staff
Kaylena Radcliff

Contributing Editor
Edwin Woodruff Tait

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Doug Johnson
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Dan Graves

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Persecution and resilience

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

Scott M. Kenworthy



STOLEN MEMORY Passersby walk past the Cathedral of Vasily the Blessed in 1890; the Soviet state confiscated the historically and spiritually significant church and operated it as a museum from 1928 on.

ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Moldovans, and Georgians in the empire belonged to the Orthodox Church (even nominal believers and unbelievers); rates of religious participation in Russia were much higher in the early twentieth century than they were in Western Europe.

The church was also subject to substantial government control and had become rigidly bureaucratized. By the early twentieth century, a renewal movement of laity and clergy sought to regain greater independence for the church from the state; many began to advocate for the restoration of the patriarchate precisely to

On October 28, 1917, just two days after the communist Bolsheviks seized power, the major All-Russian Council of the Orthodox Church voted to reinstate the office of the patriarchate to head the church. The patriarchate, the traditional hierarchical structure for an Orthodox Church, had been abolished two centuries earlier during the Westernizing reforms of Peter the Great. On November 5 Tikhon (Belavin, 1865–1925) was chosen to fill the office. As patriarch Tikhon led believers in defending the Orthodox Church from the antireligious policies of the militantly atheist communist regime.

RENEWING THE BODY OF CHRIST

Imperial Russia (1700–1917) had legally defined Orthodoxy as the “preeminent and predominant” faith in a multi-confessional empire. As the state church, it enjoyed certain privileges, although other religions generally received broad tolerance, as long as they did not compete with the Orthodox Church for adherents (as did Orthodox Old Believers and Baptists, who were subject to greater restrictions).

Every individual in the empire was legally ascribed to the religion of their birth; furthermore, legal restrictions prevented conversion away from Orthodoxy, though not in the reverse direction. The overwhelming majority of

provide the church with stronger leadership. They emphasized an older ecclesial model focused on the notion of *sobornost’* (conciliarism). *Sobornost’* emphasized the church as the body of Christ composed of all the members, including the laity, rather than a hierarchical institution tied to the state and consisting of the clergy.

This renewal movement sought fulfillment in an official church council, in which the voice of the entire church could renew ecclesial life stifled by bureaucratization. In the Orthodox Church, the highest authority had always been councils, stemming back to the ecumenical councils of the early centuries. However, because Tsar Nicholas II (1868–1918) feared a church council would result in the restoration of the patriarchate and a greater independence of the church from the state, he prevented a council from convening.

The monarchy collapsed in Russia during the February Revolution of 1917. For the next half year, Russia attempted to establish a modern democratic state, though resolution of key issues was repeatedly delayed because of continued involvement in World War I. Nevertheless the Orthodox Church moved immediately to fulfill the desire for a council. In the spring and summer of 1917, every diocese held a congress of elected members, laity as well as clergy. Those congresses democratized the church (in some cases electing



EVE OF DESTRUCTION This Soviet poster shows a worker climbing into heaven to pull down the god of each religion (left); Patriarch Tikhon (above) sought to preserve as much as he could.

their own bishops, a first for the Russian church) and also elected diocesan delegates for the All-Russian Council of the Orthodox Church.

The council itself began to meet in August 1917. Embodying the notion of *sobornost'*, laity outnumbered the clergy at the council (299 versus 265 clergymen, including 80 bishops) and had an equal voting voice. The agenda included issues related to virtually every aspect of ecclesial life, from church structure to church-state relations, questions of worship and religious education, and granting a greater role to laity and women in the church.

As the Russian Empire fragmented, some in newly independent territories advocated for an independent (or autocephalous) church as well. There were movements for an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and Georgia reclaimed its ancient autocephalous status (abolished by Russia in 1811).

Because of World War I and the ineffectiveness of the interim Provisional Government, the political situation increasingly destabilized in the fall of 1917. During this time the council debated the first key item on its agenda—the restoration of the patriarchate. Debates about whether it should be restored and how monarchical rule of the church was compatible with *sobornost'* continued in September and October, though the unstable political situation by October led the majority of delegates to support restoring the patriarchate.

In this way they could ensure clear leadership in the Orthodox Church at a time when there appeared to be none

in the country. Therefore, in its first session after the Bolsheviks seized power, the council resolved to restore the patriarchate—not so much in reaction against the Bolsheviks as from a sense that no stable government was left.

CASTING LOTS

Several days after it voted to restore the patriarchate, against the backdrop of the Bolshevik assault on Moscow, the council held elections. The three candidates with the most votes were Archbishop Antony (Khrapovitsky) of Karkhov, Archbishop Arseny (Stadnitsky) of Novgorod, and Tikhon, who was metropolitan of Moscow. Because no candidate won an overwhelming majority, the council decided to make the final decision by drawing lots among the three, following the ancient tradition of the Alexandrian patriarchate—in effect leaving it in the hands of God.

On November 5, 1917, Tikhon's name was chosen. Although Tikhon had received the fewest votes of the three, the council was quite divided between the other two candidates; Tikhon's election served to reconcile the divisions. As one participant commented, Antony was the most intelligent, Arseny was the most strict, but Tikhon was the most kind and good. He was enthroned as patriarch in a grand ceremony on November 21 in the Kremlin.

Tikhon's unusual career path had included postings on the fringes of the Russian Empire (in Poland and Lithuania) as well as nine years as the Orthodox bishop of North America (see p. 41), where his leadership style modeled *sobornost'* through the way he involved his clergy in decision-making and encouraged active lay participation.



EIGHT SHORT YEARS Church dignitaries gather with Tikhon (left, seated at center) just after his 1917 election. After struggles with the Soviet state and time under house arrest, he would die in 1925, around the same time this photograph was taken of the Red Army confiscating treasures of the Simonov monastery (below).



Although he had served where Orthodoxy was not the dominant faith and also in places where there was separation of church and state, nothing could have prepared him for what he was about to face. The intensity of the Soviet persecution, far more severe and systematic than the Roman persecutions of many centuries earlier, was certainly one of the fiercest Christianity has ever experienced.

On learning that his name was chosen, Tikhon anticipated that becoming patriarch would not be for honor and glory, but rather he perceived the news like Ezekiel's scroll, on which was written "lamentation, and mourning, and woe" (Ezek. 2:10).

The Bolsheviks, only one of several socialist groups in Russia in 1917, were the most intolerant of divergent viewpoints and competing ideologies. As Marxists they were materialists and viewed religion as a mechanism by which the ruling classes control the laboring masses. More important, they viewed the Russian Orthodox Church in particular as a direct threat to their hold on power and to their project of building a society ostensibly based on science and reason.

As the Soviets sought to establish their hold on power, the country descended into further anarchy and lawlessness. As a consequence random acts of violence became widespread, committed especially by soldiers brutalized and radicalized by four years of war, now abandoning the front to return home and seize the aristocratic estates long coveted by the Russian peasantry. These random acts of violence were perpetrated not only against the aristocracy, but also against the church and the clergy.

In its first months in power, the Soviet government passed decrees that affected the church indirectly (such as stripping religious weddings of legal status). The first direct assault of the new regime came in January 1918, when the Soviets tried to seize the most important religious institution in Petrograd, the Alexander-Nevisky Lavra. A massive crowd of believers gathered to defend the monastery.

In response to the entire situation, Patriarch Tikhon issued his most infamous encyclical on January 19, 1918, in which he "anathematized" those committing senseless acts of violence. He also criticized some early measures and actions of the Soviet government and called on believers to defend their churches, not with violence, but by being willing to lay down their own lives.

SAVING THE CHURCHES

Many readers conflated Tikhon's condemnation of random acts of violence with the criticisms leveled at the Bolsheviks. Both the Bolshevik leadership and some within the church, as well as historians since, interpreted the encyclical as a harsh condemnation of the Soviet government per se.

The Soviet regime, as if in answer, issued its Decree of Separation of Church and State on January 23, 1918, which went much further than similar Western decrees. It denied any legal status to the institutional church, deprived it of the right to own property (including church buildings and their contents), and prohibited all religious education in public or private schools that provided general education.

Believers responded to Patriarch Tikhon's appeals by coming out in the hundreds of thousands for massive religious processions in Moscow, Petrograd, and other cities to express their opposition to Soviet restrictions on religious life. Although in the spring of 1918 some Soviet leaders were willing to negotiate religious policy with the church in response to the massive scale of this opposition, by the summer, as the Civil War intensified, the government took a decisively harsher approach.

In August the Soviets issued instructions for implementing the Decree of Separation that demanded more intense



FROM PRIVILEGE TO PERSECUTION Church life under Soviet leaders such as Leon Trotsky (above) would prove far more traumatic than under Tsar Nicholas II (above right).

confiscation of church property (bank accounts, land, publishing houses, etc.); church buildings were to be let out on contracts to groups of believers. Unlike Pope Pius X (1835–1914), who had refused to allow lay associations to take control of church properties in France in an analogous situation in 1905, Patriarch Tikhon encouraged believers to take control over their churches; in effect, this saved the church from losing everything and encouraged believers to support and defend their churches.

INCOMPATIBLE WITH RELIGION

Throughout 1918 Tikhon tried hard to chart a course that he considered moral rather than political—not condemning the Bolshevik regime directly and not calling for its overthrow, but at the same time criticizing its policies and actions that harmed the church and believers.

In a particularly powerful letter to the Soviet leadership on the first anniversary of the October Revolution, he criticized the Bolsheviks for abuses of human rights as well as their summary justice against suspected supporters of the White Armies during the “Red Terror.” He also criticized their failure to deliver on promises such as peace—having pulled Russia out of World War I, they turned the army’s weapons against their fellow citizens in civil war. The Bolsheviks, however, unable to understand the distinction, regarded any criticism as inherently counterrevolutionary.

During the Civil War (1918–1921), the patriarch refused to take sides but rather condemned fratricidal bloodshed. By the end of the Civil War, the Bolsheviks had secured uncontested political control. But this was not enough; the Soviets sought not merely to transform the Russian political and economic structure but to build an entirely new society in which any competing worldview—including religious ones—would be simply incompatible.



CURRENT NEWS Soviet soldiers storm the Winter Palace, home of Nicholas and then of the Provisional Government, in this 1917 painting (above) by Ivan Vladimirov.

And yet there were many more Orthodox Christians than there were card-carrying Communists. Knowing that Patriarch Tikhon remained the most influential dissenting voice in the country, the Soviets sought a way to destroy this perceived threat to their power. So, in early 1922, Leon Trotsky (1879–1940), one of the Soviet leaders, devised a cunning scheme to accomplish this.

By the end of the Civil War, Russia had been at war for eight years, the economy was in total collapse, and the country was suffering from a massive famine that killed millions of people in 1921–1922. Tikhon rallied believers to voluntarily contribute to famine relief and called on Christian leaders internationally to assist. Such a role for the patriarch, however, was not in the Soviets’ interest. Instead of allowing churches to voluntarily contribute valuable items, they decreed that the state would confiscate whatever its agents decided. Trotsky anticipated that this would cross a red line for the church leadership; as expected Tikhon called on believers not to give up items consecrated for liturgical uses (such as chalices for the



NOT GOING QUIETLY Orthodox believers demonstrate in defense of their faith (*above*), c. 1918.

Eucharist). It became the easy justification for arresting him and everyone who followed his directive.

DESTRUCTION FROM WITHIN?

Under Trotsky's direction the Soviets handed church administration to a group of left-leaning reformist priests, the "Renovationists," who in turn declared loyalty to the Soviet government. Thus the regime had created a pretext to discredit church leadership as indifferent to the famine and had suppressed critical and anti-Soviet voices within the church. It now also had a pretext for placing church governance in the hands of the Renovationists and all the



DIVIDED LOYALTIES Metropolitan Sergius (*above left*, in the center under a portrait of Tikhon) meets with a provisional governing synod in 1931; his 1927 declaration of loyalty to the USSR (*above*) was controversial.

wealth from the confiscated valuables (which the Soviets greatly overestimated) at the government's disposal.

Tikhon was arrested in May 1922 and held under house arrest for over a year while the Soviets interrogated him and prepared for a show trial to demonstrate his guilt and to culminate in his execution. In June 1923, however, they decided to release him—largely due to international pressure—after extracting from him a statement that he was not opposed to the Soviet regime. The Soviets believed this would compromise him, which would be better than making him a martyr.

For his part Tikhon compromised to deter what seemed to him a greater danger—he believed the Renovationists' control of the church would destroy it from within. After his release the majority of churches and clergy placed themselves again under his leadership. Tikhon spent the last two years of his life trying to restore church unity. He was canonized as a saint and a confessor for the faith by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in 1981 and in Russia in 1989.

After Tikhon's death the Soviets prevented the election of a new patriarch and arrested those designated to take his place. The church's de facto leader became Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky, 1867–1944), who in 1927 made a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet Union that caused rifts both at home and between the church in Russia and the church abroad, which remained staunchly anti-Soviet.

Although the Soviets succeeded in leaving the institutional church and its leadership in disarray after Tikhon's death, the patriarch's encouragement of lay believers taking

CASTING A LONG SHADOW Dignitaries, including a Catholic cardinal and Patriarch Alexy, sit under a picture of Stalin at a 1952 conference (right); Stalin poses with Khrushchev in 1934 (below).

control of their parish communities resulted in a grassroots religious revival, especially in the countryside, that persisted through the 1920s, despite active antireligious propaganda.

DARKEST MOMENTS

But the church's darkest moments were yet to come. When Josef Stalin (1878–1953) came to power at the end of the 1920s, the regime no longer tolerated only a weakened church hierarchy; local parish communities had to be uprooted. Stalin's campaign to collectivize agriculture came with a massive closure of rural churches (which had mostly been left untouched until then) together with the arrest or exile of parish clergy. After the 1937 census revealed that over half of the population still believed in God, Stalin concluded that harsher measures were required. He sought to eradicate all "enemies" during the Great Terror of 1937–1938, specifically targeting clergy and religious believers.

The head of the secret police (the precursor of the KGB) reported to Stalin in November 1937 that, after just four months of the campaign, over 30,000 "church people" had been arrested, including 166 bishops, over 9,000 priests, over 2,000 monks, and nearly 20,000 activist believers.

Of those the regime had already executed half the clergy and one-third of the believers, with the rest being sent to the gulag (the prison camp system). As a result the campaign had "almost completely liquidated the episcopate of the Orthodox Church." He concluded the report by stating more work needed to be done, as there were still thousands more priests and active believers at large—most of whom were suppressed over the course of the next year. The degree of devastation was and is incalculable.

In 1939 the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a secret pact, after which the Soviets occupied territories of western Ukraine, the Baltics, and Moldova. These regions included a large number of Orthodox churches and monasteries, most of which were not suppressed before the Nazis invaded in June 1941. Therefore they did not experience the same kind of destruction and rupture with the past as the rest of the Soviet Union had; many clergy in the postwar Russian Orthodox Church, therefore, came from western Ukraine. The Uniate (Greek Catholic) Church that existed in western Ukraine, however, was completely suppressed and forcibly "reunited" with the Orthodox Church.

The Nazi invasion spared the Orthodox Church from total destruction because Stalin concluded that, to win the war, it would be necessary to mobilize everyone's support. He therefore reversed his policy toward the Orthodox Church, allowing parish churches to reopen and ceasing antireligious propaganda.



After Stalin's death in 1953, his successor, Nikita Khrushchev (1894–1971), reinvigorated the antireligious campaign and closed many churches. During the last decades of the Soviet Union, the regime tolerated the Orthodox Church through tight control (since it had eliminated most of the prerevolutionary clergy). Believers suffered close scrutiny and constant discrimination as a result. All the same about one-quarter of the population of the USSR remained faithful.

In the end, thanks to the heroic leadership and example of people like Patriarch Tikhon as well as countless believers who kept the faith alive (see pp. 28–32), Orthodox Christianity outlived communism in the Soviet Union and experienced a remarkable revival after it collapsed. However, the Russian Orthodox Church, like the Russian state, has yet to recover from the Sovietization of its institutional culture. The current patriarch, Kirill (Gundyaev, b. 1946), has not emulated the model embodied by Patriarch Tikhon of a conciliar church drawing its support from believers. Rather he has followed an imperial hierarchical model that seeks support from a close alliance with the state. The result is that today, as in the late Soviet period, the church is under the state's complete control. **CH**

Scott M. Kenworthy is a professor in the Department of Comparative Religion at Miami University (Ohio). He is the coauthor of Understanding World Christianity: Russia and author of The Heart of Russia.



One space or many?

THE BACKSTORY FROM RUS TO THE 1917 REVOLUTION

Heather Coleman

In a sermon given three days after the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Patriarch Kirill (Gundae) of the Russian Orthodox Church called on God to “preserve the Russian land . . . the land which now includes Russia and Ukraine and Belarus. . . . May the Lord protect from fratricidal battle the peoples comprising the one space of the Russian Orthodox Church,” he prayed.

In Ukraine, by contrast, leading churches including the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church of Ukraine had already appealed for resistance to the invasion. Even Metropolitan Onufriy (Berezovsky, b. 1944) of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, affiliated with the Moscow Patriarchate, called for prayers for the Ukrainian army and people and the defense of Ukraine’s sovereignty:

Defending the sovereignty and integrity of Ukraine, we appeal to the President of Russia and ask him to immediately stop the fratricidal war. The Ukrainian and Russian peoples came out of the Dnipro Baptismal font, and the war between these peoples is a repetition of the sin of Cain, who killed his own brother out of envy. Such a war has no justification either from God or from people.

The intertwined but separate religious histories of Russia and Ukraine have contributed both to the idea of the “one space” and to that idea’s being contested.

IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH

Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusians all trace their cultural and state origins to the early Rus principality that emerged in the ninth century around Kyiv. The medieval *Primary Chronicle* tells how Grand Prince Volodymyr (Vladimir in Russian) of Kyiv decided he

STATE AND CHURCH With his family and dignitaries behind him, Tsar Alexander III greets representatives of *volosts* (peasant communities).

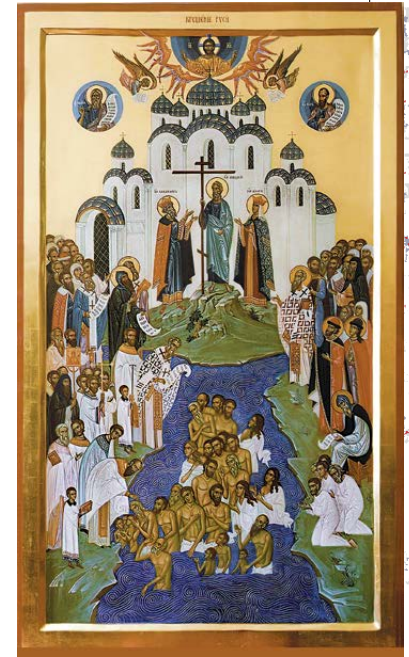
needed an official religion to strengthen his rule. Living at a cultural crossroads, he considered Islam, Judaism, and Western Christianity before hearing from his envoys that they had not known whether they were “in heaven or on earth” when they visited the Byzantine Greeks’ services in Constantinople.

In 988 Volodymyr was baptized in the Greek city of Chersonesus then returned to Kyiv; he ordered the toppling of the statue of the pagan god Perun and the mass baptism of his people in the Dnipro River. To this day all Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches of the region regard the Kyivan baptismal font as their birthplace.

Volodymyr’s decision set Rus on a geopolitical and cultural path with major implications. Certainly this became clear in 1054, a few generations later, when the Roman and Greek Orthodox branches of Christianity officially split over their significant differences.

One of the bones of contention was the way in which the church should be organized. The bishop of Rome, the pope, claimed universal supremacy over the whole church. By contrast Orthodoxy was and is a family of autocephalous local churches. Like the archbishop of Canterbury in the Anglican Communion, the ecumenical patriarch enjoys particular honor among patriarchs, but he cannot interfere in the internal affairs of other Orthodox churches.

More controversially Western historians claimed that the people of Rus absorbed—and would later perfect—the



“Caesaropapist” model that made the emperor head of both the church and the state and supreme judge on religious matters. It would be more accurate to say that the Byzantine vision was one of “symphony” between the church and the state, in which the two worked together, each with its sphere of authority, and one did not dominate the other. But what symphony means in practice has been, and still is, one of the great questions in the history of the Orthodox churches.

Between 988 and 1240, the patriarchate of Constantinople saw Rus as a diocese and continued to appoint metropolitans to lead it. Only 2 of the 23 were natives of Rus; the rest were mostly Greeks. After the Mongols sacked Kyiv in 1240, the political and religious histories of the territories of northern and southern Rus diverged. Poland and Lithuania absorbed the lands to the southwest and southeast (modern-day Belarus and central and western Ukraine) by the 1360s.

To the northeast the upstart principality of Moscow gradually expanded control. The leading Rus’ churchman, the metropolitan of Kyiv, moved to Moscow; meanwhile, the ecumenical patriarch established new metropolitanates in Galicia and Lithuania.

In 1448 the Muscovite church rejected the Council of Florence’s plan to reunite Roman Catholics and all Eastern Orthodox. Its bishops consecrated their own metropolitan of Moscow and all Rus without the participation of the ecumenical patriarch, becoming essentially self-governing. After the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, Muscovy remained the only independent Orthodox state.

Russian churchmen developed a doctrine of theocratic monarchy, arguing that the other Orthodox realms had lost their independence by falling into heresy; therefore,

WATER OF LIFE A monument to Volodymyr in Kyiv (above) commemorates the Baptism of Rus, as does an icon (above right) by Archimandrite Zenon (see p. 48).

Muscovy’s Orthodox tsar had a duty to uphold the purity of the faith. In 1589 the weakened ecumenical patriarch acknowledged the Russian Church’s autocephaly and enthroned a patriarch of Moscow and all Rus. Meanwhile a separate Metropolitanate of Kyiv with jurisdiction over the Rus of Catholic Poland-Lithuania remained under the ecumenical patriarch.

FIGHTING FIRE WITH FIRE

But all was not well for the Rus’ of the Polish-Lithuanian lands (Ruthenians, the ancestors of Ukrainians and Belarusians). Amid the pressure of the Catholic Reformation and hoping for renewal in 1596, Ruthenian bishops signed the Union of Brest. The resulting Uniate Church embraced Latin doctrine and recognized the supremacy of the pope, while preserving Eastern Christian liturgical traditions. However, strong Orthodox opposition to the Union arose, and the Ruthenian church split.

By 1632 Orthodox churchmen, determined to fight fire with fire, founded an academy along Jesuit lines in Kyiv; it quickly became the great intellectual center of Orthodoxy. Many graduates made their way to Moscow and became conduits of Western European and Ruthenian culture to the inward-looking Muscovite state and its elite. In 1667, after the Russo-Polish War, Muscovy took control of eastern Ukraine, parts of Belarus, and the city of Kyiv. By 1686 the metropolitan of Kyiv had agreed to place his church under the patriarch of Moscow rather than of Constantinople. After centuries of separate development,



DISPUTED LANDS Compare this 1644 map of eastern Europe with the more modern maps on page 42.

together with Austrian and Prussian emperors, carved up Poland among themselves.

Catherine justified this by claiming that Russia needed to reunify the Kyivan Rus lands to defend Orthodoxy and save the “Russian” population in Poland. In fact the Ukrainians and Belarusians of the region were Uniates, and their language and culture had diverged from Russian language and culture over centuries of separate development.

The incorporation of these territories involved an often violent campaign to “return” Uniates to their “native” Russian Orthodoxy. In 1839 1.5 mil-

lion Uniates, including the majority of Belarusians, were “reunited” with Orthodoxy, and the Uniate Church was abolished in the Russian Empire. (Several hundred thousand remained in the Kingdom of Poland until 1875.) In Austrian Galicia, Uniates played an important role in Ruthenian (Ukrainian) political movements, but in Russia it was difficult to make religion a basis of national differentiation, since Ukrainians were regarded as “Russians” and fully incorporated into the Orthodox Church.

OFFICIAL NATIONALITY

In the nineteenth century, both within and beyond the official church, Russians debated the relationship between church, state, and nation. To revolutionary movements across Europe that proclaimed “liberty, equality, fraternity,” Nicholas I’s (1796–1855) 1825–1855 regime asserted Russia’s fundamental distinctiveness as “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality.” Dubbed “Official Nationality,” this remained the state ideology until 1917.

However, the synodal system of church governance came under increasing criticism. In the 1830s and 1840s, an influential group of romantic nationalists, the Slavophiles, rejected Official Nationality and asserted the need to return to authentic Russian values—which, they said, resided in Orthodoxy and in the peasant commune, allegedly collectivist and cooperative, unlike the individualism and competition of the West.

Rejecting the bureaucratic Church of the Spiritual Regulation, Aleksei Khomiakov (1804–1860) argued that Orthodoxy’s strength lay in its spirit of *sobornost’* (from the word *sobor*, or council), an idea of “active unity in plurality” such as that expressed by the commune.

Tension between Orthodox clergy and the state also worsened, in part because of increasing interference from the chief procurators and from Alexander III (1845–1894) and Nicholas II (1868–1918). Their chief procurator, Konstantin

Ruthenian Orthodoxy now found itself in the “one space” of the Russian Church.

In the process, however, Ukrainian and Belarusian churchmen left a profound mark. For one thing the Kyiv Academy was developing the greatest minds of the Russian Church; and the new tsar, Peter the Great, who reigned from 1682 to 1725, relied heavily on its graduates. He had a radical program to build a secular absolutist monarchy to compete with other European states. To do so he needed the partnership of a reformed Orthodox Church.

Peter promoted Ukrainian churchmen whose learning he prized and who were generally more willing to support his reform agenda. In 1700 the patriarch died; rather than summon a council to elect a successor, Peter appointed Ukrainian metropolitan Stefan (Iavorsky, 1658–1722) as acting head of the church.

Peter envisioned a spiritual college of bishops, modeled on the state churches of Lutheran Scandinavia and Germany, to replace the patriarchate. In 1721 he established the Most Holy Governing Synod and called on the great Ukrainian scholar, preacher, and bishop Feofan Prokopovich (1681–1736) to draft the “Spiritual Regulation.” It required that clergy take an oath of allegiance, disseminate government information, and, most controversially, report sedition in their parishes.

In the following year, 1722, Peter created the office of chief procurator of the synod, a layman who served as the “tsar’s eye” in church affairs. Prokopovich saw the new model as a rejection of a Catholic-style “papal” patriarchate and a return to what he regarded as truly Orthodox collegial governance of the church. Indeed the church retained considerable autonomy in the eighteenth century, and the chief procurator’s office remained organizationally outside the synod.

The “one space” grew as the Russian state expanded. Between 1772 and 1795, Empress Catherine II (1729–1786),



Pobedonostsev (1827–1907), emphasized the religious basis of tsarist authority. He wanted the clergy to play an active role in connecting the pious tsar and his devout and obedient people. However, the bishops chafed at his relentless interference and called for a return to the pre-Petrine model of regular bishops' councils to govern the church. Similarly disenchanted parish priests mobilized to defend their interests.

During the 1905 revolution, the church worked to avert violence and to defend the existing order, but it also joined the population in calling for reform. Nicholas II's 1905 manifesto on religious toleration, which made it legal to leave the Orthodox Church, became a crucial turning point. Tens of thousands of former Uniates in the Belarusian lands transferred to the Roman Catholic Church. The synod, against the wishes of Pobedonostsev, asked Nicholas II to convene a church council—the first since the seventeenth century—to address the church's many problems and consider restoring the patriarchate.

In the semiconstitutional era after 1905, Orthodox clergymen served as deputies in all-elected *dumas* (parliaments), representing a range of parties. Even conservative churchmen became disillusioned with autocracy in the last years of the empire. Grigory Rasputin (1869–1916), a self-proclaimed “holy man,” had gained great influence with the imperial family and insinuated himself into church policy, encouraging Nicholas II to overrule the synod in various ways. Many clergy came to believe the church needed autonomy and collegial rule. When the monarchy collapsed in February 1917 (see pp. 6–10), the synod did not come to its defense.

NEW MAN ON TOP

The new Provisional Government announced the convocation of the long-awaited All-Russian Council of the Orthodox Church. Across the country diocesan



WHOSE UNITY? Crucial to the development of the Russian Empire and Church were (clockwise from above) Peter the Great, Feofan Prokopovich, Catherine the Great, and Konstantin Pobedonostsev. Catherine and her successors pushed to “reunify” the Uniates (coin, below).



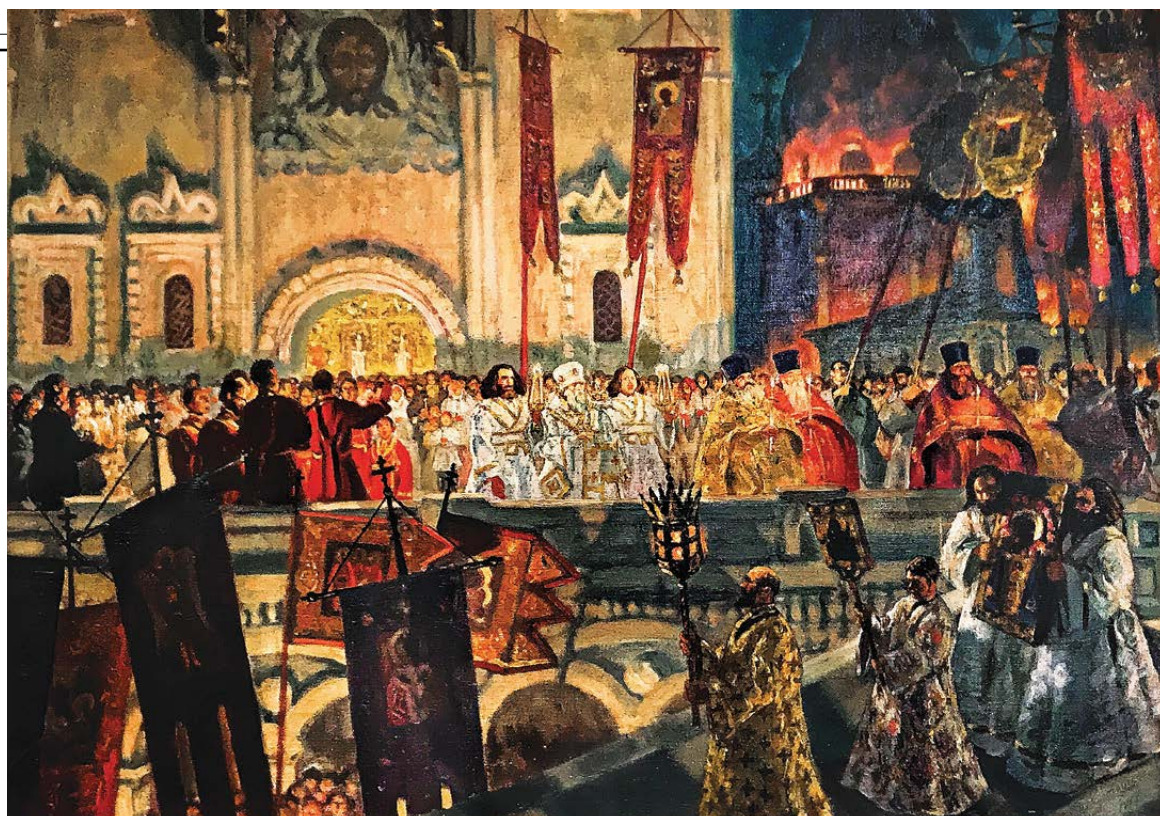
congresses of clergy and laity elected delegates to the council, hotly debating the relative power of laity, parish clergy, monastics, and bishops and arguing over whether to restore the patriarchate or a collective model of leadership. By

November, following the Bolshevik seizure of power, the council elected a new patriarch, Tikhon (Bellavin) of Moscow.

Meanwhile movements for autonomy among various national groups of the former Russian Empire spilled into church affairs. Modern nationalism raised questions about Orthodoxy's tradition of territorially defined local autocephalous churches. Should each nation have its own church? Some Orthodox in Georgia, Belarus, and Ukraine thought so and called for autonomy or even autocephaly, raising questions about the jurisdiction of the “All-Russian” Orthodox Church.

The Soviet and post-Soviet eras would further transform and complicate all these debates and questions in ways that the rest of this issue explores. Whatever Kirill may have prayed, the battle rages on. **CH**

Heather Coleman is a professor of Russian history at the University of Alberta. She is the author of Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution, 1905–1929, coeditor of Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia, and editor of Orthodox Christianity in Imperial Russia.



High and holy days

LITURGICAL LIFE IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE BEFORE 1917

Nadieszda Kizenko

Lying down to pray in front of a cross adorned with sweet-smelling flowers; processing through the snow and carrying back holy water; kissing at the Easter midnight service amid the ringing of bells and singing “Christ is risen”; awaiting the descent of the Holy Spirit with grass strewn on the floor and tree branches all around; and, if you were a small child on Palm Sunday, whacking your friends with pussy willow branches—Orthodox worship was an embodied activity.

Before 1917 liturgy in the empire linked individual believers with their family, school, or place of work; with the parish community; with the tsar and his family; with departed ancestors and saints; and with the larger Orthodox world. How they dressed; the words they heard and spoke or sang; the way they moved through liturgical spaces; what they touched, smelled, and tasted; what they carried with them and shared with others or brought back from religious ceremonies—all this formed the way Orthodox Christians throughout the empire experienced shared religious life.

ANCIENT DOMES

To be sure regional variations existed. The Russian heartland with its ancient golden-domed churches offered a different worship context than solitary wooden churches and hermitages in the north or the newly Christianized regions of Siberia and the far east. Orthodox Christian inhabitants of

EVE OF TRANSFORMATION This painting, *Easter Night*, was painted by Boris Kustodiev in 1917 just as everything was changing.

present-day Ukraine and Belarus had spent centuries living next to Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Jews, and Protestants in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This meant persecution and second-class status because of their Orthodox faith—but it also meant absorbing some practices from their neighbors and being forced to ponder, defend, and articulate their faith in ways very unlike those who had lived for centuries under the reign of an Orthodox tsar.

Those who lived in the Caucasus, Crimea, and central Asia, including the Georgians and the Armenians, encountered (and sometimes had been converted from) Islam—but also came in contact with more ancient Christian traditions. These differences could affect such things as how one fasted, where one traveled on pilgrimage, or how intensively one prepared for the sacraments of confession and Communion.

Still the church calendar and the liturgy provided enough of a shared framework that Orthodox Christians could travel throughout the diverse empire, enter any church or join any religious procession, and feel at home.

Twelve great feasts formed the core and backbone of the liturgical calendar. Commemorating key events in the lives

BORIS KUSTODIEV, *EASTER NIGHT*, 1917. OIL ON CANVAS—KADRIORG MUSEUM, TALLINN, ESTONIA / A.DAVEY, FLICKR



of Jesus Christ and the mother of God, they punctuated nearly every month. The church counted its new year from September 1, although Peter the Great had introduced the celebration of the secular New Year on January 1, mandating the fir trees, presents, and fireworks he had observed on his travels to London and Amsterdam.

In September feast days included the birth of the Virgin Mary on September 8 and the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14. The latter was celebrated with particular solemnity. In every parish church, flowers or sweet-smelling herbs adorned the cross; people would prostrate themselves before it as it was brought out solemnly at the end of the All-Night Vigil. (Every major feast had an eve, and sometimes the evening service could be more splendid than the one on the feast's morning.)

SIGHT OF THE FIRST STAR

November 21 was the Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple. At the end of the Nativity Fast (roughly comparable to Advent), Christmas Day on December 25 set off a 12-day cycle of celebration and merriment that reached its climax on January 6, the day of Jesus's baptism and his becoming manifest in the world—hence the name Theophany (*Bogoiavlenie*) rather than Epiphany. Although in Western tradition Christmas Day had become the focus of these celebrations, in Russia (and in most of the Orthodox world) the emphasis was on the 12 days as a cycle, with the eves of both Christmas and Theophany (Twelfth Night) sharing unique liturgical elements as well as being days of strict fasting.



WATER AND THE WORD The 1921 image (*above left*), also by Kustodiev, pictures a Theophany procession; Gospel books like this (*above right*) from the 18th c. would have been commonly carried and used in churches.

To evoke the experience of humanity awaiting the Savior—and of the shepherds abiding in the fields—Russian Orthodox Christians were not supposed to eat until the sighting of the first star on Theophany. Indeed in Russia (and in most of the Orthodox world), Theophany rather than Christmas was arguably the grandest liturgical celebration of the 12 days. At its high point, worshipers processed from the church through the snow to some source of water (a river, a lake) to bless it and to bring home the now-holy water.

On February 2, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, people would bring home candles blessed in church. March 25, the Annunciation, celebrated the day Gabriel spoke to the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26–38). Orthodox believers venerated it so highly as a holy day that they forbade any work. According to a folk saying, “the bird does not weave its nest, and the maiden does not braid her hair.”

Between the Presentation and the Annunciation, Russian Orthodox Christians began to prepare liturgically for the greatest feast of all—Easter (*Pascha*)—through experiencing Great Lent. Russian Orthodox Christians were required to go to confession and Communion (*govienie*) at least once a year, and almost all of them did so in these weeks.

As in Western churches, the church carefully designed the Lenten season to encourage a mood of repentance. The



liturgical structure of penance looked different from the West, however. Four weeks before Lent actually began, for example, the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee emphasized that one should not repent showily or be complacent about one's prowess in prayer, tithing, and fasting, but rather maintain a mood of constant compunction (Luke 18:9–14).

The next week's parable suggested that each person is the Prodigal Son, who had squandered his inheritance in riotous living and crawled back in shame to his father; God, the loving Father, gladly welcomed back his broken child (Luke 15:11–32). The Sunday of the Last Judgment then showed Christians what would happen to those who had not fed the hungry, taken in the stranger, clothed the naked, nursed the sick, or visited the prisoner: they, like the goats, would be sent to everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:31–46).

This reminder to focus on the needs of others became an important corrective to the popular association of Lent with abstinence from meat, dairy, and sexual relations. It also emphasized that one could only repent in this life and therefore should take care to confess sins while still able.

CLEAN, SHINY HAIR

Matthew 6:14–21, read on the last Sunday before Lent, sums up the goals of repentance; "If you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive yours." It reminded hearers not to fast "like the hypocrites," looking doleful and haggard—but with a washed face and a clean, shiny head of hair. As the ritual closing of Forgiveness Sunday Vespers, each person had to ask forgiveness of, and themselves forgive, every other person present with a full bodily prostration.

Lent began liturgically not on Ash Wednesday (not observed in Russia), but during Forgiveness Sunday Vespers. Fasting from dairy and fish officially started after midnight, although priests bemoaned carousing and devouring pancakes (*blini*) with caviar and sour cream beforehand. During Vespers the liturgy signaled transition into Lent. Priests changed their vestments to black,



REPENT AND BELIEVE Two very different images show the movement from Lent to Easter—*Before Confession* (1877) by Alexey Korzukhin (above left) and *Easter Procession* (above, date unknown) by Leonid Brailovsky.

worshippers began singing litanies in a minor key, and all performed prostrations during the Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian. This prayer would be repeated numerous times at every subsequent Lenten service, lodging itself firmly in Russian Orthodox consciousness.

The first week of Lent itself prepared and transformed worshippers. The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, read in church on the first four nights, draws extensively on both the Old and New Testaments to inspire Orthodox Christians to repentance. Read again at the fifth week of Lent, it offered a chance to think of how far—or how little—one had come.

The two occasions after it was read, whether the first Saturday of Great Lent (the feast of St. Theodore of Tyro) or the fifth (St. Mary of Egypt), were favorite choices for *govienie*. Other popular occasions for these rites included the third week of Great Lent, when the flower-decorated cross remained in the middle of the church for a week to remind people of the redeeming Crucifixion of Jesus and the point of their Lenten penance.

The *Life of St. Mary of Egypt*, read in its entirety on the evening of the fifth Wednesday of Great Lent, provided the template of a great sinner—a sex addict—who had attained holiness through 47 years of solitary repentance and asceticism in the desert. The next evening the Laudation of the Mother of God included the communal singing of the beloved Akathist hymn; this made that week another popular time for *govienie*.

These Lenten rites reminded Russian souls that they undertook the annual journey from old to new, from spiritual stupor and death to spiritual rebirth, together with the rest of humanity. In daily life most Orthodox Christians in imperial Russia experienced *govienie* with others in their family, their parish, their school, their workplace, or their regiment.



LAZARUS, COME FORTH Icons feature prominently in Orthodox worship spaces; this is a 16th-c. Russian icon of the raising of Lazarus (above).

Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday marked a welcome pause between the “bright sadness” of Lent proper and the dark mourning of Holy Week. Reflecting the festal bright spot, fasting standards relaxed to allow caviar (Lazarus Saturday) and fish (Palm Sunday), and vestments shifted to green (the same color used at Pentecost) as a symbol of new life. Children of all ages enjoyed getting pussy willows in lieu of palms—and, in some regions, thwacking one another with them while reciting verses anticipating Easter. And then came Passion Week with its black vestments.

As in many Western traditions, Holy Thursday, the last meal Jesus Christ shared with his disciples, was the most popular day for Russians to partake of *govienie*. From Thursday evening on, Orthodox Christians focused on Christ’s betrayal, suffering, and death. Thursday evening’s Passion Gospels, taking out the Shroud on Great Friday afternoon, and Christ’s symbolic burial on Matins (the morning service) of Great and Holy Saturday, were the most somber and best-attended services of the year.

A VISION OF DRY BONES

With the reading of Ezekiel’s vision of dry bones coming to life and the triumphant words, “Let God arise and His enemies be scattered,” Great and Holy Saturday signaled the end of darkness, a theme reinforced by the changing of the vestments from black to white. At midnight came Easter, “the feast of feasts”: an explosion of joy, bell-ringing, kissing one’s neighbor three times, chorusing “Christ is risen!” over and

SO MANY CANDLES This 1920s interior of the Church of St. Nicholas-Zayaitsky, Moscow (below), shows the kinds of ornate church furnishings looted by the Soviets.



over, and baskets with eggs and butter and sausage and ham to devour after the midnight services.

Ascension, the next major feast, was followed by Pentecost. On Pentecost the church became a sea of green, decorated with grass strewn over the entire floor and tree branches (sometimes entire trees) tied to the iconostases (an iconostasis is a screen separating the sanctuary from the altar area) and columns. The entire congregation solemnly sang the prayer invoking the Holy Spirit with which they customarily began all prayer, but which they had not heard for 50 days.

Kneeling and prostration, both of which had been banned during the Paschal (Easter) period, came back as the priest read prayers to the Holy Spirit. Then began another movable period of fasting before the feast day of the apostles Peter and Paul (June 29) and a shorter fast before the August 15 Dormition (Assumption) of the Mother of God, punctuated with the Transfiguration on August 6—beloved in part because it included blessing the first fruits of the harvest.

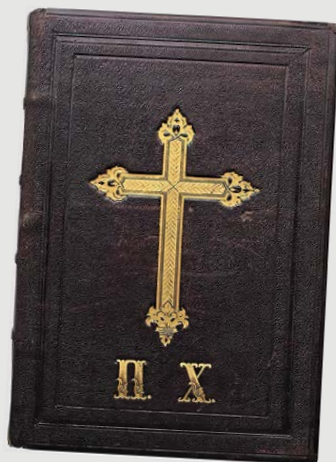
These major holidays were joined by many others, including commemoration of departed ancestors on several Saturdays throughout the year; John the Baptist’s nativity (June 24) and beheading (August 29); the Protecting Veil of Mary (October 1)—a holiday especially venerated by Cossack troops—and feast days of especially beloved saints (Nicholas, George, Demetrius) and Marian icons (such as the Vladimir, the Smolensk, and the Kazan).

Thus, even as it shared many of the same holidays and rites with both Eastern and Western Christians, as the largest Orthodox polity in the world, the Russian Empire had developed a particularly elaborate liturgical tradition—one that would take the Bolsheviks decades to uproot. **CH**

Nadieszda Kizenko is professor of history and religious studies program director at the University at Albany and the author of A Prodigal Saint: Father John of Kronstadt and Good for the Souls: A History of Confession in the Russian Empire.

Which text? Whose job? What language?

TRANSLATING THE BIBLE INTO MODERN RUSSIAN



When a complete authorized translation of the Russian Bible was finally published in 1875, it arrived on the scene to concerns and controversy. This relatively late Synodal translation, or *sinodal'ny perevod*, was due partly to the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church used the Slavonic Bible liturgically. But the delay also revolved around and resulted from major disputes over authority—disputes that revealed significant fault lines in religious culture.

The most basic of these disputes arose over which sacred texts were considered authoritative. The Russian Bible Society (RBS), established in 1812 with support from the British and Foreign Bible Society, followed the lead of its Western Bible Society counterparts in utilizing the Hebrew Masoretic text, alongside the Greek Septuagint, for Old Testament translation. In doing so it drew upon the expertise of a distinguished group of academic Hebraic scholars in St. Petersburg and Moscow, notably St. Petersburg professor, archpriest, and tutor to the tsarevich, Gerasim Petrovich Pavsky (1787–1863).

This appeal to the Hebrew text effectively challenged the Septuagint, the textual foundation of the Slavonic Bible, and became the subject of bitter dispute by more conservative Russian biblical scholars—a dispute only partially resolved by placing bracketed alternative Septuagint readings in Russian at the bottom of pages in later published editions of the Synodal Old Testament.

In the case of the New Testament, the RBS's first complete Russian-language NT (1820), as well as the first complete Synodal NT (1862), drew upon the Erasmus Greek *textus receptus*, an edition based on a handful of Greek texts available to sixteenth-century scholar Erasmus (see CH 145). By the nineteenth-century's end, subsequent

HOLY BOOKS Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov, left) believed only the church had the right to publish Russian-language translations such as the Synodal Bible (far left).

Greek New Testament scholarship had eclipsed this *textus receptus*, leading to ongoing debate among Russia's biblical scholars in the early twentieth century.

Despite all this the RBS managed to translate and issue first editions of the New Testament, the Psalter, and the first eight books of the Old Testament (the so-called Octateuch). By the early 1820s, the success of the RBS and its modern stereotype printing establishment in St. Petersburg had attracted opposition from a growing number of conservative church hierarchs and prominent societal arbiters of traditional religious culture, including Tsar Alexander I's own confessor, Archimandrite Foty (1792–1838). As a result Nicholas I (1825–1855) closed the RBS in 1826, accompanied by a prohibition on modern biblical translation. This forced Russian biblical translation underground for the next 30 years.

LOOKING TO THE PAST

This generated a second question of authority dividing religious thinkers. Who had the authority to translate and publish holy Scripture? Notable editions of Russian-language Scripture continued to circulate underground throughout the reign of Nicholas I. But when biblical translation reopened in the reign of Alexander II (1855–1881), Moscow metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov, 1782–1867) articulated the accepted understanding: the church alone had the authority to translate and publish editions of Scripture. This was waived only for Jewish Russian/Hebrew diglot (bilingual) editions of the Hebrew Bible.

Russian religious culture continued to be divided over a third problem as well: what is an authoritative language for biblical translation? The Synodal translation of the Bible—still the most widely circulated edition of Scripture in Russian to the present—represents a pre-Pushkin nineteenth-century Russian language that can lead to obscure and difficult-to-understand passages. (Alexander Pushkin [1799–1837] was a great Russian poet who is considered by many as the founder of modern Russian literature.) Nevertheless during the heavy years of Soviet religious persecution, the very “datedness” of the Synodal biblical text often attracted readers otherwise put off by the degradation, or Sovietization, of the Russian language.

These issues of authority—of base texts, of translators and publishers, and of the language employed—continue today, even in an environment in which the Synodal Bible faces competition from multiple new translations in a less heavily censored Russian religious marketplace.—*Stephen K. Batalden, professor of history and director of the Arizona State University Melikian Center for Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies, and author of Russian Bible Wars*



Love as an act of rebellion

ORTHODOXY AND LITERARY CULTURE

Caryl Emerson

"When cruelty is the norm, love is an act of rebellion."

This thesis, applied to Christ's response to the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880), belongs to Dostoevsky scholar Michael Ossorgin. In the novel the Inquisitor has just condemned Christ to death; without a word, Christ kisses him. This breathtaking alternative ethic also applies to the best traditions of Orthodox Christian thought as reflected in nineteenth-century Russian literature.

ALTERNATIVES TO LIVE BY

Cruel and arbitrary exercise of power has been an identifying mark of Russia's governing elites for a millennium. The current fusion of military aggression, human rights abuse, and religious fervor uncannily resembles the fusion of a brutal political agenda with atheistic fervor under communism. Little wonder that Russian literary creators committed with some urgency to devising more spiritually healthy alternatives to live by.

Exemplary here are three very different prose writers from the second half of the nineteenth century: Fyodor

LOST ROAD Grigory Myasoyedov painted *The Road in the Rye* in 1881; it presents a romanticized Russian landscape.

Dostoevsky (1821–1881), Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910), and Nikolai Leskov (1831–1895). Their fictional heroes are inconstant seekers; their own lives, too, were neither easy nor consistent. All were raised Russian Orthodox, and each offered his own corrective to official ecclesiastical practices. These correctives varied profoundly.

Dostoevsky, in his journalism, recommended military action against the Ottoman Empire to recapture the holy city of Constantinople. In his novels, however, he championed a very different ideal, a compassionate panentheism (the belief that the divine permeates every aspect of the universe), which drew ire from conservative Orthodox critics. Tolstoy, pacifist, Christian anarchist, and anticlerical theist, was the loudest, most stubborn rebel. He rejected the authority of the Orthodox Church and disavowed both the Trinity and the Resurrection. For ridiculing the holy



FOLK BELIEFS A 15th-c. chronicle (above left) depicts conflict in 944 between Rus pagans and Byzantine Christians; pagan burial stones still stand on this field in Khakassia (left).

"PRAYING UP" In *Sick Husband* (1881) by Vassily Maximov (above), a woman prays in front of an icon corner.

liturgy in his final novel, *Resurrection* (1898), the church effectively excommunicated Tolstoy in 1901.

Leskov, who descended from a line of clergymen and began his career as a self-taught journalist, combined expertise in Orthodox doctrine with hands-on knowledge of the many dazzling varieties of Russian religious experience. All three writers were deeply invested in understanding the workings of love.

Two sources of inspiration were of cardinal importance to this love project. The first was traditional folk belief, Russia's peculiar blend of Orthodoxy with pre-Christian ritual known as *dvoeverie*, or "dual faith." The artistic elite began to celebrate folk belief as a key aspect of Russian national identity in the nineteenth century, under the influence of German Romanticism.

Native Russian paganisms tended not to be maritime but continental, tied to the soil, rivers, and forests. They were less anthropomorphic than the Greek and Roman pantheon. There was no single goddess of female beauty, for example, only of grass, birch trees, ponds, and swamps—and unlike Venus or Aphrodite, she did not need a face. Beauty was not jealous, but fertile and patient. The good was cyclical and seasonal.

The second inspiration was less affirmative. These writers were, overall, indifferent to reproducing that staple of the European novel, the bourgeois love plot, so obsessed with carnal naughtiness and so hungry for a happy marriage at

the end. That narrative was more often parodied than followed. In its place Russian writers managed to invest the far more complex virtues of *caritas* and *agape* with the irresistible appeal and mystery of *eros*.

These three forms of love can overlap, but to grasp their potential for rebellion, consider these distinctions. Eros, for the British author C. S. Lewis, is a "need-love," by no means identical with carnal sexuality but usually marked by desire for a discrete, incarnated other. Eros can be generous and joyous, Lewis insisted, if not taken too seriously or made too "rapt, intense, and swoony-devout."

Caritas is charity—but more an evaluative attitude or worldview than a concrete act; in the words of Thomist philosopher Josef Pieper, it is a "readiness to pay something for the union with God." Agape, conventionally opposed to eros, is "gift-love" that works altogether outside commercial economies, undemanding and unselfish, offered without expectation of reward.

SCANDALS OF EROS AND AGAPE

In their quest for a love plot devoid of sexual possessiveness and independent of official institutions, Russian writers saw the Orthodox Church, subordinated to the state, as an uneasy ally and at times even an enemy. Established authority, with its hierarchy and wealth, inevitably fell prey to the temptations of judgment and violence. By contrast weakness and solitary wandering, being vulnerable, were morally invincible. Love was unpower.

Literary plots built around scandals caused by disobedient eros are commonplace in all cultures. Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Leskov could work with those plots too—Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* has a classically erotic "swoony-devout" heroine—but many of their

CONFESSION AND SACRAMENT Novelists Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Leskov (clockwise from left) wrestled with issues of faith.

masterpieces revolve around scandals caused by caritas and agape.

On the material plane, agape-love can seem unbeautiful, barren, bereft of family. Russian writers, however, were fond of redefining fertility, expanding kinship categories, and uncovering alternative forms of ecstasy. The resources of *dvoeverie* were their toolkit. Nature was “profane matter” but also holy. Dual faith balanced “praying up” (to a heavenly Father or a resurrected Christ) with “praying down” (to Mother Earth).

By praying up, mediated by the sign of the cross, one accesses the ideal—but risks losing touch with matter. By praying down, helped by incantations and charms, one is promised a reunification with the earth; burying a dead body meant to reconsecrate it, to plant it in the womb of its original mother. But the organic world was rife with base appetites and seductions. No space was neutral: it was either protected (by a pagan spirit or a patron saint), or it was unprotected. If unprotected it was open to dark spirits, collectively called the “unclean force.” These spirits were more mischievous than evil. They could be appeased and bribed with gifts. Their power lay in their multitude and smallness.

Writers made much of these petty devils, at times keeping them tiny, at times bloating them up to human size as in the shabby gentleman who visits Ivan Karamazov in his nightmare. But Russian demons rarely achieved the monumental stature of Dante’s Lucifer or Milton’s Satan. The moral landscape of dual-faith plots was usually less melodramatic and more prosaic than those lofty biblical trials. In our everyday weakness and quest for love, do we pray up or down? Out of the immense output of these three writers, only select scenes from each are evoked here, focusing on the prayerful act.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

In Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* (1866), reverent moments often occur across thresholds, eye-to-eye, in the horizontal leap of a divine spark. But the wisdom of bowing down, at once deeply Orthodox and pre-Christian, permeates the novel. Sonya (Sophia), the unstained prostitute who saves Raskolnikov, makes only one nonnegotiable demand: that the murderer confess his sin downward, asking the earth’s forgiveness by kissing the dirty public square. Only then will healing begin. Descent before ascent is the proper Christian sequence, of course, but the novel scarcely attends to the upward turn, to the sinner’s pleas for divine guidance. Christian dogma is active in this novel, but more as Scripture (for instance, Sonya’s reading of the raising of Lazarus, an act of devotion that Raskolnikov mocks).



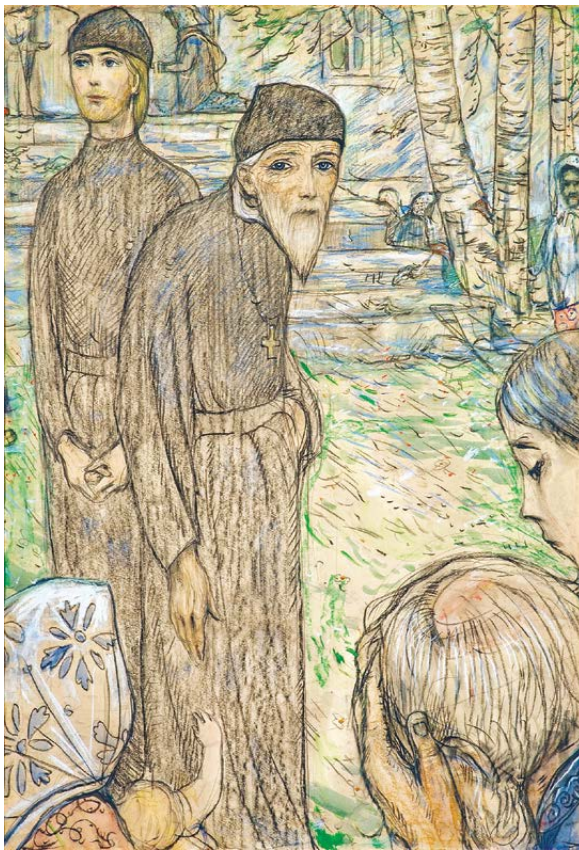
The Brothers Karamazov is likewise full of symbolic bows and downward prayer. Book six, “The Russian Monk,” takes place in protected space: the Elder Zosima’s life retold from the loving perspective of his disciple Alyosha. Zosima is an inspired clerical example of dual faith, balanced between the higher ideal of an all-forgiving Jesus and an equally sacred cyclical principle, rooted in nature and revealed to him at the time of his brother Markel’s death.

It is the Christian envelope, however, that proves transfigurative. Literary scholar Paul Contino, in his study of Dostoevsky’s “incarnational realism,” notes that Zosima might have been criticized for being “thin on Orthodox practice,” but his entire life and worldview are implicitly rooted in the Incarnation, with “the church as Christ’s body.” Zosima’s trademark is to bow down to sinners, to the earth, eventually to be buried in that earth and even to rot publicly in it. This is no scandal, Alyosha gradually comes to see. It is sacramental.

Arguably Leo Tolstoy’s worldview was dual faith throughout his writerly career. He prayed down to nature, fertility, physical strength, peasant labor, and then (after his spiritual crisis in the late 1870s) attempted—with uneven success—to pray up to a disembodied ideal devoid of the “animal principle” altogether. An intolerance of



FAITH AND FICTION Ambrose of Optina (left, as an elderly monk) inspired the character of Elder Zosima (below, in a 1982 illustration by Soviet artist Ilya Glazunov) in *Brothers Karamazov*.



civilization's social rituals and a reverence for what is palpably, ecologically agricultural saturate his novels. In *Anna Karenina* (1878) this is the "Konstantin Levin" option, the man who works the soil as against his bookishly abstract brother, Sergei Koznyshev. In *War and Peace* (1867), this ethos is embodied in the peasant Platon Karataev, whom Pierre Bezukhov befriends in a French prisoner-of-war camp. Both Levin and Bezukhov eventually consummate a romantic love plot. But familial love, *storge*, with its focus on prosaic interactions and cyclical generations, quickly crowds out scenes of conventionally romantic eros.

As a Christian thinker, Tolstoy was part radical Protestant and part rebellious gnostic. In the name of what he called "reasonable consciousness," he rejected the Trinity, the sacraments, original sin, redemption, salvation, final judgment, and all other "supernatural ways of caring for men." With those excisions can we even speak of a "praying up" in a Christian cosmos? To some extent we can, if we apply to Tolstoy the same incarnational vision that Paul Contino confers on Dostoevsky's Elder Zosima.

Consider Tolstoy's tiny 1859 story, "Three Deaths." The first death is that of a noblewoman fleeing Russia for an illusory cure in Europe. She is in consumption, in denial, but, being wealthy and pampered, she is trapped in profane matter. She can neither let go nor pray upward and thus meets a miserable end.

The second death is that of a coachman at a waystation where the noblewoman's carriage makes a stop. This peasant coachman, Fyodor, accepts the life-death transition. When the young fellow driver, Sergei, asks the dying coachman for his boots, Fyodor agrees—but on condition that Sergei erect a cross over his grave. Eventually Sergei remembers his promise and one morning goes into the forest to find the right tree.

This is the third death and the best. It is not pain free. The natural universe is sentient. The tree knows it is dying as the axe cuts into it; it shudders and its roots tremble with fear. The final note is one of jubilation, however, as more sunlight fills the forest over the fallen tree, which will rise again as a cross. This scene reveals dual faith at its most radiant: Christian self-emptying not from a cramped personal point of view but as part of a larger cosmos, from the perspective of nature itself.

LESKOV'S WIDE LENS

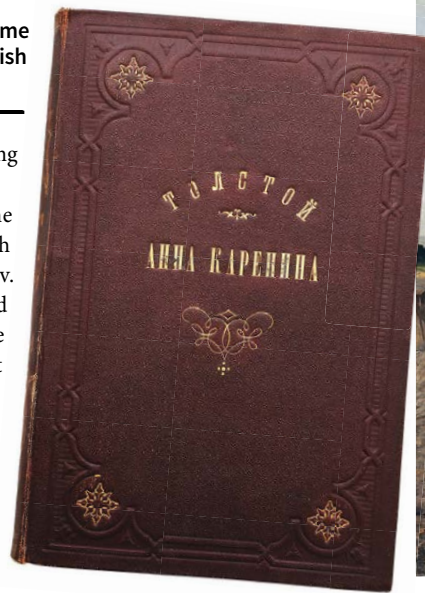
There were darker sides to dual faith, however, and here Nikolai Leskov is a rich resource. In his youth Leskov had worked as a business agent for his uncle and traveled extensively throughout the Russian Empire. This diversity of impressions decentered him, discouraging the sort of blanket pronouncements about "the Russian people" so common in Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, each of whom was a Romantic in his own way. Leskov was an intimate eyewitness to all social classes—nobles, merchants, peasants, bureaucrats, the clergy, sectarian Old Believers—but scandalously refused to commit to any reigning political ideology.

His "Enchanted Wanderer" (1873) is a classic frontier adventure tale, but without the usual aggressive, self-assertive hero. Instead the protagonist wanders from one captivity to the next, first sampling life in the army, then

SAD STORY Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* became world-famous; this is an 1887 Spanish translation (right).

being hobbled by the Tartars, finally finding refuge in a monastery.

"Episcopal Justice" (1877) concerns the forcible conscripting of underage Jewish boys into the Russian military in Kyiv. Both the narrator (a low-level clerk) and the Orthodox Christian metropolitan are routinely anti-Semitic state servitors, yet they stumble into helping an agonized Jewish bookbinder save his son. As a chronicler of institutions where cruelty was the unmarked norm, Leskov can shock his readers with actual—even if accidental—acts of reconciliation and love.



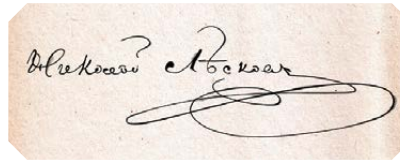
A SHAPESHIFTER

One such shocking act unfolds in Leskov's 1885 tale "The Spook." The narrator is a young upper-class boy, brought up on holy Scripture but fascinated by folk belief: wood demons, water-mill spirits, swamp sprites.

Along with his family, their serfs, and the entire village, he assumes that the local recluse, Selivan, who lives in a rundown inn off the main road, is in league with the unclean force. Every misdoing or mishap is attributed to him. When facts don't add up, rumor and magic pitch in: Selivan must be a shapeshifter, the villagers say, he commits crimes but cannot be caught because he turns into a boar, rooster, rat, wagon-wheel, or roadside post.

Selivan lifts the narrator and his younger brother onto his shoulders and out of a swamp when their cart overturns, and the village accuses him of causing the accident. In the final episode, a blizzard forces a wealthy relative to take emergency refuge in Selivan's inn. So certain are the travelers that they will perish violently in this unprotected place that come dawn they rush out, forgetting their moneybox. Selivan's theft is assumed—until he turns up, breathless, at the police station. "You forgot your little coffer." Selivan refuses the reward due him by law and pressed on him by the grateful travelers. "There's no need.... I don't need what isn't mine."

Only pagan logic insists on contracts and laws. This is Christianity winning with the right tools: not by the sign of the cross to keep devils at bay (a gesture still on the superstitious side of dual faith) but by the deeds of a Russian *pravednik*, a "righteous person" who does good absolutely regardless. Selivan is relieved that the townspeople no longer fear him, but for past injuries he seeks neither retribution nor justice. The final voice belongs to the local Oryol priest: "Christ lit up for you the darkness.... It was not Selivan who was the spook, but you.... His face seemed dark to you, because your eye was dark."



"WHAT ISN'T MINE" Leskov (whose signature is above and whose house is at the right) rejected an idealized view of the Russian people—exemplified here by Myasoyedov's *The Sower* (1888, above right).



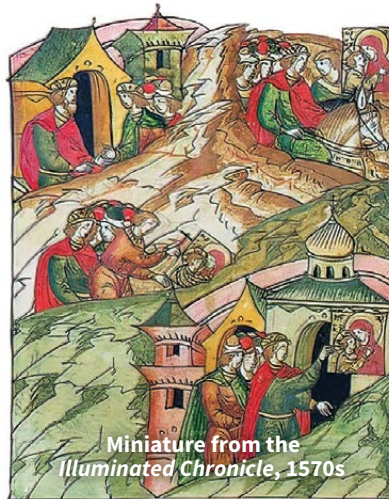
Leskov in this late story achieves the nonjudgmental moral texture that Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, in their novels, developed through far more elaborate philosophical structures. Selivan's love is an act of rebellion against cruel political norms, which in Russia—then as now—were abetted by a compromised, hierarchical church.

But the prayerful orientation of the outcast Selivan is neither up nor down. It is across, a love-laden response to an immediate needy other in the present. Like Dostoevsky's Elder Zosima, and (with some pantheistic adjustment), also like Tolstoy's tree that becomes a cross, Leskov's *pravednik* Selivan takes our breath away, a luminous example of Russian Orthodox personalism, which values above all the dignity of the human being in social and divine relation. Where cruelty is power, love is an act of rebellion. **CH**

Caryl Emerson is A. Watson Armour III University Professor Emeritus of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Princeton University and author or editor of a number of books including *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature*.

A CONTESTED STORY

SELECTED EVENTS FROM THIS ISSUE AND THEIR CONTEXT. (ITEMS IN **RED** REPRESENT THE RISE TO POWER OF SOME MAJOR POLITICAL LEADERS.)



Miniature from the
Illuminated Chronicle, 1570s

988 Prince Volodymyr of the Rus is baptized in Kyiv.

1054 Roman and Orthodox Christianity separate.

1240 The Mongols sack Kyiv. Poland and Lithuania begin absorbing parts of today's Belarus and Ukraine.

1325 The metropolitan of Kyiv and all Rus (appointed by the patriarch of Constantinople) moves to Moscow.

1448 Moscow Orthodoxy consecrates a metropolitan of Moscow and all Rus.

1453 Constantinople falls.

1458 The patriarch of Constantinople appoints a new metropolitan of Kyiv, Galicia, and all Rus.

1589 The patriarch of Constantinople acknowledges Moscow as self-governing while maintaining authority over Kyiv. The first patriarch of Moscow is elected.

1596 The Union of Brest creates the Uniate Church in Poland and Lithuania.

1632 Orthodox churchmen found the Kyiv Academy.

1667 As part of a settlement of the Russo-Polish War, the Kingdom of Russia takes control of parts of today's eastern Ukraine and Belarus, as well as Kyiv.

1682 **Peter the Great (Peter I) comes to the throne, ruling until 1725.**

1686 The metropolitan of Kyiv agrees to place his church under the patriarch of Moscow.

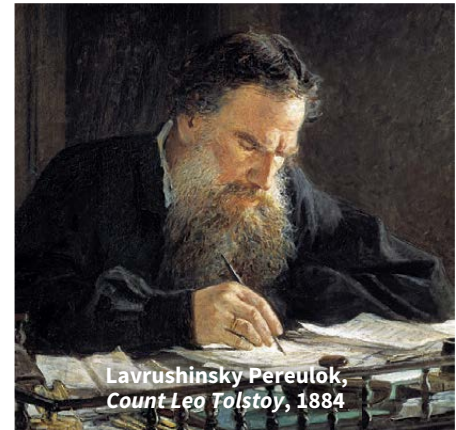
1700 When Patriarch Adrian dies, Peter appoints a Ukrainian metropolitan, Stefan, as acting head of the Orthodox Church of Russia (ROC).

1721 Peter establishes the Most Holy Governing Synod and asks Feofan Prokopovich to draft the Spiritual Regulation.

1722 Peter establishes the office of chief procurator of the synod.



Jacopo Amigoni, **Peter I, Emperor of Russia**, early 1700s



Lavrushinsky Pereulok,
Count Leo Tolstoy, 1884

1762 **German-born and Lutheran-raised Catherine the Great (Catherine II) comes to power, ruling until 1796.**

1794 Russian monks come to Alaska.

1812 Russian Bible Society is established.

1826 Nicholas I prohibits modern Bible translation into Russian.

1833 "Official Nationality" is proposed as an imperial ideology.

c. 1830s Aleksei Khomiakov and others found the Slavophile movement.

1839 The Uniate Church is abolished in the Russian Empire, and Uniates are forcibly reunited with Orthodoxy.

1858 Alexander II accepts a petition to resume modern Bible translations.

1876 The Synodal translation is published, the first authorized Russian translation of the whole Bible.

1905 **A revolution begins that will last until 1907, a parliament is created, and a constitution written.** Nicholas II issues a decree allowing people to leave the Orthodox Church.

1917 **Revolution begins in Russia, followed by civil war until 1921. Bolsheviks come to power under the**

ANDREI BOGOLYUBSKI TAKES THE VLADIMIR ICON AWAY FROM VYSHGOROD, FACIAL CHRONICLE V. 5, LAPTEVSKIY TOM, 16TH C.—PUBLIC DOMAIN, WIKIMEDIA
NIKOLAI GE, PORTRAIT OF LEO TOLSTOY, LATE 19TH C.—TRETAKOV GALLERY / PUBLIC DOMAIN, WIKIMEDIA
JACOPO AMIGONI, PETER I, 1672–1725, OIL ON CANVAS—NATIONAL MUSEUM, STOCKHOLM / PUBLIC DOMAIN, WIKIMEDIA



leadership of Vladimir Lenin. The All-Russian Church Council chooses Tikhon as the first patriarch since Adrian.

1919-1920 Many priests, bishops, and lay activists are arrested and executed, and convents and monasteries are shut down.

1922 The Bolsheviks arrest Tikhon, releasing him a year later.

1924 Alexey Shchusev is asked to design Lenin's mausoleum. Scientist Valentina Puzik takes monastic vows.

1925 Exiles found the St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris.

1927 Metropolitan Sergius declares that loyal Orthodox believers can be loyal Soviets. Those who resist become known as the Catacomb Church. Many exiled leaders also reject Sergius.

1928 Josef Stalin consolidates control.



Priests imprisoned in the Solovetsky labor camp, 1923

1929 Olga Iafa is sent to the gulag. Stalin begins collectivizing agriculture, which also crushes rural religion.

1932 Maria Skobtsova becomes a nun, serving the poor of Paris.

1935 Sergei Bulgakov is accused of heresy.

1937 Nicholas Berdyaev publishes *The Roots of Russian Communism*. In the Great Terror, tens of thousands of clergy and believers are arrested and either executed or sent to the gulag.

1944 Vladimir Lossky publishes *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*.

1945 Skobtsova is executed at Ravensbrück.

1949 Exiled Georges Florovsky becomes dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

1950 Archimandrite Ioann Krestyankin is sentenced to the labor camps (freed in 1955).

1952 Matrona Nikonova's grave becomes a pilgrimage site.

1957 Romano Scalfi founds Russia Cristiana.

1958 Nikita Khrushchev consolidates control. Sophrony Sakharov founds the Monastery of St. John the Baptist.

1966 Anthony Bloom publishes *Living Prayer*.

1962 Alexander Schmemmann becomes dean of St. Vladimir's.

1964 Leonid Brezhnev becomes leader of the Soviet Union.

1969 Alexander Men publishes *The Son of Man*.

1970 Schmemmann publishes *For the Life of the World*.

The Orthodox Church in America becomes autocephalous.

1973 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn publishes *The Gulag Archipelago*.

1974 John Meyendorff publishes *Byzantine Theology*. Aleksandr Ogorodnikov founds a religious philosophical society.

1978 Léonid Ouspensky publishes *The Theology of the Icon*.

1980 Dissident priest Dmitri Dudko is arrested and forced to recant. Activist Vladimir Poresh is also arrested.

1985 Mikhail Gorbachev becomes the last leader of the Soviet Union.

1988 The Soviet Union allows the ROC to celebrate the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus.



ROC priests passing a poster of Lenin in Moscow, 1990.

1990 Alexy II is elected patriarch.

1991 The Soviet Union dissolves; Boris Yeltsin becomes president of the Russian Federation.

2000 Vladimir Putin becomes president of Russia, serving continuously until the present as either president or prime minister.

2007 The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) and the ROC reconcile and restore Eucharistic communion between the two institutions.

2013 Artos Fellowship is founded.

2020 The Main Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces opens in Moscow.



Christian lives and Christian hope

KEEPING FAITH UNDER COMMUNISM

Irina Paert

If there was a battle between God and the Soviets, God won.

The atheist regime tried hard to replace religion with atheism, closing churches and arresting believers (see pp. 6–11). Some believed faith would fade away as communism progressed. That did not happen. Religion remained part of life among a significant minority of Soviet citizens. Christianity and other religious worldviews, including Eastern religions and Buddhism, grew stronger as they attracted intellectuals raised in atheist families. Cracks formed in the regime, evidenced most prominently when Soviet authorities decided to allow the Russian Orthodox Church to celebrate the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus in 1988 (see pp. 38–41).

Some stories of believers in the USSR tell of martyrdom, suffering, and innocent deaths of hundreds of thousands. Others point out strategies for the survival of institutional Christianity, arguing that without compromising

GIANT STEPS? At the same time he was painting Orthodox worship (pp. 12–13), Boris Kustodiev was also depicting Soviet scenes such as this giant peasant towering over city, people, and church.

with power, the church would not have survived. Many Christian believers who lived under the state's pressure suffered death and violence, though others survived without making a deal with the authorities. How did they understand their witness? What did it mean for them to be Christians in times of faithlessness and persecution? How did they live their lives as Christians?

DESTRUCTIVE CHANGE (1917 TO 1940s)

The assault of the Bolsheviks from the early years of Soviet power until the Second World War led to the demolition of

BORIS MIKHAILOVICH KUSTODIEV, *THE BOLSHEVIK*, 1920. OIL ON CANVAS, TRETYAKOV GALLERY, MOSCOW, RUSSIA—BRIDGEMAN IMAGES



Д. Моор, Москва

D. Moor, Moscou

the institutional structures of the Russian Orthodox Church, the largest Christian organization. By the beginning of World War II in the USSR, only four Orthodox bishops were alive and not imprisoned, and not a single functioning monastery existed. The head of the church, Patriarch Tikhon, had died broken in 1925 (see pp. 43–47).

It began in the villages. Stalin's collectivization did not simply mean the replacement of private farming with state collective farms; it attacked the village culture and way of life. As one of the pillars of rural popular religion, the Orthodox parish was a site of resistance and a real threat to collectivization.

When Aleksander Vorobiev (d. 1937), a pious Orthodox man and father of 11 children, became the head of the parish council in the 1920s in the village of Kamennoe Ozero in the Urals, he knew that the future of the parish depended on him and his fellow parishioners. He tried to keep the church open as long as possible but could not resist the armed groups of the local militia who closed the parish church in 1936.

Vorobiev started a campaign to reopen the church and sent numerous petitions and complaints to the state authorities in Moscow. At age 82 he was arrested and tried as a member of the fictitious “counter-revolutionary fascist terrorist organization of the church people in the Urals.” Five women, all members of the church council, were also arrested and tried with him; so was the parish priest. All seven were executed in the prison of Yekaterinburg in 1937, and their property was confiscated.

FORGET ABOUT THE WISE MEN A 1921 antireligious poster by Dmitry Moor depicts communists leading a procession guided by the “true” (red) star.

Historians estimate the number of victims of Stalinism—those who were arrested, executed, imprisoned, exiled, and deported—at 60 million. The labor camps—spread over the vast territories of the north of Russia, Siberia, and the far east—served as places of detention, reeducation, and extermination of groups deemed enemies of the people. Believers in the gulag (see p. 1) made a special category.

WITNESS IN THE CAMPS

Olga Iafa (1876–1964), an educated noblewoman from St. Petersburg, was 51 when she was arrested in 1929 and sent to the gulag. She spent three years in the labor camp in Solovki. Her reminiscences and literary works about Solovki remain an important witness to the life of Christians in the camps.

Believers typically had two approaches to life as camp laborers. Some chose the path of martyrdom and refused to contribute to the Soviet economy through work. When arrested and sent to Solovki, for example, nuns from Shamordino, a monastery founded by Amvrosy of Optina, refused to work for what they saw as “the Antichrist” and received a severe punishment. Other believers tried to reason with the nuns and help them to avoid their fates, but the women were determined to follow the will of their spiritual father, Amvrosy, and suffer martyrs’ deaths.



Olga Iafa highlighted the other approach to witness in the camp. She recollected how 14 Orthodox and Roman Catholic bishops performed heavy work duties in the camps during Holy Thursday:

United in one common effort they walked shoulder to shoulder—one still young short-sighted Catholic bishop, shaved and in round glasses, and a gaunt, weary, white-bearded Orthodox bishop, decrepit in his day, but strong in spirit, pushing with unrelenting zeal on the cart.

Normally on that day, according to Orthodox tradition, bishops participated in the ritual of footwashing, symbolizing humility. In Solovki they showed humility to the people of the camp through their acceptance of unjust punishment. This particular approach deeply affected Iafa. In her novella *Mother Veronika*, she wrote of how work and service to the people could be a form of Christian witness.

Veronika, a nun, is proud and self-centered, striving for recognition as an exemplary Christian. When she is arrested and given a sentence, she makes a prostration in gratitude, much to the amusement of the guards. But, while in the camps, she learns true Christian humility through her alienation from other people. She sheds her pride and ambitions through self-negation—working in the hospital and looking after the sick and dying. Her transformation is visible to people around her who seek her counsel and receive grace.

Finding meaning in suffering and privations is a recurring theme of gulag literature. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008) famously wrote in *Gulag Archipelago*: “Since then I have come to understand the truth of all the religions of the world: They struggle with the evil inside a human being (inside every human being). It is impossible to expel evil from the world in its entirety, but it is possible to restrict it within each person.”

CHOOSING THE LESSER EVIL

The restoration of the institutional structures of the church during the Second World War changed Christian witness. USSR religious life experienced revival during and after

LIFE IMITATES ART IMITATING LIFE Ivan Vladimirov’s 1918 painting of a priest on trial (above left) resonates with this photograph of the 1922 trial of Metropolitan Veniamin (Kazansky), who was later executed.

the war: many churches were open, and new territories that were either outside of the USSR or occupied by the Germans experienced a religious renaissance. The number of clergy and churches almost doubled after the war. Demand for religious sacraments rose immensely among people affected by war and repression. In one provincial parish (Kuibyshev) in only one year (1944), there were 20,403 officially registered baptisms—56 each day!

Still, during the war, Orthodox Christians had to make a difficult choice between Stalin and Hitler. While many welcomed the religious policy of the Third Reich, which restored churches in occupied territories, they could not reconcile Nazi violence against Jews. In 1942 Germans executed the mayor of Kremenchuk because, together with a local priest, he helped Jews to get Christian names to be saved from the Holocaust.

But after Stalin’s death in 1953, hopes were high. Many believers, priests, and bishops were released from the camps; they preached the gospel and served as spiritual guides. Even so the church remained under close surveillance of the state and was sometimes a tool of the KGB, which maintained a huge apparatus of agents and informants.

Soviet propaganda continued to boast that the Soviet people held a uniform worldview, materialistic and ideologically streamlined with the policies of the Communist Party. Underneath the surface, however, a different life was thriving. Individuals and groups began to form a religious underground, the catacomb church, which existed both in the countryside and in the cities. It consisted of believers, monks, nuns, bishops, and priests who disaffiliated themselves from the church hierarchy led by Patriarch Sergei (Stragorodsky, 1867–1944). The religious underground had an alternative hierarchy, with clandestine chapels and churches and secret hideaways for the clergy. The state security police searched viciously for these clusters of religious



THE ACCUSED Believers continued to carry on worship activities, such as processions (above, in Leningrad in the 1940s) and veneration of icons, such as this one of St. Nikolas (above right), often at great cost.



life. The network of the catacomb church covered the entirety of the USSR, spanning western Ukraine to Siberia, and the persecutions of these believers raged from the 1920s to 1987.

In addition to the illegal catacomb church, another form of religious resistance emerged within the “official” church. Some informal monastics who lived “in the world” had jobs in Soviet institutions, but they took monastic vows and lived out a hidden but intense spiritual life under the guidance of spiritual fathers and mothers. Members of these secret monastic networks worked during the day in Soviet institutions, but at night read the Gospel and ascetic books, corresponded with elders, and copied the sayings of spiritual elders from nineteenth-century books.

Valentina Puzik (1903–2004), a professor and head of a laboratory at the Central Tuberculosis Institute in Moscow, lived this secret double life. No one knew at the time, but the renowned professor was also a nun under the name Ignatia, having taken monastic vows when she was 21 years old. She turned to God under the influence of a charismatic monk, Agathon of the Petrovsky Monastery in Moscow, where the tradition of spiritual guidance and eldership was preserved. Her spiritual father died of pellagra in a Stalinist camp, but Mother Ignatia preserved his legacy. She wrote books about asceticism, preserved letters and documents from her spiritual father, composed hymns and prayers, and supported younger women who sought spiritual counsel.

THE AGE OF COMPLICITY (1960s TO 1980s)

The uneasy compromise between the church hierarchy and the Soviet state became more transparent during the



THE ACCUSERS This 1930s sign on the Dormition Cathedral of the Kyivan Cave Monastery reads “Monks—Bloody Enemies of the Working Class.”

years of the Cold War, when the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church served Soviet foreign policy, participating in delegations to Western international institutions.

Metropolitan Filaret (Vakhromeev, 1935–2021), important in the church from the 1960s to 1980s, later wrote that the Russian Orthodox Church has participated with a clear conscience in the all-Union and worldwide peacemaking movement, and I hold this movement in high esteem. I can assume that today it is hard to believe how often and how close to the edge of the nuclear abyss the human race found itself during the second half of the twentieth century. . . . Friendship societies with the peoples of other countries, peacemaking forums on a regional and planetary scale, and national peace movements quite naturally included the peacemaking mission of the Church.



PRECIOUS AND PRESERVED This Belarusian Communion box in which a priest would hide the elements (*above*) and this Ukrainian embroidery of the Virgin and Child (*left*) both survive from the gulag.

Yet popular religious movements and intellectuals resisted the compromise. On the ground rural priests and parish activists organized pilgrimages, carried out services, and maintained a network of Christians all over the USSR. At the same time, collectivization had subverted the base of Christian life in the villages, and it never fully recovered. Due to urbanization processes in the 1960s, a massive outflow of younger people from the countryside meant that Orthodoxy in Russia's rural regions was dying.

CITIES AND SEEKERS

City intelligentsia who came to faith in the late 1950s and 1960s led a religious revival, although limited in scale. Educated youth began to explore religious philosophy. Hoping to avoid interference from the authorities, young men and women seeking spiritual guidance flocked to popular preachers and spiritual elders, such as Aleksandr Men (1935–1990), who served in the village of Semkhoz, 43 miles from Moscow (see pp. 43–47).

Another popular site was the provincial Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery where Archimandrite Ioann Krestjankin (1910–2006) provided spiritual counsel to educated young men, many of whom became priests.

These questioning members of the intelligentsia formed small discussion groups, circles, and religious-philosophical seminars in the 1970s. They tended to lean toward clergy with a similar background and intellectual outlook, including Orthodox priests such as Men. These priests carried out missionary work among the intelligentsia, catechizing and baptizing adults, and drawing on

world literature, the arts, and music to convey the gospel to Soviet-educated seekers.

Disregarding the ideological differences between “democrats” and “nationalists,” the missionary clergy used pastoral methods of the Russian Orthodox Church that remained traditional even as they innovated. They employed the traditional teachings of the church fathers, combining them with universalist and ecumenical currents.

The traditional personal relationship between pastor and neophyte, based on the model of spiritual fatherhood, was especially valuable in developing personal ties between the members of these dissident or semidissident circles around the parishes of Men's church in Novaia Derevnia, Vsevolod Shpiller's Nikolaevskaya Church in Kuznetsy (Moscow), or Dmitri Dudko's commune in Grebnevo, 24 miles outside Moscow.

Men was a popular pastor to Christian intellectuals. He compared his role as a pastor with that of a midwife, saying that he only wanted to help the person to find his or her own way to God: “What is born from within is more valuable than what is brought from without.”

The new political investment in the antireligious campaigns of the Khrushchev era and the destructive policies used against the institutions and personnel of the Russian Orthodox Church led the church hierarchy to push conformity, but dissent emerged instead among the lower ranks of the clergy and the intelligentsia.

Some vociferous priests accused the hierarchy of cowardice and complicity and criticized its neglect of the reformist spirit of the All-Russian Church Council of



1917–1918. In 1972, Solzhenitsyn adopted a similar position in his open “Great Lent Letter” addressed to Patriarch Pimen. He lamented the devastation of religious life in Russia and blamed the hierarchy for its silence, passivity, and submissiveness to the destroyers of the church.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, dissident and informal movements took up the call to Christian witness—such as hippies, who rediscovered the gospel after reading philosophical books and listening to Western music, most notably Andrew Lloyd Weber’s rock opera, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. These long-haired men, calling themselves Jesus People, dropped out of universities, camped beside Latvian lakes and in forests, or gathered in the Moscow apartments of Aleksandr Ogorodnikov (b. 1950) and Vladimir Poresh (1949–2022). The priest Dmitrii Dudko (1922–2004) baptized some of them in his kitchen rather than in church.

They planned seminars and “happenings”: for example, Ogorodnikov staged the mock ballet *Lenin Superstar*. They published *samizdat* (clandestine) journals. Some rediscovered Orthodoxy and saw themselves as intellectual descendants of the nineteenth-century saints and theologians; others were in favor of ecumenical relations with other Christians, especially Roman Catholics. Several young men with hippie backgrounds became priests. In the late 1970s, many members of these informal Christian groups were arrested and received prison sentences or were sent to psychiatric hospitals.

The late 1970s through the 1980s saw even greater militarization, political polarization, and ideological control within the communist bloc. Christians had a presence in the communitarian, pacifist, and feminist movements in the late Soviet Union. Most of the Soviet hippies supported nonviolent resistance, and some embraced the teachings of Leo Tolstoy against war.

Tolstoyan groups together with Jesus People and Christian feminists protested the war in Afghanistan (1979–1989). The members of these informal groups identified themselves and their way of life with the early Christians, amalgamating the

DIFFERENT WITNESSES Dissidents Aleksandr Ogorodnikov and Elena Levasheva marry in the 1970s (*above left*); Valentina Puzik (*below*) lived for many years as a secret nun while heading a medical laboratory.

“WORLDWIDE PEACEMAKING”? Church leaders such as Metropolitan Filaret (Vakhromeev, *above right*) participated in peace and disarmament movements during the Cold War, which also served an agenda of the Soviet government.

hippies’ lifestyles with the forms of a Christian community. Not all of them managed to withstand the pressure of the authorities: Dudko, after his arrest in 1980, publicly renounced his views and denied that persecution of dissidents even existed.

CHOICES AND SILENCE

History made a full circle: today the Russian Orthodox Church is no longer persecuted by the state authorities. It has experienced a remarkable revival in the last 30 years. A generation of Orthodox Christians grew up in a country where people were not penalized for their faith in God.

However, the current alliance of the church hierarchy with the Putin regime raises questions about what we can learn from the past. The bishops do not oppose the war and injustice. But there are clergy and laity who actively resist the war, morally corrupt authority, lies, and political violence. Some of them are imprisoned or in exile. They are successors of the martyrs and confessors of the previous era. **CH**

Irina Paert is senior researcher at the School of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Tartu and the author of Old Believers, Religious Dissent and Gender in Russia 1760–1850 and Spiritual Elders.





The “Philosophy Steamer”

HOW RUSSIAN EMIGRE THEOLOGIANS SHAPED ORTHODOX THOUGHT

Paul Gavriluk

It is the duty of the revolution to put an end to compromise, and to put an end to compromise means taking the path of socialist revolution.—Vladimir Lenin, “Speech on the Agrarian Question,” November 1917

The **Bolshevik coup** of October 1917 served as a political and spiritual act. Politically it brought a radical Marxist party into power, precipitating a radical break with Russia’s monarchist past. Spiritually the coup involved a rejection of God, the destruction of places of worship, and the expulsion into exile of many influential Russian religious thinkers. These thinkers were expelled on Vladimir Lenin’s direct orders. Because many left by sea, collectively these individuals were known as the “passengers” of the “Philosophy Steamer.” Soviet leaders saw them as the enemies of the communist state and had no use for them.

Those who remained in Russia either died during the country’s Civil War (1917–1923) or perished through the repressive machine of the Soviet state, executed during Stalin’s purges or while languishing in labor camps, the gulags. For the exiled religious intelligentsia, it was a catastrophic experience: they lost their country without any prospect of returning. But it was a catastrophe that saved their lives and brought them together.

The “steamer” brought exiles to the significant cities of Prague and Paris. In Czechoslovakia, the doors of Charles

NO ROOM FOR THEOLOGY HERE Boris Kustodiev depicts the 1921 World Congress of the Comintern, an international Soviet-controlled group advocating for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, in Moscow.

University were opened to them when the Russian Law Faculty was formed in the early 1920s.

Prominent legal scholar Pavel Novgorodtsev (1866–1924) headed its faculty, which included Petr Struve (1870–1944), a political theorist and editor of an important emigre journal, *Russian Thought*, as well as two theologians: Sergius Bulgakov (1871–1944) and his younger colleague, Georges Florovsky (1893–1979). The latter two would soon move to Paris to collaborate at the newly established St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute. What is known as the “Paris School” of twentieth-century Russian Orthodox theology had St. Sergius as its main institutional center.

BULGAKOV: THE WISDOM OF GOD

A towering figure in Russian religious thought, Sergius Bulgakov experienced a spiritual evolution as complex as that of Augustine. Raised in a clergy family, he lost his faith in his teens, embraced Marxism, became a political economist, then became philosophically dissatisfied with Marxist doctrine. He embraced religiously colored idealist philosophy before eventually coming back into the fold of the Orthodox



MEETING OF MINDS Pavel Florensky (see p. 1) and Sergius Bulgakov are shown together in a 1917 painting (left, l-r); Bulgakov (below) later died in Paris.



Church and becoming a priest. His monumental theological system and his literary output are comparable to those of theologians better known in the West such as Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

Bulgakov is best known as an influential representative of Russian sophiology. Founded in the nineteenth century by philosopher and poet Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900), sophiology offered a speculative development of the biblical concept of Sophia, the Wisdom of God. Solovyov identified Sophia with the principle of “Godmanhood,” or divine humanity. Sophia served as a link between God and the world by closing the ontological divide between the uncreated and the created. It was both the ontological ground and the goal of creation, when God will be all-in-all. Bulgakov characterized his position as pan-en-theism, a view that all things were in some sense “in God,” although God could not be reduced to all things.

In the mid-1930s, Bulgakov’s teaching caused a major controversy, the so-called Sophia Affair. Bulgakov faced accusations of pantheism, gnosticism (specifically, for locating the Fall in the divine rather than in the creaturely realm), and a list of other heresies. The de facto head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), issued an encyclical condemning Bulgakov’s sophiological teaching in 1935.

But Bulgakov’s ruling bishop and the founder of the St. Sergius Institute, Metropolitan Evlogy (Georgievsky), protected him from persecution. With the support of the metropolitan and his colleagues, Bulgakov retained his post. Still, a shadow of heresy continued to hang over his teaching; it remains controversial to this day.

LOSSKY: GOD IS UNKNOWABLE

Indeed Bulgakov’s position garnered him enemies among

WORLD TRAVELER Georges Florovsky, a younger colleague of Bulgakov, eventually moved to America and ended his days at Princeton University (below).



the emigres. The most significant theological opponents included Vladimir Lossky (1903–1958) and Florovsky. In contrast to Bulgakov’s bold speculations about the inner life of the Trinity, Lossky emphasized the apophatic character of Orthodox theology. Apophaticism or apophatic theology insists on the unknowability of God in his essence and describes God in terms of negations: uncreated, unknowable, ineffable, immutable, and so on. In Lossky’s interpretation apophaticism was a refusal to form verbal or mental idols



THINK, PRAY, LOVE St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris (left) and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Yonkers (below left) became two prominent centers of Orthodox thought outside Russia.

Orthodox theology, retaining this dominance until quite recently.

After World War II, Florovsky crossed the Atlantic and settled in New York City, where he became the dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and established that institution's international reputation. Two younger emigre theologians from Paris followed Florovsky: Alexander Schmemmann (1921–1983) and John Meyendorff (1926–1992), who became the deans of St. Vladimir's in succession (see pp. 43–47).

SCHMEMANN: EUCHARISTIC BEINGS

Alexander Schmemmann, an outstanding liturgical theologian, became famous for his classic *For the Life of the World* (1970). Schmemmann's main insight is that humans are Eucharistic

beings, mediating creation's relationship with God in an act of worship. According to Schmemmann divine liturgy is an eschatological event, a sacrament of the kingdom.

Schmemmann initiated an influential liturgical renewal in the Orthodox Church in the United States and abroad. His theology drew on the "Eucharistic ecclesiology" of Nicholas Afanasiev (1893–1966), who had written "the Eucharist makes the Church."

MEYENDORFF: PALAMAS FOR TODAY

John Meyendorff became an important translator and interpreter of the work of the fourteenth-century theologian Gregory Palamas (c. 1296–1359). Fundamental to Palamite theology is the distinction between the unknowable and inaccessible divine essence and the knowable and participable divine energies. Like God these energies are uncreated. Access to the divine energies allows human beings to be deified by participating in God rather than in something lesser than God.

For Meyendorff the "neopatristic synthesis" Florovsky had initiated meant primarily the retrieval of Palamas's theological and spiritual heritage. As a spiritual writer, Palamas provided a theological justification for *hesychasm*, a monastic movement that placed a great emphasis on the practice of the Jesus Prayer ("Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner" and variants) and on associated states of mystical union with God.

With Lossky and Meyendorff, Orthodox theology—especially as it came to be expounded in the West—acquired a strongly experiential and mystical tenor.



of God; it is a recognition that God is infinitely greater than anything that could be thought about him.

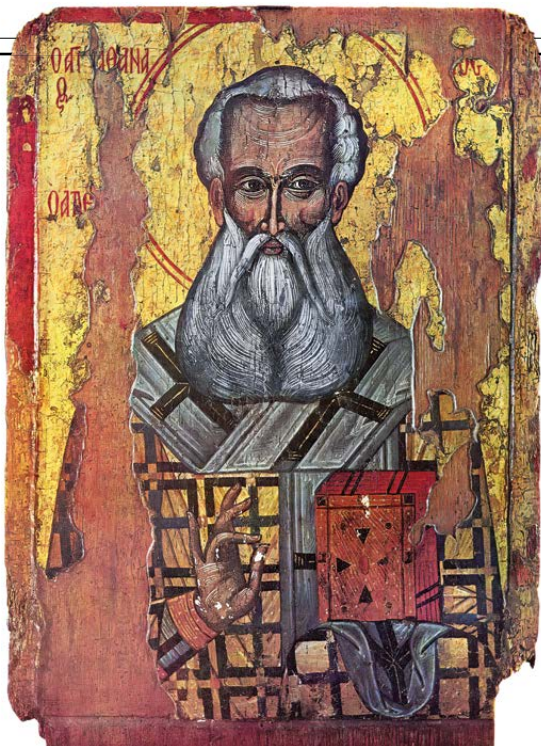
Lossky drew his main inspiration from the sixth-century Byzantine theologian Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, for whom apophatic theology was a form of ascetical theology culminating in the mystical encounter with God. Lossky's *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (1944) became a classic work that introduced many Western Christians to the treasures of Orthodox theology.

FLOROVSKY: RETURN TO THE FATHERS

Georges Florovsky, whose criticism of Bulgakov was less public, announced a "return to the Church Fathers" or the "neopatristic synthesis." For Florovsky, Bulgakov's sophiology compromised the centrality of the historical Christ in the Christian tradition.

Florovsky's neopatristic synthesis was a project to renew contemporary Orthodox theology by retrieving the theological heritage of the Greek church fathers. His retrieval centered on Athanasius of Alexandria's (c. 296–373) theology of the divine Incarnation, as well as the Chalcedonian Definition adopted at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which established that Christ is fully God and fully human.

Unlike Bulgakov, Florovsky refused to turn the Chalcedonian Definition into a general metaphysical principle of Godmanhood; he emphasized the historical contingency of creation and the historicity of the divine Incarnation—Jesus had really walked among us, both human and divine. Florovsky's synthesis of the church fathers became the dominant paradigm of



RECOVERY AND RENEWAL Florovsky sought to retrieve the work of patristic writers such as the Egyptian Athanasius of Alexandria (left). Schmemmann sought to make the Eucharist central to everyday life (below).



BERDYAEV: MARXISM IS A CULT

No survey of Russian emigre theology would be complete without at least mentioning the name of Nicholas Berdyaev, expelled in 1922. Berdyaev could be regarded as Russia's most brilliant political theologian. His highly influential book, *The Roots of Russian Communism* (1937), exposed Russian Marxism as a surrogate religion with its own cult of the martyrs, its own set of canonized writings, its own iconography, its own cult of relics, and so on. As an alternative to Marxist ideology, Berdyaev offered Christian personalism, with its recognition of the uniqueness and value of human beings.

While Berdyaev's devastating critique of Russian communism and atheism did not penetrate behind the Iron Curtain of the Soviet Union, his work was rediscovered in Russia in the early 1990s and became important for a revival of Christianity during *perestroika* (a restructure and reform of the Soviet system) in the late 1980s.



HUNDREDFOLD HARVEST

The expulsion of these religious thinkers from Soviet Russia, while tragic and catastrophic, made possible a flourishing tradition of emigre Orthodox theology, which produced a hundredfold harvest. If Orthodox theology is a recognizable commodity in the Western theological academy today, we have the preceding generations of emigre theologians to thank for this development. The greatest temptation of the Orthodox Church's leadership throughout history has been its co-option by the state (see pp. 16–19 and pp. 49–51). But the Russian exiles of the 1920s and onward could not be co-opted. They continued to oppose the godless Soviet state and Stalin's idolatrous regime. Russian emigre theology—especially through its

“HAVE MERCY ON ME” John Meyendorff (right) taught for many years at St. Vladimir's and became known for his work on 14th-c. thinker Gregory Palamas (seen at left in a 14th-c. Russian icon).

critique of the Bolshevik totalitarian state—continues to offer ample resources for resistance. **CH**

Paul Gavrilyuk is professor at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he holds the Aquinas Chair in Theology and Philosophy, and author of numerous books including The Suffering of the Impassible God and Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance.



Remembering and rebuilding

RUSSIA AND UKRAINE IN THE POSTSOVIET ERA, 1988–2018

Vera Shevzov

The 1988 Millennium celebration of the Christianization of Rus sparked euphoria. Communism's downfall was still three years away, but Orthodox believers within the USSR and abroad saw it as a victory over a state whose ultimate goals presupposed their demise. Yet that milestone celebration was not all it appeared. The Soviet Council of Religious Affairs spearheaded the commemoration to gain support for USSR president Gorbachev's democratic and economic reforms; only the liturgical participation of thousands of believers transformed it into a public religious moment.

The Council's director, Konstantin Kharchev, argued that the Communist Party's decades-long offensive against religion had succeeded. Nevertheless he noted that 10 to 20 percent of the population remained "under the influence of religious views" and thought state policy should be revised to convey that believers were full-fledged Soviet citizens. But the Party did not abandon communist ideals. When the well-known priest Alexander Men was invited to speak on national television in 1989—the first-ever such appearance by a priest—he was not permitted to say "God," "Christ," or "Lord." Instead he quoted Socrates.

Soon the Soviets began returning churches to faith communities and registering large numbers of parishes in Russia and Ukraine. Ukrainian believers who traced their roots to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) or the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC, see pp. 12–15) and who had come under Soviet rule during World War II seized the moment. Entire communities proclaimed independence from the ROC and competed for church property. In 1990 the UAOC elected 92-year-old Metropolitan Mstyslav (Skrypnyk) of the United States as patriarch, signaling Orthodox emigre influence.

EMERGING FROM THE MARGINS Church and state leaders speak at the 1988 millennium celebration.

Concurrently an ROC episcopal council elected Metropolitan of Leningrad Alexy II (Ridiger) as Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus, an Estonian of Baltic-German heritage and son of an Orthodox priest. Adhering to Gorbachev's principles of *perestroika*, state officials for the first time in Soviet history did not interfere in the election, even though they had favored Ukraine-born Filaret (Denysenko), Metropolitan of Kyiv since 1966. Filaret returned to Ukraine to take up the cause of Ukrainian autocephaly, which he had previously ardently opposed.

In March 1991 the Soviet state granted the ROC legal status. That November the Soviet council mediating state oppression was dissolved. In December the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine proclaimed independence from the USSR. With the country unraveling before his eyes, Gorbachev resigned; the Soviet flag over the Kremlin was lowered on December 25, 1991, and the USSR ceased to exist. In its place 15 sovereign states were born—among them Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

SPIRITUAL COLONIZATION

Despite Orthodox Christianity's seemingly spectacular comeback, things were not quite so straightforward. The Soviet period had left a traumatic legacy.

First, 70 years of totalitarian communist teachings and systemic antireligious policies—a type of internal, spiritual colonization—left millions of Soviet citizens with a worldview antithetical to Orthodox Christianity. Human worth had been measured by utilitarian standards of labor and



CRUMBLIED FOUNDATIONS Years of antireligious propaganda (left), destroyed churches (below), and executed martyrs—such as surgeon and bishop Luka Voyno-Yasnetsky—(below right) ruptured Orthodox memory.

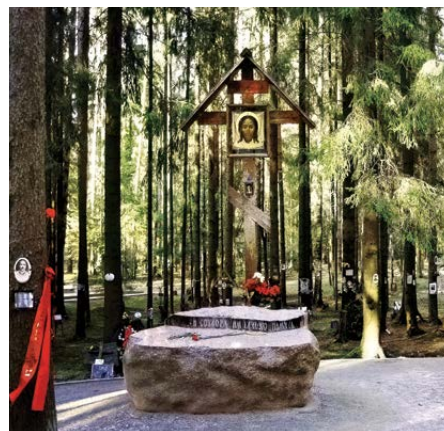


communist service—in contrast to the Orthodox view of the human person as eternally unique and irreplaceable.

Former Soviet citizens lacked a coherent worldview to guide them in the face of the rapid introduction of market capitalism. Scores turned to once-forbidden, largely forgotten religious roots—Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism as well as Orthodoxy—in search of meaning and belonging.

The spectacular rise in the number of baptisms in the 1990s transformed Orthodox churches into communities of new converts—often including newly ordained parish clergy—who had little lived knowledge about Orthodoxy or the nature of the church. Nevertheless many came with a zeal to become genuinely Orthodox (however that was understood). At the same time, other church leaders came from Orthodox families and had witnessed or experienced repression and humiliation. The effects of trauma, passed down through generations, brought a sense of duty to recover what was believed lost and for some an accompanying sense of entitlement.

Second, 70 years of widespread demolition, looting, and repurposing of sacred property, along with the imprisonment and execution of clergy and lay people, had decimated prerevolutionary Russia's vibrant Orthodox religious culture (though that culture had not been without problems). Icons, chapels, churches, and places endowed with decades, if not centuries, of prayer and memories were destroyed, and access to liturgical worship was limited or severed, tearing Orthodoxy's communal fabric. Believers suffered decades of state-induced historical amnesia due to



MEMORY ETERNAL Those in postsoviet society who consider memory of Soviet repression essential have been more welcoming of shared commemorative sites such as Levashovo outside of St. Petersburg (above left) than predominantly Orthodox ones.

systemic banning of religion-related literature combined with the rewriting of a 900-year past through a Marxist-Leninist lens.

Institutional churches and grassroots believers engaged in the difficult and contentious work of recovery and repair. The late 1980s and 1990s saw a flood of reprints of pre-1917 historical, devotional, religious, and theological literature. Among the main pastoral challenges was the cultivation of a Christian understanding of “church,” not primarily as an institution, but as a mode of being. Rapid institutional church growth complicated this. Desire to display victory over the Soviets by building new churches, or to restore broken ties to ancestors through restoring abandoned or repurposed ones,



NEW CLOUD OF WITNESSES? This 21st-c. icon of the “new martyrs” recalls Soviet atrocities against Orthodox believers in its frame.

Some church leaders also desired to reclaim a “due place” forcibly denied to them for 70 years. They sensed a silent mandate to demonstrate the church’s relevance and viability in a highly secularized society.

In Russia, Patriarch Kirill (Gundiaev), the son of a priest, whose grandfather spent 18 years in labor camps, was among the most prominent on this front. As early as 1993, as Metropolitan of Smolensk, he founded the World Russian People’s Council, a “meeting place for political, educational, and cultural leaders with different political and religious convictions united by concern for the future of Russia.” Imagining this forum as a contemporary version of a *zemskii sobor*, a type of civic assembly preceding the reign of Peter the Great, Kirill positioned himself as facilitator of decision-making in the rebuilding of postsoviet Russia’s society.

In Ukraine Filaret—the most vocal, politically connected, and media-present church voice in the country—insisted that the fate of an independent Ukrainian state depended on a single independent Orthodox church. In contrast the autonomous UOC—Ukraine’s only canonically recognized church in the Orthodox world until 2018 and connected to the ROC until 2022—positioned itself as a mediator outside the fray of politics, though supporting Ukrainian sovereignty and an administratively independent Ukrainian church.

Church leaders also promoted nominal and cultural Orthodox identities to reconstitute their flocks and boost “institutional church building.” Prior to 1917 Russia’s imperial subjects were officially identified by confessional belonging. Hence ethnic Belarusians, Russians, and Ukrainians for centuries belonged to the same identity group. In contrast while the Soviet regime promoted ethnic and national identities, communist ideology defined Soviet identity; believers by definition could not be authentically “Soviet.” Polls reflect a lasting impact. In 2013 approximately 71 percent of Russia’s citizens considered themselves Orthodox, yet only 6 percent found Orthodoxy definitive of ethnic “Russianness.” Only fractions of self-identifying Orthodox claim to participate in the Eucharistic liturgy on a regular basis; some claim not to believe in God.

FRACTURED HISTORIES

The late 1980s and 1990s saw a flood of previously unknown information about Soviet repressions. Former Soviet citizens faced the staggering task of making sense of what Alexander Yakovlev, architect of *perestroika*, referred to as the regime’s “blood-soaked harvest.” Yakovlev claimed some 20 to 25 million people were executed or died in prisons or labor camps; millions more died in famines; and untold numbers

resulted in an increase from 2,000 to 20,000 active churches in Russia alone between 1991 and 2019. With only three seminaries and two theological academies open in the USSR in 1988, the early 1990s church faced a severe shortage of qualified pastors. Bishops often resorted to ordaining men with little or no formal training.

DUE PLACE

The forging of Ukrainian church life faced its own challenges. The surge of UAOC and Ukrainian Greek Catholic communities in its western regions, largely spared the early decades of Bolshevik “ecclesial cleansing” that plagued the eastern and central regions, came with a swell in Ukrainian national identity. In response the ROC granted autonomy to its exarchate in Kyiv headed by Filaret. Supported by Ukraine’s first president, in 1992 Filaret broke with the autonomous UOC and the ROC and established the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP), which no church in the Orthodox world recognized as canonical. The result was three competing Orthodox churches in Ukraine.

“A SACRED CELEBRATION OF MEMORY” The Mother of God is inseparably linked to Orthodox historical memory. Forbidden during Soviet times, annual processions are again common practice today.

of rank-and-file soldiers and high-ranking military officials were arrested, executed, or deported to Stalin’s forced labor camps as alleged traitors.

Orthodox clergy in Russia routinely speak about the Soviet past in cataclysmic terms—“a horrific ordeal” that “no other people in history has had to endure.” In the late 1980s, many clergy and laity in Russia began to gather evidence about fellow Orthodox victims and to immortalize them as new martyrs distinct from the early church’s martyrs.

The ROC promoted broader civic commemoration of these new martyrs as “heroes of the spirit,” but this met public apathy. Yet Orthodox churches or chapels on mass execution and burial sites—such as the Butovo firing range constructed outside of Moscow where in 1937–1938 alone more than 20,000 people, with backgrounds largely unknown, were executed—elicited some criticism of monopolizing the memory of the repressed dead.

In 2007 the ROC fulfilled a decades-long aspiration of restoring Eucharistic communion with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA or ROCOR). Established in 1920 during a bloody civil war, ROCOR was comprised of bishops, monastics, parish clergy, and lay believers who fled Russia, hoping some day to return. Never considering itself separate from the ROC and not desiring autocephaly, its self-proclaimed mission was to be the “free voice” of its “mother church in captivity.” When the two reconciled, Patriarch Alexy called it the civil war’s “last chapter.”

But Russia’s and Ukraine’s Orthodox churches still remain divided over rightful heirship to the Kyivan see in Rus. The dominant Ukrainian Orthodox narrative (associated with the UOC-KP and the UAOC) often refers to Kyiv Rus and Ukraine interchangeably. When the Rus of Kyiv were forced to migrate westward following Kyiv’s destruction in 1240, they alone preserved “authentic” Kyivan Orthodoxy in the Galicia-Volynia principality and later in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and thus are the sole heirs to the Kyiv legacy. From this perspective “Russian” Orthodoxy is “other” and threatens the Kyivan-Ukrainian tradition.

A competing Ukrainian perspective (associated with the UOC) views the original Metropolitanate of Kyiv and All Rus as overseeing the vast region stretching from the northern White Sea to the southern Black Sea. In this view the diverse Slavic peoples now known as Belarusians, Russians, and Ukrainians were all under the jurisdiction of the Kyiv see and equal heirs to that spiritual and ecclesiastical heritage, despite the divergence of their historical fates after 1240 and their formation of three sovereign states in 1991.

The Patriarchate of Moscow and All Rus traces its roots to the Rus legacy through the displaced Kyivan see in Rus’s north-eastern region, which Byzantine-appointed metropolitans



chose as their permanent residence following Kyiv’s destruction. Based on his own reading of the past, Kirill’s efforts to delineate a Rus-based Orthodox civilizational space as a means of claiming an ecclesiastical jurisdictional sphere of oversight (“canonical territory” including Ukraine) within the broader Orthodox world has become known as his controversial concept of the “Russian world.”

To complicate matters, Postsoviet Orthodoxy’s fractured memory became entangled with the Patriarchate of Constantinople’s own generational memory of trauma since the conquest of Constantinople. In 2019, working with Ukraine’s incumbent presidential candidate (whose campaign slogan was “Army! Language! Faith!”), Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (Archontonis), acting on his interpretation of the past, granted autocephaly to a newly-formed Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU), born from a merged UOC-KP and UAOC. The UOC, however, did not join.

In doing so Bartholomew exerted “rights and privileges” granted to the archbishop of Constantinople—since the “New Rome” was the seat of the Roman emperor—by one of the most controversial Byzantine canons among modern Orthodox Christians (the Council of Chalcedon’s Canon 28). He revisited, clarified, and annulled a controversial 300-year-old agreement allegedly transferring the seventeenth-century Kyivan see to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow, and reestablished his own jurisdiction over that see. The challenges posed by Postsoviet Orthodoxy in Russia and Ukraine have thus laid bare not only seemingly insurmountable divisions among those countries’ Orthodox Christians, but also within today’s “Orthodox world” broadly conceived—caused in part by difficulties in mutually acknowledging, understanding, and empathizing with the long-term impact of the particular traumas its member churches have endured. **CH**

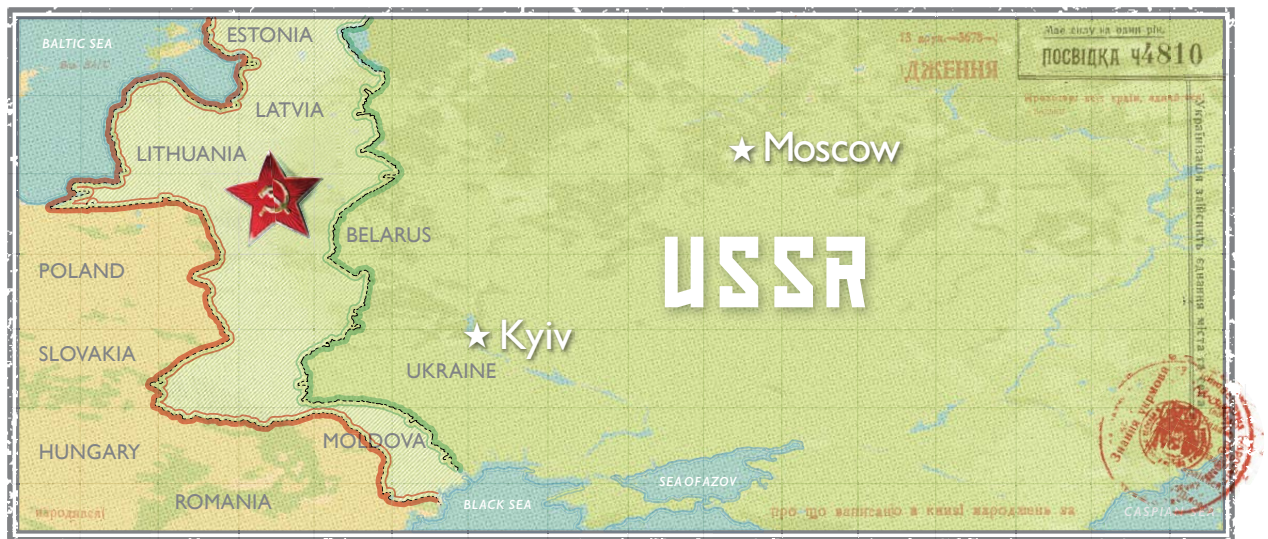
Vera Shevzov is professor of religion and of Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies at Smith College and the author of Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution.

Imperial Russia, early 20th century

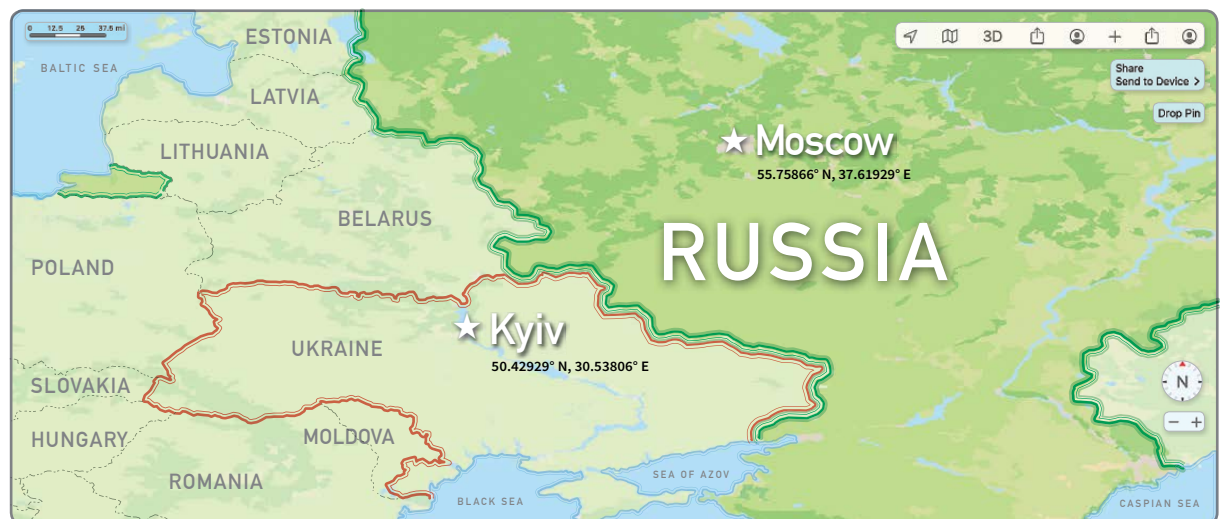


Border of Soviet Union in 1989, gained in WWII

Border of Soviet Union in the late 1930s



Border of modern Russia, 2007





A diversity of witnesses

SOME SCHOLARS, CHURCH LEADERS, MISSION WORKERS, AND MARTYRS FORMING MODERN ORTHODOXY IN RUSSIA

Jennifer A. Boardman

PATRIARCH TIKHON OF MOSCOW (1865–1925)

The son of a village priest, Tikhon (Bellavin) went on to study at St. Petersburg Theological Academy. After ordination he was appointed the only Orthodox bishop of North America in 1898. Within the diocese were Russians, Ruthenians, Serbs, Greeks, Syrians, and indigenous Alaskans, and Tikhon worked to make sure all were welcome. He also created the first Orthodox monastery and seminary in the United States, transferred the see to New York from the West Coast, and oversaw the first English-language service book. Tikhon returned to Russia in 1907.

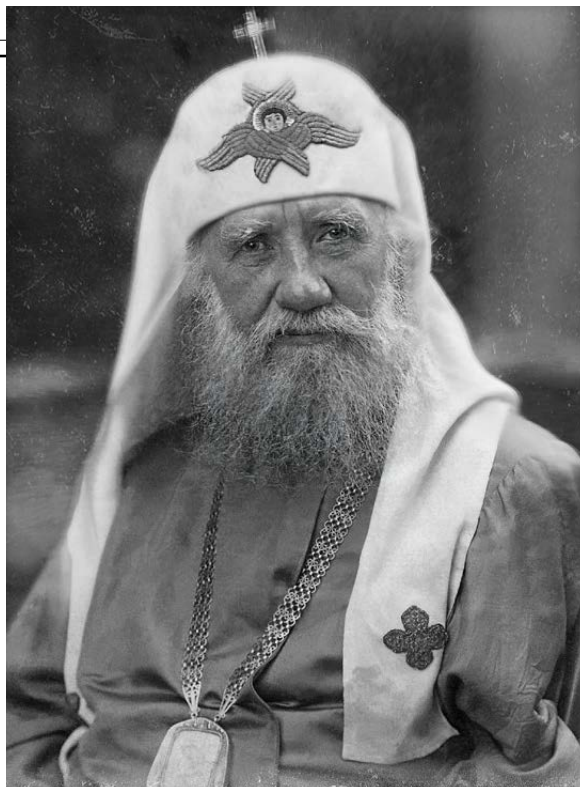
In 1917 the All-Russian Church Council decided that the patriarchate should be reinstated following the Bolshevik Revolution. The council decided to choose the patriarch by casting lots among the three candidates with the highest vote count. Though Tikhon had originally received the fewest votes among the three highest contenders, he was chosen as patriarch by lot on November 5, 1917, the first since Peter the Great abolished the patriarchate in 1721.

NO ONE FORESAW Archbishop Tikhon (*right*) walks through the Spassky Monastery in Yaroslavl in 1913 with Tsar Nicholas II (*center*) and other dignitaries. Within five years Nicholas would be dead and Tikhon patriarch.

Tikhon considered his new position a cross to bear instead of a joy to hold.

Patriarch Tikhon soon began condemning the Bolsheviks' actions against the church. He spoke out against the execution of Tsar Nicholas II, and he reminded the Bolsheviks of their failure to bring the freedoms they promised and the peace they ensured. Tikhon was bold in his assessment of the new regime, and the people listened. The Bolsheviks were listening, too, and did not like what they heard.

Tikhon did not want the church to become a political entity, but he did see his role as being a peacemaker. After the Bolsheviks stole church valuables, prompting Tikhon to advocate for passive resistance, the Bolsheviks arrested



A CROSS TO BEAR Tikhon (Bellavin, *left*), the first patriarch in over 200 years, suffered for speaking out against the Bolsheviks.

EYES TO SEE Blind peasant Matrona of Moscow (*below left*) was among the many “new martyrs” canonized after the fall of communism; some icons show her with her eyes open and some with them closed (*below*).

Matrona Nikonova also lost her ability to walk by her teens. Her brothers became Bolsheviks following the Russian Revolution, so she was forced to leave her family home for Moscow. There she lived under the care of friends and patrons.

In 1993 Zinaida Zhdanova, a woman who used to live in the same house as Nikonova, wrote a book about her former roommate. Zhdanova described Nikonova as a woman familiar with suffering; though born without eyes, Zhdanova wrote, she was able to see the spiritual world with profound clarity. Back in the village, people would visit Nikonova for help with life’s troubles, including illness, relationship struggles, and even spiritual warfare.

On the heels of the immense popularity of Zhdanova’s book, the Russian Church began considering Nikonova for canonization. Controversy ensued around this; theologians Aleksei Osipov and Andrei Kuraev were both openly critical of this move, and Kuraev referred to church officials having thrown her memoirs “into the trashcan.”

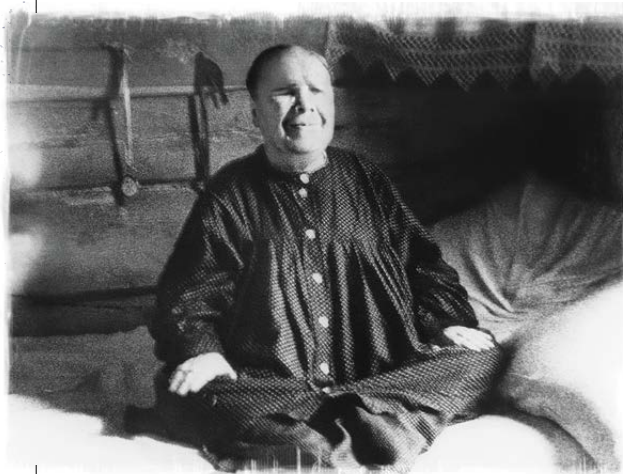
One dubious story about Nikonova—in which she assured Stalin that Russia would be able to stand against the Nazis in 1941—gave the church pause, but it was decided to exclude that particular episode from her biography. In recent years,

however, Russian nationalists have used that apocryphal episode to help restore Stalin’s image as a hero in defeating the Nazis.

Nikonova was canonized for local veneration in 1999 and for the whole church in 2004. She continues to be a popular saint, especially among Russian women, who value her care and concern for the personal dilemmas of average Russians.

MARIA SKOBTSOVA (MARIA OF PARIS, 1891–1945)

Elizaveta Pilenko was born in Riga and raised near the Black Sea. After her father died, she lost her faith, moved to St. Petersburg, and rose in prominence as a poet in the years before the revolution. She married, had a daughter, divorced, and later became the mayor of Anapa for the Socialist Revolutionary Party. During the Russian Civil War, she faced trial for being a Bolshevik



the patriarch in May 1922. He was imprisoned for a year, during which time liberal clergy members—Renovationists—declared their loyalty to Soviet rule and defrocked Tikhon.

In 1923 Tikhon was suddenly released from captivity—owing to pressure from the British government—and quickly put forth a neutral position toward the Soviet regime. While some saw his change of tune as cowardice, others saw his greater concern for the ruination of the church in Renovationist hands (see pp. 6–10). As clergy began returning to the patriarch, many left the Renovationist cause, proving both Tikhon’s prominence and acumen. He died less than two years after his release.

MATRONA NIKONOVA (MATRONA OF MOSCOW, c. 1880–1952)

Born without eyes in the poor Russian village of Sebino,



GOD'S LOVE IS DEEP Another new martyr, Maria Skobtsova (*right*), died in Ravensbrück, where she was sent for sheltering and aiding Jews.

sympathizer but was acquitted. She fell in love with Daniel Skobtsov (1884–1969), who was involved in the case against her, and they quickly married and eventually fled to Paris.

When her youngest daughter died of meningitis in 1926, Skobtsova began to turn toward God, embracing a new sense of purpose as a human and as a mother. She aimed “to be a mother for all, for all who need maternal care, assistance, or protection.”

She became a nun in 1932 following her divorce from Skobtsov. Now known as Maria, she devoted herself to serving people in need. She blessed Russian refugees in countless ways: they lived with her in her rented Parisian house, she fed a hundred hungry people each day, she created centers to care for the ill, and she provided spiritual care along with physical attention.

Mother Maria protected Jews during the Nazi occupation of Paris and was allowed to bring food to Jews who were held in a sports stadium before their transfer to Auschwitz. She and her colleague Father Dmitry Klepinin also sheltered Jews who came to their residence, helping some of them escape Paris.

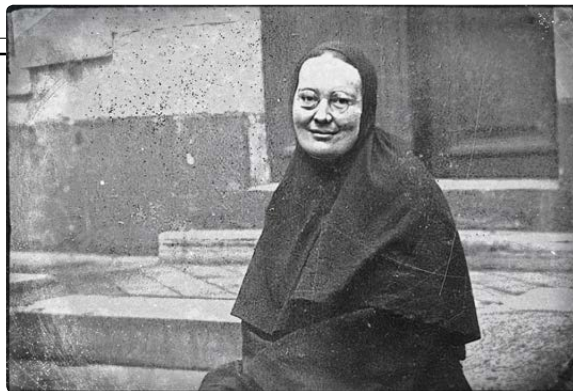
In 1943 Mother Maria, Father Dmitry, and Maria's son, Yuri, were arrested. Mother Maria was sent to Ravensbrück and, in a rush to execute more prisoners as the Red Army closed in, she was executed just one week before the camp's liberation in 1945. The ecumenical patriarch canonized Mother Maria, Father Dmitry, and Yuri in 2004.

ANTHONY BLOOM (ANTHONY OF SOUROZH, 1914–2003)

Anthony Bloom's background was diverse. He was born in Switzerland; his uncle was the famed composer Alexander Scriabin, and his father's ancestors were Scots who had immigrated to Russia. By 1923 the family had made it to Paris to escape the Russian Revolution, and there Bloom began questioning life's meaning.

He decided to read the Gospels to refute what he believed were false claims. Yet instead Bloom experienced the “vivid sense that Christ was without any doubt standing there . . . if the living Christ is standing here—it means that he is the risen Christ.” Bloom grasped the love of God through Jesus's presence and work as the suffering savior. After all, he reasoned, Jesus too was once a refugee.

Bloom decided to take monastic orders through the Russian Orthodox Church while simultaneously entering medical school. During World War II, Bloom served as a doctor in the French army and helped the efforts of the



CAPTIVATED BY CHRIST Anthony Bloom is pictured here in a photograph from his enthronement as metropolitan of Sourozh (*above left*) and in an official portrait (*above right*).

French Resistance. Following the war he was ordained as a priest and traveled to England for an Anglican-Orthodox conference. He was later asked to serve at a Russian church in London and was consecrated as bishop in 1957 in a new British diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church called Sourozh.

Through Bloom's influence as a priest and speaker on British airwaves and television, his church gained both English and Russian converts. Andrew Walker, a British theologian, said that Bloom “indelibly stamped the spirituality and theology of the Orthodox tradition upon the British religious consciousness.”

Because Bloom was an expatriate, he was able to exert pronounced influence over the spirituality of Russians in the Soviet Union—influence that clergy within the country were unsafe to exercise. His Russian sermons were broadcast in the Soviet Union, giving those living under communist rule much-needed spiritual guidance and hope.



FAITHFUL PURPOSE Esteemed Orthodox theologians and sons of emigre parents, Alexander Schmemmann (*far left*) and John Meyendorff (*left*) both served as deans of St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York.

ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN (1921–1983)

Born in Tallinn, Estonia, to Russian emigres, Schmemmann moved to France as a child, where he became involved in the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Paris. He grew in faith and knowledge there and later studied at both the University of Paris and St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute. Schmemmann married in 1943, had three children, taught history, and moved to the United States in 1951. He began teaching at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York during a time when many Russians were immigrating to the United States.

In 1962 Schmemmann was elected as dean at St. Vladimir's, and he also taught at Columbia University, New York University, Union Theological Seminary, and General Theological Seminary in New York, extending his influence much beyond Orthodox circles. He even served as an Orthodox observer to Roman Catholicism's Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1965. He became well known as a liturgical theologian and a key figure in Orthodox liturgical renewal.

Schmemmann had a great hand in creating the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), which kept expanding to welcome more and more ethnicities within its community, including indigenous Alaskans, Greeks, Bulgarians, Romanians, and Albanians. The Russian Orthodox Church even declared the OCA its own entity (although not all global Orthodox churches agreed). In 1974 the OCA welcomed its first American-born primate, Metropolitan Theodosius.

For 30 years Schmemmann's sermons in Russian were sent over Radio Liberty airwaves to the Soviet Union. The government tried to clamp down on the broadcasts, but Schmemmann's words prevailed to bring hope to those living inside the harsh regime, including famed author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who later became Schmemmann's friend. Schmemmann died of cancer in 1983, a man of many worlds but one faithful purpose.

JOHN MEYENDORFF (1926–1992)

A child of Russian nobility, John Meyendorff was born

theology degree with a thesis on St. Gregory Palamas, a Byzantine theologian.

The next year Meyendorff and his family moved to the United States, where he began teaching church history and patristics at St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York. He simultaneously lectured at Harvard University, Fordham University, Columbia University, and Union Theological Seminary.

The greater Orthodox community highly respected Meyendorff's views, seeing him as a leader and a constant advocate of unity to strengthen the Orthodox Church. Along with Schmemmann, Meyendorff helped create the Orthodox Church in America (OCA). Prior to the OCA's creation, most Orthodox churches in the United States were based on ethnicity. But Meyendorff urged that faith tradition take precedence over ethnic background.

Meyendorff retired as dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary in June 1992. Within a month of retirement, he passed away of pancreatic cancer at age 66, leaving a legacy of church unity and theological wisdom. His son, Paul Meyendorff (b. 1950), served as the Father Alexander Schmemmann Professor of Liturgical Theology at St. Vladimir's until 2016.

ALEXANDER MEN (1935–1990)

Alexander Men was born in Moscow to Jewish parents. His mother, however, was attracted to Christianity, and Men and his mother were both baptized. In 1953 Men had to enter the Institute of Fur instead of Moscow University because of his Jewish heritage. Due to Stalin's clamp down on Christians as well, Men could not finish his degree in science, instead choosing ordination in 1960.

Serving at a parish outside of Moscow, Men organized a group of priests to stay true to Christian teaching and practice. The group split, however, when member Gleb Yakunin (1934–2014) chose an activist route, bringing international attention to the lack of freedom of religion in the Soviet era. Men chose a different path. Though the KGB constantly surveilled his church, he wished to keep peace with government officials, believing he could have more influence in the culture through goodwill.

WHAT NEXT? Alexy II (*below*) was elected patriarch of Moscow and all Rus in 1990 and became the first patriarch to serve a post-Soviet church.

WHY NOW? Alexander Men (*right*) witnessed to Christ inside the Soviet Union until he was assassinated in 1990.



Men wrote many books, including *The Son of Man* (1969), in which he introduced Jesus and the gospel to the modern world with an intellectual and even scientific bent. Men's influence began to grow when the Soviet Union celebrated the thousandth anniversary of the Kyivan Rus's conversion to Christianity in 1988. Thanks to the Soviets' uncharacteristic leniency during the celebration, Men had the opportunity to share his knowledge and experience as a priest in more than 200 speeches over two years.

Still Men spoke out about the dangers of the government ensnaring the Russian Orthodox Church and turning it into an organization more about power and dominance than about changing people's hearts and minds. On Sunday, September 9, 1990, on his way to the train to take him to his parish, an assassin attacked Men with an ax; Men died shortly afterward. The case has never been solved.

PATRIARCH ALEXY II OF MOSCOW (1929–2008)

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the Russian Orthodox Church suddenly received both the hopeful and monumental task of ushering in a new era of faith unburdened by religious oppression. For almost 70 years, the communist government had suppressed the church at every turn, leaving the clergy split, the Russian people largely unsupported, and generations of people who had never known lives of faith.

Only one year before the fall of the Soviet Union, Alexy II had been elected as new patriarch of the Russian

Orthodox Church. He was born in Estonia to Orthodox parents and became a Soviet citizen after World War II. He became a priest, then bishop, archbishop, and metropolitan of Tallinn, and also held powerful positions within the Moscow Patriarchate.

Because of these positions, Alexy was able to write a letter to new General Secretary Gorbachev in December 1985. Alexy proposed giving Soviet Christians more influence and freedom, promising the new leader that faithful Christians could help solve some of Soviet society's problems. Within a year of writing this letter, Alexy was removed from his positions in the Moscow Patriarchate and moved to Leningrad; Gorbachev was not ready to hear what Alexy had to say.

Yet tides changed again in 1990 when Alexy was elected as the new patriarch, in the first free election for the position since 1917. He said, "The church is separate from the state, but it is not separate from society," and he pushed for chaplains in the military and prisons, religious education in schools, and the reinstatement of church properties. In addition Alexy's centrist positions between church traditionalists/nationalists and church progressives helped foster a loose unity. A year before his death, the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia reconciled. **CH**

Jennifer A. Boardman is a freelance writer and editor. She holds a master of theological studies from Bethel Seminary with a concentration in Christian history.

Questions for reflection

Orthodoxy in Russia: past, present, future

Use these questions on your own or in a group to reflect on the history, theology, and political context of Orthodoxy in Russia.

1. How did the Soviet era cause a disconnect with the past in the Russian Orthodox Church (pp. 6–11)? What were some of the early responses to this disruption from Orthodox Christians?
2. How did Christianity come to the Rus (pp. 12–15)? What were some of the major debates over who counted as “Russian Orthodox” and why they did? Name one thing from the article that seems relevant to today’s news.
3. What did Orthodox worship look like before the Revolution (pp. 16–19)? Name some spiritual themes and emphases that stood out to you.
4. Why was Bible translation so controversial in Russia (p. 20)? If you’ve read our issue #143 on the Bible in America, how do the debates over translation in Russia compare with those in the United States?
5. How did the novelists discussed in our article on culture (pp. 21–25) describe Russian faith? If you have read any of these novelists’ work, do you agree? Why or why not?



LAYERS OF TRADITION These delicate 20th-c. filigree and enamel boxes by Peter Carl Fabergé (*above*) and Joseph Abramovich Marshak (*below*) use a 19th-c. painting by Viktor Vasnetsov, which is thought to be of a 12th-c. Rus warrior, Il’ia Muromets.

6. How did Christians within the Soviet Union witness against communism (pp. 28–33)? How would you characterize their different approaches? Which stories spoke to you the most?
7. How did Russian emigre theologians (pp. 34–37) witness against the Soviet threat? What were some of the major themes of their thought? Which of these thinkers would you most like to learn more about and why?
8. How do the last three decades of Russian history (pp. 38–41) connect with stories you read earlier in the issue?
9. Which story from our gallery (pp. 43–47) most resonated with you? Why?
10. How do you see themes of the issue reflected in our interview about how Russian artists are reckoning with the past (pp. 49–51)?
11. What are some things you learned from this issue that you did not know before?



Beyond copies

PAST AND FUTURE IN RUSSIAN ART AND CULTURE

Sergei Chapnin is publisher of Дары (The Gifts), chairman of the Artos Fellowship, and director of communications of the Orthodox Christian Studies Center at Fordham University. He talked to us about how artists are reckoning with the Russian past.

CH: Tell us about who you are and what you do.

Sergei Chapnin: I'm a religious journalist and Christian art curator focused on contemporary Christian art in Russia and the world. Since 2015 I've been publishing an almanac of contemporary Christian art and culture; the next issue will be in English for an English-speaking audience. As a curator I exhibited in Russia, Belarus, France, and Finland. My primary project was *The Saints of the Undivided Church* where 120 icons of 100 icon-painters from 15 countries were presented. I hope to bring this exhibition to the United States.

I see two different tendencies within contemporary Christian art in the Russian and the post-Soviet space. One group is focused on reproducing the patterns of the previous centuries, making copies. We have masterpieces where the copies are sometimes much better, technically speaking, than the original. The art of copying is basically within the commercial domain. Icon painters just want to sell their icons. At least before the war, they earned good money.

What I think is much more interesting is a group of icon painters, calligraphers, sculptors, and architects who are trying to relate contemporary techniques

PAUSE AND PRAY Archimandrite Zenon Theodor's contemporary icons adorn St. Sergius of Radonezh chapel in Moscow near where Alexander Men was murdered.

and styles and ideas and reflect on the history of persecution of Christians by Bolsheviks. They are inspired not just by the past, but by a Christian vision of the contemporary world. The Artos Fellowship unites artists, art historians, and others interested in contemporary Christian art, liturgical and nonliturgical. The guild of church builders unites those involved in liturgical arts.

Until February 24, 2022, we had close relations with icon painters and architects in Belarus and Ukraine. Architects and icon painters from Russia were working in Kyiv, and icon painters from Ukraine and Belarus were working on churches in Russia. We had regular joint exhibitions. We are still friends. I am now based in the United States. Every week I have phone calls from Russia and Ukraine, from my friends. And we're still in touch. But I doubt whether we will be able to have the kind of joint exhibitions that we had before.

CH: Can you talk to us a bit about art in the past?

SC: Religious art flourished in the beginning of the twentieth century in the Russian Empire. There are many masterpieces of that time, and emigres brought icons to Western Europe and to the United States. Coming to Russian American homes, I see these beautiful icons in Long Island houses. Immediately after the revolution,



these traditions were broken. No architects were building churches; there was no chance to build a church. All icon-painting schools were closed. The famous Palekh school was transformed into miniatures painting, including fake procommunist scenes; the Soviets thought religious images should not just be replaced by flowers or pastoral scenes but by communist propaganda.

There was a highly complex interaction between traditional Christian art and communist propaganda involving religious elements and religious artists. The Bolsheviks were aware that religious art was close to the heart of the Russian people. Alexander Alexandrov (1883–1946) of the famous Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble, who wrote songs glorifying communists, had been trained as a church choir conductor and was the last conductor at Christ the Saviour Cathedral, the main church in Moscow that the Bolsheviks blew up in 1931. Another striking example is Alexey Shchusev (1873–1949). A famous architect who founded a more modern style of architecture for Russian churches, he was chosen to build Lenin's mausoleum on Red Square.

CH: Did any artists preserve Christian traditions?

SC: Yes. The beginning of the twentieth century had involved a rediscovery of the icon in the Russian Empire. For more than a thousand years, since the seventh Ecumenical Council, there had been no serious reflections on the theology of image. After the revolution quite a few icon painters became emigres.

The most well-known, Léonid Ouspensky (1902–1987), wrote *The Theology of the Icon* (1978). He was based in Paris, as was Archimandrite Sophrony Sakharov (1896–1993). Sakharov was a painter before he became a monk. He spent the first years after the revolution in Moscow, studying at the College of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. His career as an artist could have been fascinating, but he had chosen the religious way.

He joined St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris and then moved to Mount Athos. In the 1940s



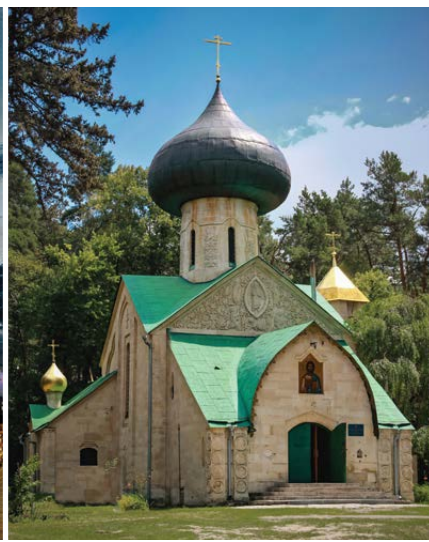
HOLY INFANT An icon of the Nativity by Olga Shalamova (left) and of the Virgin and Child by Sophrony Sakharov (above) show contemporary icon painters at work.

he was forced to leave Mount Athos and returned to Paris. In the 1950s he founded the Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Essex (UK). He was also a philosopher and one of the vital ascetic writers of the twentieth century.

I would also mention Pimen Sofronov (c. 1898–1973) in the United States. He was born in contemporary Estonia, then part of the Russian Empire, in an Old Believers family. [The Old Believers did not accept liturgical reforms made by Patriarch Nikon of Moscow in the mid-seventeenth century.—Editors] He worked in Estonia, Latvia, France, and Yugoslavia, but his most fruitful period was after World War II in the United States.

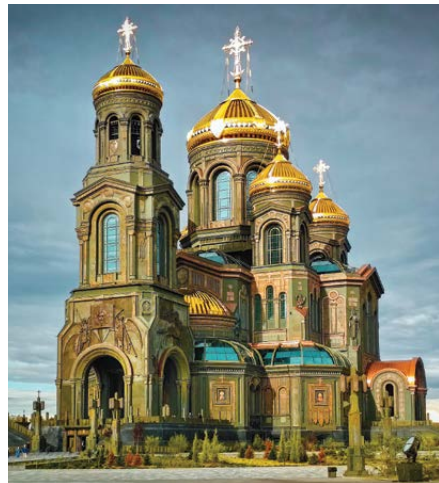
The decline in iconography in the Soviet Union continued until the 1970s when the first restoration and iconography workshop was opened in Moscow Spiritual Academy by nun Iuliana Sokolova (1899–1981). Among contemporary icon painters, Archimandrite Zenon Theodor (b. 1953) is the most famous Russian icon painter today. Many icon painters in Russia and around the world are, in a way, his disciples. He is a gifted man, and I hope I can say that we are friends. He has been learning from Eastern and Western icon traditions all his life, changing styles and techniques.

The Russia Cristiana School of Iconography was founded in Seriate in Italy. In 1995 they invited Fr. Zenon and other famous artists from Russia to teach them how to paint. In the beginning they were fond of Russian icon painting. They realized that while they could copy the Russian technique, they ought to rediscover Italian traditions. They did it quite successfully.



CHANGING SPACES Lenin's mausoleum (*above*) was designed by an architect who had designed many churches, such as the Church of the Transfiguration, Natalivka, Ukraine (*above right*).

JESUS WITH A SWORD The Cathedral of the Armed Forces (*right*) displays extensive martial imagery (*far right*).



CH: Are artists today continuing tradition or reacting against it?

SC: The religious artist is not the only person who decides. The church requests, and sponsors have their word. Some artists are a few steps ahead of the church administration and sponsors. The primary request during the so-called religious revival was to restore what was destroyed by Bolsheviks. That can mean a very narrow-minded understanding of tradition: happy enough with the formal adaptation of the patterns of "our glorious past."

Very few of the thousands of churches built in Russia since 1991 employ modern architecture. The famous church Pokrova-na-Nerli (Church of the Intercession on the Nerl) is copied 10 to 15 times in different sizes. Architects combine different elements of a style or combine different styles, not to make the parish community comfortable in the church, but to stick to "tradition." Some architects just want a church in their portfolio. They still need to learn what is taking place in the liturgical space.

A few years ago in the south of Russia, a new cathedral was built by architects who were used to designing secular buildings; it had a tiny space for the altar. The diocesan administration was happy the project was relatively cheap and didn't check the details. But after it was ready, they found that the altar was far too small. The bishop could not move comfortably when other priests were concelebrating with him. Now, because of the guild of church builders, a few universities train architects with a specialization in sacred architecture. The situation is changing.

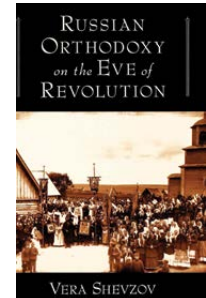
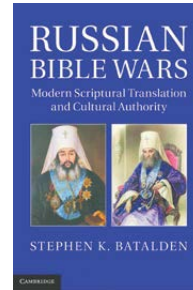
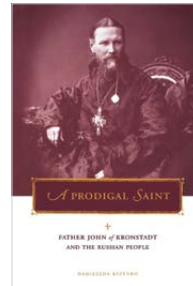
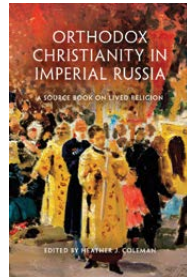
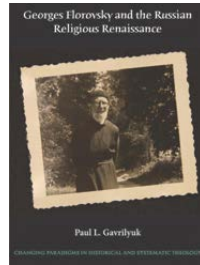
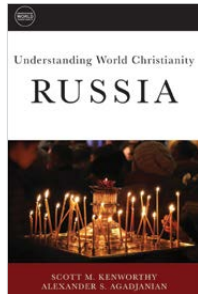
CH: How do art and civil religion intersect today?

SC: Ten years ago I identified a new concept of the post-Soviet civil religion: wrapped in Orthodox traditions, but with a neo-imperial ideological essence. Today we can find quite a few examples of this merger of political and religious metaphors. The most striking example is the Main Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces in Moscow. It's the temple of Mars, rather than an Orthodox church with military scenes. Yes, in Orthodox tradition, you can decorate a church with images of soldiers. But the message should be clear—they are praying to God, subordinate to God, and recognize him as God.

In this military temple, the soldiers have arms in their hands. They're depicted as self-sufficient, not praying at all. They're presenting themselves as the military of the state, ready to kill and showing off their earthly weapons to God. I thought this kind of sacrilege would not happen. And here it is with millions of dollars of investments. This huge temple is a clear manifestation of post-Soviet civil religion in Russia. The roots of that are in the past. The Soviets from the very beginning exploited religious feelings and religious tradition, including arts, for propaganda. Putin is their successor with the only difference: Bolsheviks were atheists, and Putin pretends to be a Christian. **CH**

Recommended resources

READ MORE ABOUT THE COMPLEXITIES OF ORTHODOXY IN RUSSIA IN THESE RESOURCES RECOMMENDED BY OUR AUTHORS AND CH STAFF.



BOOKS

A comprehensive **introduction** to Orthodoxy in Russia for the general reader is Scott Kenworthy and Alexander Agadjanian, *Understanding World Christianity: Russia* (2021); other surveys include Dimitry Pospelovsky, *Orthodox Church in the History of Russia* (1998); Thomas Bremer, *Cross and Kremlin* (2013); and *The Oxford Handbook of Russian Religious Thought* edited by Caryl Emerson, George Pattison, and Randall A. Poole (2020).

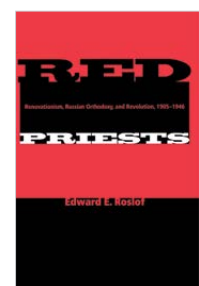
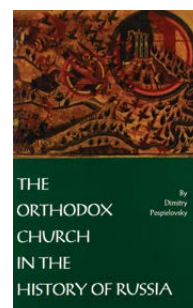
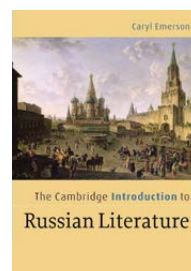
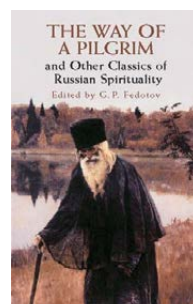
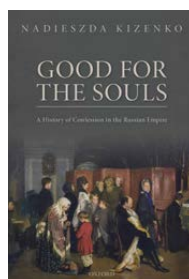
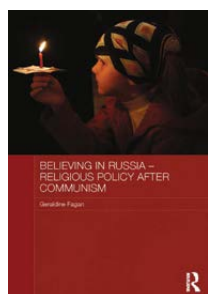
Learn more about the church in **imperial Russia** (and before) in Nadiezda Kizenko, *A Prodigal Saint* (2000); Valerie Kivelson and Robert Green, eds., *Orthodox Russia* (2003); Vera Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution* (2004); Stella Rock, *Popular Religion in Russia: "Double Belief" and the Making of an Academic Myth* (2007); Mark Steinberg and Heather Coleman, eds., *Sacred Stories* (2007); Scott Kenworthy, *The Heart of Russia* (2010); and Randall Poole and Paul Werth, eds., *Religious Freedom in Modern Russia* (2018).

Understand faith during the **Soviet period** through William Husband, *Godless Communists* (2000); Edward Roslof, *Red Priests* (2002); Felix Corley, *Religion in the Soviet Union* (1996); Nathaniel Davis, *A Long Walk to*

Church (2003); Catherine Wanner, ed., *State Secularism and Lived Religion in Russia and Ukraine* (2012); and Wallace Daniel, *Women of the Catacombs* (2021).

Begin looking at **liturgy and spirituality** in G. P. Fedotov, ed., *The Way of a Pilgrim and Other Classics of Russian Spirituality* (2003); Heather Coleman, ed., *Orthodox Christianity in Imperial Russia: A Source Book on Lived Religion* (2014); and Nadiezda Kizenko, *Good for the Souls: A History of Confession in the Russian Empire* (2021). Two classics by famous theologians from this issue are Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (1970) and John Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* (1974). For **Russian Bible translations**, look at Stephen Batalden, *Russian Bible Wars* (2013).

The literature on **Russian literature** is vast, but you can start with Caryl Emerson, *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature* (2003); Andrei Sinyavsky (translated by Joanne Turnbull and Nikolai Formozov), *Ivan the Fool: Russian Folk Belief, a Cultural History* (2007); Rowan Williams, *Dostoevsky* (2008); and Paul Contino, *Dostoevsky's Incarnational Realism* (2020).

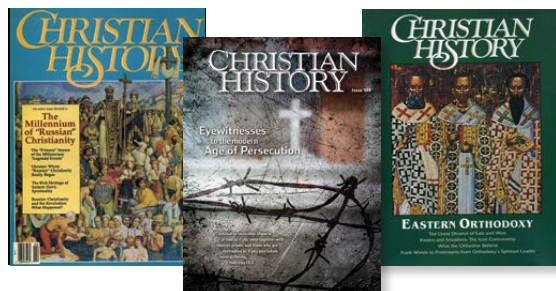


Introduction to some Russian **emigre theologians** are found in Nicolas Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century* (1963); Paul Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov* (2000); and Paul Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance* (2014).

Much has been written about **rebuilding Orthodoxy in Russia** since the Soviet Union fell. Begin with Alexander Agadjanian, *Turns of Faith, Search for Meaning* (2014); Geraldine Fagan, *Believing in Russia: Religious Policy after Communism* (2014); Svetlana Alexievich, *Secondhand Time* (2016); John Burgess, *Holy Rus': The Rebirth of Orthodoxy in the New Russia* (2017); and Hanna Stähle, *Russian Church in the Digital Era* (2021).

Finally, biographies of several people in the **Gallery** not mentioned earlier include Sergei Hackel, *Pearl of Great Price: The Life of Mother Maria Skobtsova* (1982); Jane Swan (edited by Scott Kenworthy, who is at work on a new biography of Tikhon), *Chosen for His People: A Biography of Patriarch Tikhon* (2015); and Wallace Daniel, *Russia's Uncommon Prophet: Father Aleksandr Men and His Times* (2016).

CHRISTIAN HISTORY ISSUES



Read these past issues on our website—some are still available for purchase:

#18 *The Millennium of “Russian” Christianity*

#54 *Eastern Orthodoxy: Then and Now*

#109 *Eyewitnesses to the Modern Age of Persecution*

VIDEOS FROM VISION VIDEO



Videos on this issue's topic include *Christian Catalyst Collection: Alexander Solzhenitsyn*, *The History of Orthodox Christianity*, *A Light in the Darkness*, and *The Printing*.

WEBSITES

You can find some primary sources relating to this topic at the [Internet Sourcebook for Byzantium](#) and the [Internet Modern Sourcebook](#) (under Nineteenth-Century Russia, Russian Revolution, and Post-War Eastern Europe). Many academic libraries have guides to sources on Orthodoxy in Russia; find one particularly extensive guide at [Christopher Newport University](#). View online exhibits and other info at the [Russian History Museum](#).



The Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (until May 2022 under the jurisdiction of the ROC-MP) all have official websites. (The first three have English versions; for the rest, you'll have to use Google Translate.) The Orthodox Church in America, while multi-ethnic today, had its origins in Russian missions in Alaska. Its website has many helpful resources about Orthodox belief and worship. Some popular websites with Orthodox devotional and historical resources include [OrthodoxHistory.org](#), [Pravmir.com](#), and [Orthodox Christian](#).

Read more about Leo Tolstoy at the [Tolstoy Commons](#) and Fyodor Dostoevsky at [The International & North American Dostoevsky Societies](#), and see the current work of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute at their websites. The Orthodox Studies Center at Fordham University sponsors the news and opinion site [Public Orthodoxy](#).

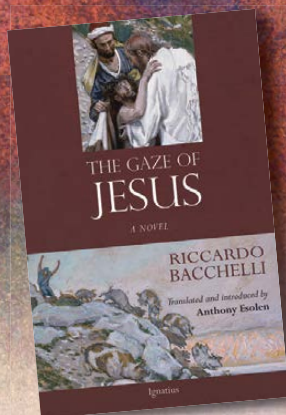
You can read more about the work of the [Artos Fellowship](#) at its website and about [Russia Cristiana](#) at its site. [RBR \(Religious Books in Russian\)](#) publishes *The Gifts* and other works. The [Orthodox Arts Journal](#) has many images and theological resources about Orthodox art. **CH**



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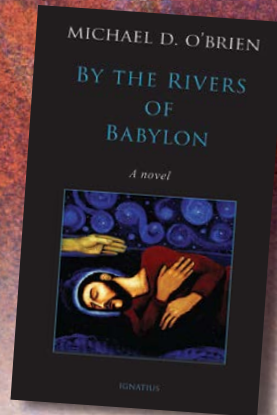
— **Eleanor Nicholson**, Author, *A Bloody Habit: A Novel*

Also by Anthony Esolen

◆ THE HUNDREDFOLD

This is a tapestry of hymns, monologues, and short lyrics knit together as one book-length poem in praise of Christ in all his startling humanity. Drawing from the riches of the English poetic tradition, Esolen considers the mysterious man from Nazareth and the world he came to set on fire with splendor.

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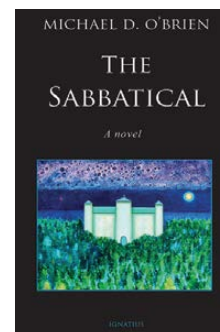
— **Peter Kreeft**, Best-selling Author; Professor of Philosophy, Boston College

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