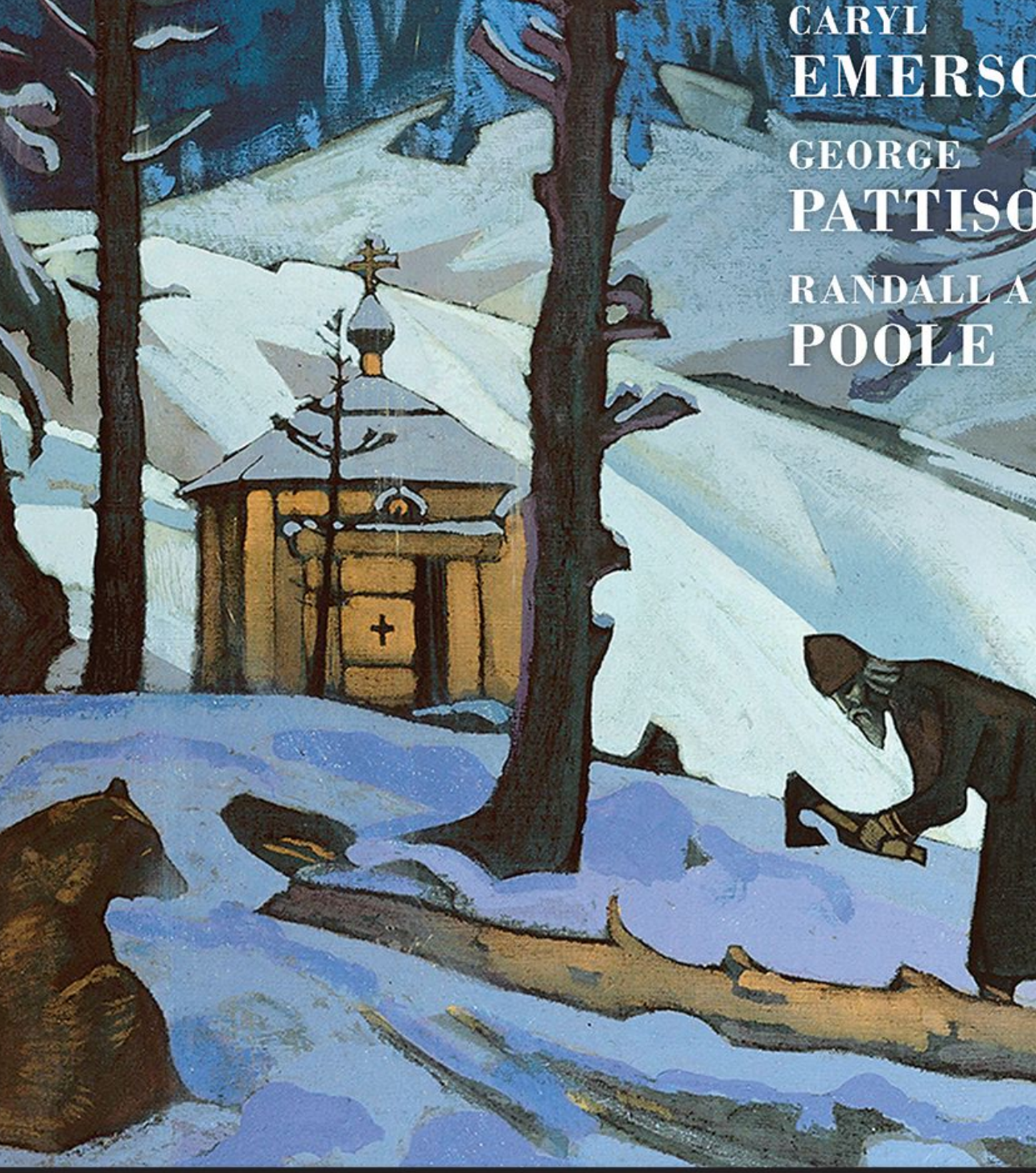

CARYL
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The Oxford Handbook *of*
RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS
THOUGHT

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

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RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Edited by

CARYL EMERSON,
GEORGE PATTISON,
and
RANDALL A. POOLE

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Foreword

This book contains very valuable and informative examinations of the disparate currents and traditions of Russian religious thought in the millennium since Grand Prince Vladimir, ruler of Kievan Rus, took the epochal decision to be baptized in the Christian faith in the late tenth century. This event had momentous consequences both individually for Vladimir—who, rejecting his pagan past, sincerely adopted the doctrines and moral precepts of his new religion—and collectively for the destiny of his nation: Historically Russia's statehood and cultural identity would emerge from the crucible of the Eastern Orthodox faith.

The end of the twentieth century saw Russia and her people return, after decades of enforced official atheism under communist rule, to their Christian roots and thereby rejoin the family of European nations, the cultures and civilization of which have been built upon the Christian faith. And yet, whilst being a part of this common Christian civilization, Russia's historical development and the emergence of her religious thought have taken quite often startlingly different routes, sometimes in opposition to, at times influenced by, these various Western Christian traditions, yet practically always in reference towards them.

In the history of Russian religious thought there are no analogies to the great Western universities such as Oxford or Cambridge, or the Sorbonne. But it would be a mistake to believe that as a result Russia lacked a theological heritage. The opening chapters of this book skilfully examine how religious thought in Russia was formed without the institutions of learning familiar to the medieval West and how the Orthodox Church expressed, to use Eugene Trubetskoi's phrase, a 'theology in colours', a spiritual vision embodied more in images than in letters. This 'iconic' theology perhaps compensates for an apparent dearth of original written theology of the period.

It would appear, and this is examined in the subsequent essays of the book, that Russian philosophy is marked by a seeming absence of a secular tradition, at least up until the eighteenth century. Before the Age of Enlightenment had made its first tentative steps into the vast Russian Empire, Russia's finest theological minds were shaped by the ecclesiastical schools, which, by their very nature as institutions of primarily dogmatic instruction, could perhaps have been seen as constraining enterprising speculative thought. Yet in this book we discover such fine Christian preachers, relatively unknown in the West, as the Metropolitan of Moscow Philaret (Drozdov) and St. Tikhon of Zadonsk. It was against this background that more independent religious thinkers such as the Slavophiles (Khomyakov and Kireyevsky amongst others) emerged.

The English-speaking admirer of Russian art, music, and particularly literature will inevitably think of the nineteenth century as the pinnacle of this great culture. Russian literature had taken Western forms of expression and imbued them with the 'cursed eternal questions'. Western readers are familiar with the philosophical and religious ideas expressed in the great fictional works of Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoevsky (this tradition being continued of course into the twentieth century by writers such as Boris Pasternak) but the present book has the merit of introducing English-speaking readers to Russian religious thinkers who appeared as contemporaries of these great figures and who used established Western forms of non-fictional philosophical expression. Pre-eminent amongst them was Vladimir Soloviev.

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of various social movements and religious currents that strove to establish ways of thinking and theologizing independently of what was officially approved by both state and church, and it is appropriate that the lion's share of this *Handbook* is devoted to precisely this epoch. The nineteenth century did indeed provide the ground for later religious movements, most striving to remain creatively within the Orthodox dogmatic tradition but others (theosophy and occultism in particular) consciously departing from it.

These various strands, supplying the creative tensions of the Silver Age, would eventually be submerged by the revolutionary upheaval of 1917. As the concluding essays in this book demonstrate, it was in the Russian emigration that these religious ideas were preserved and built upon, especially by such gifted theologians and philosophers as Sergei Bulgakov, Nikolai Berdyaev, Semyon Frank and Lev Karsavin. The chapters on these remarkable figures provide us with insight into their profoundly original and often daring reflections on the nature of the divine in the creative process, on freedom and human dignity, and in particular on the vexed relationship between the individual and the communal in Karsavin's (Solovievian) vision of 'all-unity' (*vseedinstvo*).

The essays presented in this *Handbook* are a collective invitation for English-speaking readers to examine further the spiritual themes raised by the great Russian cultural figures described so comprehensively therein. As such, I have the pleasure of recommending it to teachers and students alike of Russian literature, Russian religious philosophy, and Russian culture in general.

+Hilarion Alfeyev
21 June 2019

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Publishers, 2014), *Philosophy of Man in the Creativity of F. Dostoevsky* (RKhGA Publishers, 2012); *Political Philosophy of B. N. Chicherin* (St. Petersburg University Press, 2013); *Russian Philosophy in European Context* (RKhGA Publishers, 2017) and others.

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INTRODUCTION

CARYL EMERSON, GEORGE PATTISON,
AND RANDALL A. POOLE

Over three hundred years after Peter the Great's campaign to reinvent Russia as a modern European nation, the opposition between 'Russia' and 'the West' remains a potent cultural meme that plays out in manifold ways—not least in the dangerous domain of geo-political competition. Remarkably, the terms of this supposed opposition have remained more or less constant throughout a period in which Russia moved from Tsarist autocracy, through Soviet Communism, and on to today's 'sovereign democracy'. From the Western point of view, Russia has persistently appeared enigmatic, mysterious, and indefinable, its mentality defined by the infinite horizons of the steppe and its polity by a seemingly unshakeable penchant for authoritarian rule. Even some of its undeniably great cultural achievements in literature, music, and (not least) dance are seen as revealing the predominance of passion over reason and a deeply embedded collective identity that is impermeable to Western individualism (*The Rite of Spring* inevitably comes to mind). Since at least the Slavophile movement of the nineteenth century, Russia has responded in kind, as several essays in this collection will explore.

At the same time, even though the Western stereotypes are at first glance predominantly negative, Russia has not only perplexed and repelled outsiders—it has also fascinated. Russian otherness has sometimes seemed to promise dimensions of experience unavailable in the West, from the mysticism and liturgical splendour of its Church to the eschatological hopes invested in its Communist Revolution. As translations of Russian literature became widely available from the late nineteenth century onwards, and as Russian music, art, and dance came to play a formative role in the modernist reshaping of European culture, while successive waves of travellers and émigrés helped expand the Western understanding of Russian culture, Russophobia began to give way to Russophilia. As in other forms of orientalism, this often involved elements of fantasy no less exaggerated than those of the Russophobes, as can be seen in the portrayal of 'Russian man' in the writings of the theologians Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen, who saw the wildness of the Russian character as a much-needed antidote to the petit bourgeois attitudes of their Protestant congregations.

It would be nice to imagine that, over time, a more balanced and realistic view emerged, and to some extent that has happened. At least in scholarly literature, it is understood that the kind of binary oppositions that were frequently encountered in the twentieth century need extensive revision. Without denying the importance of Russian forebears such as Pushkin and Gogol, Dostoevsky was from early on familiar with and influenced by Dickens, Hugo, and Sand. Even Slavophile depictions of the opposition between a mystical East and a rationalistic West can be seen to have drawn on the concepts and categories of German idealism. Philosophy, despite the exoticism of Soloviev's sophiology, was generally seen as a common intellectual pursuit between Russian and Western thinkers until Lenin's expulsion of non-Communist intellectuals in 1922. So, too, in mathematics and natural science. At the same time, elements of Russian culture have become embedded in the West, offering points of reference and resources across a wide range of cultural activities. If Dostoevsky's novels reveal French and English influences, his own work—like that of Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Chekhov—has played an incalculable role in shaping subsequent European and global literature. Figures such as Metropolitan Anthony Bloom and Archimandrite Sophrony Sakharov have modelled Russian Orthodox spirituality in ways that have helped make it a living ecclesiastical force in the West. More broadly, the Jesus prayer and the use of icons is now commonplace in many Catholic and Protestant circles. But whether we think of 'Russia' and 'the West' in terms of ontological opposition or of convergent and overlapping traditions, a deeper understanding and appreciation of Russia remains an important task for contemporary Humanities scholarship.

The theme of this *Handbook* is, of course, Russian religious thought, and whilst we shall give some place to Western perceptions and receptions, our main focus is on developments that, for the most part, were primarily directed towards Russian audiences, whether in Russia itself or in émigré communities. At the same time, as we shall see, this too was often (though not invariably) set against certain background assumptions concerning Russia's difference from other European nations or what we might more broadly call Russian exceptionalism.

Religion, or more specifically, Russian Orthodoxy, is for many Russians a defining and distinctive element of Russian identity. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church has been invited to assume a prominent, if at times controversial, place in public and political discourse in Russia. To be Russian, some say, is to be Orthodox. Inevitably, then, the Orthodox voice is a powerful element in the story this *Handbook* has to tell. However, it is not a *Handbook of Russian Orthodoxy* or even of *Russian Orthodox Theology*, though either of these are potentially important themes for a work of this kind and in each case there would be significant overlaps. What we are offering is, nevertheless, something different.

We might also add that this is not a *Handbook of Religion in Russia*, however worthy that ambitious project might be. Clearly, and despite the trope of Russia's Orthodox soul, Orthodoxy is not the only form of religious life in Russia in the period covered by this *Handbook*. In addition to Catholic and Protestant forms of Christianity, the minority religions of Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism have been important, their influence varying

somewhat with the shifting boundaries of the Russian and Soviet state. A handbook on this topic would also have to take into account phenomena such as Siberian shamanism and new religious movements and, in every case, would require a greater focus on the ritual and sociological aspects of religious life. The changing representation of religion in Russia's museums and art galleries would be a fascinating topic in such a collection. This *Handbook*, however, is concerned quite specifically with Russian religious *thought*. What, then, does this mean?

One way of answering this question is to say that the social location of the kind of religious thought we are presenting is (very roughly) defined by that great modernist expression 'writers, artists, and thinkers', where the last, 'thinkers', were often independent figures, working outside the boundaries of official institutions of teaching and research, such as universities. Taken strictly, this would circumscribe the topic too narrowly, but, in a looser sense, it would extend to those for whom and to whom these cultural figures spoke. The classic Russian novelists and dramatists were, by definition, writers, artists, and thinkers, but (in the absence of a free public sphere and open debate) their work was and is read and valued for its spiritual independence across broad swathes of Russian society. This does not mean that all readers shared their world-views, let alone their religious claims. The Bolshevik Party boss Sergei Kirov claimed to be moved to tears by the character of Alyosha Karamazov, but Alyosha's moral and spiritual values are not obviously evident in his own career. Nevertheless, to the extent that it was not blocked by censorship, the representation of religion in such works established abiding theoretical and existential possibilities, whether or not these were or could be taken up and acted upon.

Happily, the category of writers, artists, and thinkers reflects an intuitive recognition of the important interconnections of forms of cultural life that are sometimes arbitrarily separated. Although it obviously comprises novelists, poets, painters, and musicians, it also includes theorists in a range of fields, notably philosophy (including religious philosophy) but also, for example, history, aesthetics, and literary criticism (of which Karsavin, Losev, and Bakhtin respectively provide important exemplars). Importantly, it also includes religious thinkers. In the period we are considering, these include both lay (Berdyaev, Frank, and Nicholas and Vladimir Lossky) and ordained (Florensky, Bulgakov, Florovsky, Men) defenders of religious faith, and, as Oleg Bychkov notes in his essay, more ecclesiastically mainstream figures such as Metropolitan Filaret. Nor, of course, was the world of these writers, artists, and thinkers homogeneous. The important collection *Landmarks* (1909), with contributions by several of the figures covered in his volume, was both a product of the intelligentsia and a religiously coloured critique of its then current state.

Emphasizing again that we are at the moment speaking only in very general terms, the category of writers, artists, and thinkers also serves to explain several further features of this *Handbook*. First, because it presupposes a certain level of cultural development involving not only a distinctive and self-sustaining sphere of cultural creativity but also the existence of a public capable of receiving the works produced, it belongs essentially to the modern period and, more specifically, to the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries. Second, the particular character of this cultural development in Russia during this period requires us to acknowledge the dominant influence of Russian Orthodoxy. This is not to say that Buddhism and Islam were not without influence but this was certainly not on the same scale. The case of Judaism is somewhat different. This is in part because Orthodoxy, like other forms of Christianity, is obligated by its historical origins to reckon with its own Jewish heritage, notably the Hebrew Bible (or, in Christian terminology, the Old Testament). Christian self-definition is, and has from the beginning, also been definition vis-à-vis the Jewish other. In the case of Russia (though this is regrettably not so exceptional), the presence of anti-semitism in some of her most influential cultural figures makes it an unavoidable topic in a collection such as this. More positively, however, it is also of significance that several major figures of modern Russian religious thought, including the philosopher Semyon Frank, the painter (and sometime Commissar) Marc Chagall, and the charismatic priest Alexander Men, were of Jewish background. Lev Shestov, though non-observant and, as Emmanuel Levinas remarked, not a philosopher of Judaism, belongs also in the history of modern Jewish philosophy.

Part I of the *Handbook* sets the historical stage. Although our main focus is on the modern period in which 'religious thought' emerged as a distinctive and quasi-autonomous dimension of cultural life, it is impossible to understand this emergent realm without some historical background, much of which is largely unknown to non-specialists. Not only is it generally the case that the past is key to understanding the present. In this particular case, the interpretation of Russian history is itself a major theme within Russian religious thought, whether with regard to the original Christianization of Russia, the Schism within the Russian Church, or the fate of believers in the Soviet era. For reasons we shall come to later, however, the *Handbook* does not significantly venture into the post-Soviet era. The historical story told here extends from the beginnings of Christianization in Kievan Rus' (Goldfrank), through different phases of Tsarist (Kizenko) and early twentieth-century history (Shevzov), and on to Soviet and post-Soviet developments (Knox).

In Part II, we enter the period in which Russian religious thought develops its own distinctive cultural form. Articles by O. Bychkov and Michelson highlight the often-overlooked importance of Church theology during this time, which serves as the conceptual foundation for the subsequent essays by Hamburg, Poole, and Frede on Chaadaev, the Slavophiles and Westernizers, and nihilism, movements that would define the terms for debates that continue into our own time. Thereafter, we turn to the novelists Dostoevsky (Pattison) and Tolstoy (Emerson) and to the visionary philosopher Soloviev (Evtuhov) whose work provided the religious thinkers of the twentieth century with a rich store of arguments and tropes.

With the advent of the twentieth century, we enter the era of what has been called the Religious-Philosophical Renaissance, a time of extraordinarily creative energy. This provides the focus for Part III. Coverage includes such movements as the so-called God-seekers and God-builders (Lippman), religious idealism and liberalism (Poole), the theological notion of theosis or divinization (Coates), and the controversy over the glorification of the Name of God (Kenworthy), all of which shaped the politics, belief

patterns, and artistic creativity of the period. Separate articles are devoted to key individuals such as Bulgakov (Zwahlen), Florensky (Schneider), and Berdiaev (Siljak), who assumed leadership of this Renaissance. It is here too that we consider the relationship between Russian religious thought and Judaism (Rubin).

In Part IV, the emphasis moves from ideas to art. Here we examine broad philosophical conceptions of the character and role of art (V. Bychkov), as well as expressions of religious life in music (Mitchell), poetry (Kelly), and visual art (Antonova).

The year 1922 saw the definitive end of the Religious-Philosophical Renaissance on Russian soil, when Lenin sent many of its leading figures into exile on the so-called 'philosophy steamer'. These deportees joined those already living in the West to set in motion a further wave of remarkable intellectual and cultural creativity, the focus of Part V. This diaspora also spanned a wide range of views, with what we might call 'the Left' finding expression in the journal *The Way* (Arjakovsky), whilst the more ecclesiastically inclined developed what became known as the Neo-Patristic synthesis (Gavrilyuk). In outfield, earlier Russian traditions of esotericism were popularized through Gurdjieff, Ouspensky and their followers (Sutcliffe and Willmett). The changing roles of leading figures in the Religious Renaissance in the new situation of emigration require us to look again at Berdyaev (Pattison) and Bulgakov (Slesinski), whilst Shestov (Fotiade), Frank (Boobbyer), and Karsavin (Beisswenger) all come to the fore as major figures.

Despite Lenin's best efforts, religious thought did not die out entirely in the Soviet Union. Part VI looks to some of the manifestations of such thought in this period. Losev managed to maintain a public profile as a theorist of aesthetics, whilst also continuing to advance the agenda of the 'Silver Age' thinkers (Obolevitch). Bakhtin, obscure during his lifetime but after his death ferociously colonized by Marxists, materialists, and Orthodox Christians, is revealed as a thinker who found creative synergies between elements of religious thought and the secular discipline of literary and cultural criticism (Emerson). In late Soviet times, the charismatic teaching of Alexander Men (Bauer and Noble) and the films of Andrei Tarkovsky (Birzache) made Christian and other spiritual resources available to those who had ears to hear and eyes to see. That Men was murdered and Tarkovsky exiled underlines the existential peril of religious thought during these years. The Gulag was a constant, if veiled, presence on the horizon of religious life (Gullotta).

All editorial choices in volumes of this kind are open to dispute. Whilst few would argue against chapters dedicated to Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, or Soloviev, other figures and movements might be seen as receiving too much or too little attention. The response of Oxford University Press's anonymous readers suggests that some see one article on Berdyaev as too much, whilst others see two articles as well-merited. Reputations are inevitably contestable and similar arguments could be conducted regarding a range of inclusions and exclusions. Nevertheless, we are confident that what we are able to present here does justice to the big picture. That it is likely to need further development or provoke disagreement belongs to the nature of both subject matter and genre.

The volume does not and cannot come to a conclusion. The intellectual and cultural history with which it engages is still alive and still productive of new developments.

However, works of this kind are not commentaries on current affairs although some might have wished the collection to develop a sharper edge vis-à-vis the contemporary situation. Such edges blunt with astonishing rapidity, and it is our hope that we have focused on topics, personalities, and conceptual frameworks that will endure. The materials covered in this *Handbook*, we believe, are important, even essential, for understanding much of what is at issue in contemporary relationships between Russia and the West. Because human and institutional lives straddle Soviet and post-Soviet times, an exact stopping-point cannot be fixed, but we have chosen the cautious path of drawing to a close with the Soviet empire's declining years. Part VII therefore looks back so as to offer some overall assessments. Rowan Williams' chapter considers the theme of tradition in Orthodox theology, whilst Paul Valliere examines the reception of Russian religious thought in Western theology. Finally, the collection as a whole receives critical appreciation from Professor Igor Evlampiev of St. Petersburg State University. These respected British, American, and Russian voices do not give closure to the collection, but they do move us further into debates regarding the continuing significance of the themes and personalities addressed in it.

Note on Transliteration

The preferred form of transliteration used in this volume is that of the Library of Congress system. However, many of the figures discussed have been present in English language literature for a long period and in some cases older systems of transliteration are reflected in standard forms of names. Secondary literature also reflects a variety of practices. In this situation we have chosen not to enforce standardization across the volume and quoted material will always retain whatever form is given in the source. We do not believe that any of the variations that will be encountered entail any ambiguity as to the person being discussed or cited. Readers will recognize that 'Dostoevsky' is 'Dostoyevsky', 'Dostoevski' or 'Dostoevskii' (other forms also occur in English language literature), and that 'Kireevskii' and 'Kireevsky' refer to the same person. Similarly Nikolai Berdiaev is recognizably the same author as Nicolas Berdyaev and Sergei Bulgakov is also known as Sergius Bulgakov. Some contributors also use the practice of using two-fold initials rather than a single forename, thus N. A. Berdyaev or M. M. Bakhtin (as opposed to Mikhail Bakhtin). Some versions of names or words include the soft sign (’), others do not—thus Soloviev or Solov'ev, *sobornost* or *sobornost’*. Indexed forms follow current practice, with cross-reference where necessary.

PART I

HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

CHAPTER 1

CHRISTIANITY IN RUS' AND MUSCOVY

DAVID GOLDFRANK

Orthodox Christianity arrived in Rus' in three fashions. From the scattering of the 860's Byzantine mission of Cyril and Methodius to Moravia, Slavic Christianity penetrated westernmost Rus', perhaps bearing some Catholic influence. With ties to Constantinople, individual Varangians and other Rus' converted, most spectacularly Princess Olga of Kyiv while on mission there in the mid-tenth century. But the essential step was the selection of Orthodoxy by her grandson Volodimer (Vladimir) of Kyiv (r. 982–1015) and his elite over competition from Khazar Judaism, Volga Bolgar Islam, and German-sponsored Catholicism. A mass river baptism in Kyiv in 988 or 989, followed by one in Novgorod, set off the establishment of Orthodoxy as the official religion. Outside of several violent confrontations with pagan shamans, conversion was relatively peaceful.

Early Rus' Orthodox Culture

We do not know how much translation resulted from the Moravian mission, but during the 890s–950s, a set of Greco–Slavic bilinguals in Bulgaria translated a sufficient number of biblical, liturgical, hagiographic, homiletic, theological, canonic–legal, and secular texts into a literary form of the local Slavic dialect (Old Church Slavonic) for an Orthodox church to function without Greek. This form of text-based Christianity spread throughout Rus' (Thomson 1980). Court priest and subsequent Metropolitan, Ilarion (r. 1051–1054), authored the greatest early Rus' sermon, 'On Law and Grace', which scholars believe evinces some knowledge of Greek and Latin or Czech Catholic influence. Employing contrasts of 'shadow' and 'truth', treating the Rus' pagan past as equivalent to Old Testament antecedents, utilizing the trope that 'the last shall be first',

and praising Volodimer and Iaroslav, Ilarion welcomes Rus' into the family of Christian realms (Franklin 1991).

The foundation of Kyiv's Monastery of the Caves (Pecherskii) by the anchorite Antonii and his disciple the cenobite Feodosii, the first Rus' clerics to be sainted, was a crucial event. Under Feodosii (d. 1074), a Studite-influenced cenobitic rule supposedly operated, but individualistic principles soon prevailed, and Pecherskii became renowned for heroically eccentric ascetics. A religious–cultural hub of society, Pecherskii served as scriptorium, painting studio, liturgical music conservatory, healing clinic, soup kitchen, and elite seminary matriculating qualified monks as bishops and abbots. It was also the archetypical locus in Rus' of the vital elder–disciple relationship (Paert 2010; Goldfrank 2012). Pecherskii's Uspenskii Sobor (Cathedral of the Dormition) became the model for similarly named and constructed churches as far flung as Volodimer-Volynsk and northern Vladimir.

The Pecherskii monk Nestor (d. early 1100s) was the most productive Rus' writer. His Life of Feodosii Pecherskii borrows from earlier Greek hagiography. The sources, compilations of *paterica* with their extreme asceticism and self-abnegation, and Cyril of Scythopolis's sixth-century Lives of the laurite (grouped eremitical) Sabas the Sanctified and the cenobite Euthymius the Great all indicate a joining of the various strains of monasticism. Nestor's *Lesson on the Life and Murder of Boris and Gleb*, which depicts their love and humility as they accepted death at the hands of their ruthless brother Sviatopolk, is likewise dependent on earlier hagiography. The dynasty-sponsored cult of Boris and Gleb proved useful, and a somewhat later *Tale of the Passion and Encomium of the Holy Martyrs Boris and Gleb* specifically points to the martyred early tenth-century Czech prince Vaclav, similarly revered in Catholic Bohemia (Hollingsworth 1992).

Nestor is sometimes credited as the main author of the Byzantine-influenced Kiev chronicle (down to 1106) known as the *Tale of Bygone Years* (*Povest' vremennykh let*). This work created a grand narrative for later Ukrainian and Russian historiography by locating Rus' geographically within its river systems; ethnically as Slavic but with Scandinavian, Baltic, Finnic, and Turkic admixtures; cosmically within the Christian view of God's universal providence; and culturally as derived from Cyril's and Methodius's ninth-century mission. Significant for overall religious thought is that the initial Rus' choice of Orthodoxy over Judaism, Islam, and Roman Catholicism credits four considerations: worldly success, native drinking customs, and sheer ascetic beauty, and well as fear of the Terrible (Last) Judgment (Cross/Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1953; Prestel 2016). Nestor is also credited with the initial stage of Pecherskii's remarkable *Patericon* (completed in the thirteenth century), uniting the Life of Feodosii and briefer tales of other ascetics (Heppell 1989). Among other important works from the early period stands the pilgrimage of the early twelfth-century abbot Daniil from Chernihiv/Chernigov to the Holy Land and Bishop Kirill of Turov's optimistic (relative to salvation and endtimes) late twelfth-century cycle of Easter sermons (Veder 1994). Some observers argue that while the Rus' were relatively silent in verbal elaborations of religious thought, they compensated with iconography and its symbolism and messages (Florovsky et al. 1962).

Lived Orthodoxy In Pre-Modern Rus'

The most important events in life were marked by special ceremonies. Regular church attendance was not mandated, but inside churches worshippers engaged a combination of mosaics, frescos, icons, candles, incense, prostrations, signs of the cross, supplications, and chanting, all creating an aura of holiness unknown outside the church walls. For the illiterate these graphics were the only available visual representation of doctrine: hence the importance of Orthodox Last Supper/Communion depictions above the altar and Terrible Judgment frescos on the west wall for worshippers to observe as they left.

Orthodoxy operated continuously for the pious, since the monastic spirit of constant self-awareness, repentance, and prayer permeated medieval homiletics, though only one annual confession-cum-communion was requisite. All the baptized were subject to rules whereby the Church penetrated society, communities, families, and individual life. Bishops' courts held jurisdiction over sex, marriage, family life, beliefs, rituals, and pagan practices. In theory father-confessors probed the most intimate details of personal lives, including dreams (Levin 1989).

Clerics supervised welfare institutions and the medical profession. Pecherskii healers were jealous of non-Orthodox physicians, such as Armenians, who were represented as unqualified for essential divine aid. Bishops enjoyed exclusive authority over clergy and their families, clerical employees and dependents, and marginal people—wanderers, widows, orphans, the lame and blind, and social outcasts. Churchmen accompanied armies deep into the steppe, performed services along the way, and sometimes treated campaigns against pagans and other non-believers as a holy enterprise.

Responsible father-confessors, such as the Novgorodian monk-choirmaster Kirik, pondered the application of church law to Rus' conditions and sought advice concerning the minutiae of daily living. The faithful avoided taking Communion too soon after licit sex and abstained after menstruation. Priests and their wives were expected to live exemplary lives. Widowed princesses could retire to elite urban female monasteries. The faithful established icon corners or shrines inside homes to replace earlier clan cults, but continued to fear household spirits. Priests blessed fields before the sowing, and also horses once a year. Holy festivals and popular religious songs created new combinations of Christian saints and nature veneration. Transgressors might pay a fine to their bishop in addition to undergoing penance, as if a sin required monetary compensation or payment for the cost of administering spiritual justice. A dying person was expected to forgive wrongs and request reciprocal forgiveness, but the culture assumed one could pursue personal litigation at the Terrible Judgment. Several of these customs and notions persisted into recent times (Fedotov 1946–1966; Levin 1989; Collins 1994).

Each regional Rus' principality had a special cult, Vladimir-Suzdal-Rostov's being consequential for the future. Andrei Bogoliubskii (r. 1155–1174/5), its programmatic founder as the hegemonic 'Grand Principality of Vladimir', brought one of Russia's future iconic protectresses, a Byzantine Madonna of the *eleusa* (tenderness) type, from

southern Rus'. This 'Vladimir Mother of God' allegedly brought victory to Bogoliubskii's aggressive armies against the Volga Bolgars, and later, in 1395, 1451, and 1480, saved Moscow from Mongol invaders. The icon was placed in Bogoliubskii's extolled foundation, Vladimir's Dormition Cathedral, while its second cathedral, built under his potent half-brother and successor Vsevolod 'Big Nest' (r. 1176–1212), was dedicated to the military martyr, Dmitrii of Salonica (Hurwitz 1975).

First Mongol Century

Pragmatically granted privileges and protection by the Mongols, the Rus' Church continued to grow as a force, and outright paganism disappeared among the Eastern Slavs. However materially rough the initial Mongol invasion and exactions were, geography favoured the forested Rus' north. By 1291 Metropolitan Maksim moved his operational headquarters to Vladimir. Some literature from this era, for example the sermons by the Kyiv-Pecherskii Archimandrite (r. 1247–1274) and then Bishop of Vladimir (Serapion) (r. 1274–1275) calling for repentance and moral reformation, accepts the fact of submission, while treating the Mongols as godless pagans (Bogert 1984).

In Novgorod and its breakaway subordinate republic Pskov, the Church supported resistance to Roman Catholic aggression. Prince Alexander of Novgorod led the troops that drove the Swedes away from the mouth of the Neva River in 1240 (hence 'Alexander Nevskii') and defeated the Livonian Knights on the ice of Lake Piepus in 1242. Grandfather of the first Moscow Grand Prince, Alexander was later eulogized as the ideal warrior prince and canonized. Meanwhile, facing murderous internecine strife, the Lithuanian Prince Daumantas/Dovmont (d. 1299) fled to Pskov in 1266, converted to Orthodoxy, fought off both Lithuanians and Livonians, and was also canonized. The steadfast Christian prince, Mikhail of Chernihiv/Chernigov (ca. 1185–1246), who accepted martyrdom at the hands of the Mongols rather than undergo a pagan ritual of submission, stood out well afterward as a culture hero (Dimnik 1981).

Second South-Slavic Influence

In the fourteenth century the anti-Catholic, anti-scholastic wing of late Byzantium's many-sided cultural renaissance, radiating from Constantinople, Trnovo, and Mt. Athos, promoted an intellectual, devotional, and artistic package representing a distinct brand of Orthodoxy (which, unbeknown to most, also incorporated the core of St. Augustine's Trinitarian theology of love). This included a revival of the intense inner mental and devotional strivings termed hesychasm ('stillness'), a more spiritualized liturgy and iconography, programmatic charitable social consciousness, and, for the

Slavs, translations or retranslations of patristic classics, more recent ascetic and mystical treatises, and polemics against Judaism and 'heresies'—among them specific Roman Catholic doctrines and practices such as the *filioque* ('and from the Son') formula for the procession of the Holy Spirit, purgatory, the unleavened Communion wafer, and papal claims to supremacy over the Eastern patriarchs (Romanchuk in Wallace et al. 2016).

The fourteenth-century hesychastic movement also witnessed an affirmation of the classical Christian mystical notion of theosis (divinization) of the purified, illuminated practitioner of intense prayer, who is synergetically aided by God. Paradoxically, while Eastern Orthodoxy emphasized more than Western Scholastics did the classical apophatic approach to God, Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), the premier hesychastic theologian, developed the notion of divine energies (operations) as separate from the divine essence (for modern discussions see Chapter 19 in this *Handbook*). A profound difference emerged among Rus' friendly to hesychasm over the fate of the original earthly paradise after the advent of 'mental paradise' in the era of Grace. Archbishop Vasilii Kalika of Novgorod (r. 1330–1352) rejected Bishop Fëdor of Tver's alleged notion that only 'mental paradise' now existed. Using arguments found in Palamas and Gregory the Sinaite (ca. 1265–1346), as well as the eleventh-century Nicetas Stethatos, Vasilii argued for a fusion of the two: Eden extended up to the 'third heaven' of 2 Cor. 12:4, identified with 'mental paradise', and the light experienced in mystical visions was the same as what had shone on Mount Tabor at the Transfiguration (Bogatyerv in Wallace et al. 2016). Meanwhile, the 'Metropolitans of Kyiv and all Rus'' had relocated their chief operational headquarters to Moscow.

Essential for the spread of these new currents was the northern Rus' monastic revival, as well as four major figures: the Bulgarian-origin Metropolitan Kiprian (r. in Western Rus', 1376–1408, in Eastern Rus', 1381–1382, 1389–1408), the Greek iconographer Feofan (active in Rus', 1370s–ca. 1410), the Greek Metropolitan Fotii (r. 1410–1431), and the Serbian hagiographer Pakhomii (active in Rus', 1428–1484). Kiprian circulated the new liturgies; Feofan introduced the more spiritualized iconography; and Fotii was a tireless sermonizer (Goldfrank in Wallace et al. 2016). Feofan's native follower Andrei Rublev (1360s–1427) produced the geometrically informed Old Testament Trinity ('Hospitality of Abraham'), perhaps the most famous icon in the world, and a striking example of reverse perspective, as if God were gazing at the venerator. Described by Iosif Volotskii (see the section below, 'Consolidation, Expansion, Dissidence') as 'excelled in divine love' with 'elevated mind and thought to the immaterial and divine light', Rublev's expression of divine tenderness and mystical experience made him a Russian culture hero (Goldfrank 2000). The rediscovery and restoration of his surviving iconostasis icons and cathedral frescos commenced in 1859. But what art historians deem the genuine Rublev only started to come to light in the 1920s, when he became a stimulus in the unfolding modern Orthodox revival and its spiritual prestige among aware non-Orthodox Christians (Bunge 2007).

Sergii of Radonezh (d. 1391) was, and still is, the most renowned ascetic of the period. His Trinity Monastery developed into one of Muscovy's largest landowners and its

greatest 'community of venerators', connected with donations, burials, his relics, and commemoration prayers. The network of his disciples increased for several generations and established a large proportion of Russia's important new suburban and colonizing monasteries. His first hagiographer, the Rostov-educated Epifanii the Wise (d. pre-1422), a master of the Byzantine (root-repetitive) word-weaving style, presents Sergii as a model of patience, humility, charity, burning faith, trust in God, pastoral care for disciples, and moderate hesychastic praxis. Epifanii also penned the Life of Stefan of Perm (ca. 1340–1396), the missionary bishop to the Zyrians or Komi of the distant fur emporium Perm, who created an alphabet in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to spread Orthodoxy to Finnic pagans in their own language. Epifanii's image of Sergii survived Pakhomii's several more miracle-filled and less ornate rewrites (Miller 2010). In 1461 Pakhomii composed the Life of the Novgorodian Varlaam Khutynskii (d. 1192), leading to his general veneration also in northeastern Rus'; Pakhomii followed this with his Life of Kirill of Beloozero (1337–1427). Pakhomii's overall importance lay in his idealized combining of hesychastic spirituality and strict cenobitic practice, when only a minority of monks in these major cloisters immersed themselves in spiritual texts and when cenobiticism functioned more in the sphere of monastery property and communal meals and services than in strict enforcement of personal poverty (Romanchuk 2007).

East and West Rus' Split

Fotii was the last successful 'Metropolitan of Kyiv and *all* Rus'', though contested in Western Rus' by another Bulgarian, Grigorii Tsamblak (r. 1414–1419). A talented writer whom the Eastern Rus' later respected, Grigorii attended the Roman Catholic Council of Constance at the behest of Lithuania's Grand Prince Vytautas, performed an Orthodox mass for the curious, and vainly floated a Church Union proposal favouring neither side. Then the Greek Metropolitan Isidor (appointed 1437) accepted a Church Union proposed by the papacy at the Council of Florence in 1439, but Moscow objected and expelled him. Eventually the northeastern Rus' bishops, with Vasilii II's support, appointed Bishop Iona of Riazan as Metropolitan (r. 1448–1461). Despite Iona's efforts to maintain unity, in 1458 the Western Rus' (Ruthenian) dioceses under Poland–Lithuania selected their own 'Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Rus'', but soon repudiated Church Union and renewed their subordination to the Patriarch of Constantinople (under Ottoman Turkish protection after 1453). Meanwhile, for 128 years, Iona's Moscow-based autocephalous successors termed themselves 'Metropolitans of all Rus'', and the rulers of both Moscow and Lithuania (and hence) Poland considered themselves sovereigns 'of all Rus''. The most significant religious–cultural result of this split was that what would become Belarus and Ukraine were subject to profound Western influences well before Russia was—in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they provided a number of crucial figures in Russian Church life.

Consolidation, Expansion, Dissidence

Religion played an essential role in the symbolism of the crown's authority, even linking the fecundity of the sovereign's wife to Divine Providence, and likewise in the growth and defence of Moscow's territory (Thyrêt 2001). Such expansion proceeded from the 1470–1478 crisis with Novgorod and the 1480 standoff against Khan Akhmed (causing the sacralization of Dmitrii Donskoi's 1380 pyrrhic victory over Mamai), through the conquest-annexations of Kazan (1552) and Polotsk (1563 to 1581). In Kazan the chief mosque was converted into the archbishopric's Preobrazhenskii (Transfiguration) Cathedral; loyal Muslims were tolerated, if rarely placed on a par with Orthodox counterparts. Polotsk was different: local Jews were given the choice of conversion or death. For the expansion to the East, the state sponsored new monasteries and churches and requisitioned superfluous books, icons, and service equipment from existing church and monastery storerooms.

Expansion into other Christian territory, Orthodox or non-Orthodox, entailed potential problems for Orthodoxy purity as seen from Moscow. In Novgorod the issues included disdain by the first archbishop sent by Moscow for local veneration practices and accusations by the strident second, Gennadii (r. 1486–1504), that some clerics used Jewish books, favoured Jewish practices, and were spreading their heresy in Moscow. Independent evidence indicates the circulation of some Scripture, logic, Islamic monarchal theory, and prayers and poetic pious musings compatible with any monotheism, translated from Hebrew into Ruthenian, but no clear heresy—just wider intellectual horizons (Goldfrank 2017a, 2017c; in contrast, Taube 2005).

Combating such perspectives and the potential prestige of learned Jews energized Gennadii to commission translations from Latin, commission the first ever, complete one-volume Orthodox Bible (1499), and borrow the Roman Catholic pseudo-Donation of Constantine to protect Church property. In the 1550s, a small amount of dissidence, augmented by protests against slavery and church lands, erupted again, allegedly due to recent Protestant influence. The indicted Pskovian ex-Trinity abbot Artemii fled to Western Rus', where he defended Orthodoxy, while another so indicted, the ex-slave Feodosii Kosoi, fled and became a radical Protestant preacher there. Occupying parts of Livonia and Estonia (1558–1582) and employing non-Orthodox mercenaries, Ivan IV or ghostwriters polemized against Protestants and Catholics (Ivanov 2009).

The challenges of autocephaly, expansion, dissidence, and mounting direct contact with Europeans in this era of the gunpowder revolution all challenged native Orthodoxy. The result was Russia's first original treatises: the hesychastic 'On Mental Activity' by the semi-recluse, 'great elder' Nil Sorskii (1433/4–1508), and the cenobitic Monastic Rule and apologetic, didactic, and inquisitorial *Book against the (Novgorod) Heretics* (later known as *Prosvetitel'*) by his supporter (not rival, as found in most scholarship), the enterprising abbot Iosif Volotskii (1439/40–1515). Iosif also theoretically elevated the

Orthodoxy-protecting monarchy and rationalized the lucrative commemoration services that supported cloisters.

Both Nil and Iosif claimed strictly to follow biblical Scripture and the Church Fathers—and for Iosif also church law. In their world, Satan and his demons are real, be they sowing sinful urges, as warned in the monastic literature, or heretical notions. Nil's originality lay in his exposition (often via the manipulation and combination of the actual words of sources) of practical remedies and advice for combating pernicious urges and for achieving *theoria*—the ecstatic vision of God (Goldfrank 2008a). Iosif's originality lay in his utilization of polemic and artificial literary disputation as a pedagogical device via his lumping all opponents together and identifying current, alleged dissidents with those found in his much earlier sources. All the while he provides a model for real disputation with sequential rhetorical syllogisms, and combines a positive exposition of Orthodox doctrine and devotion with a screed justifying execution or life imprisonment without parole for the current 'most evil and filthy of all heretics and apostates under the sky' (Goldfrank 2017b). His full Monastic Rule uniquely combines the homiletic, polemic, historical, and regulatory, and contains Muscovy's first clear institutionalization of a co-governing body within a monarchal system: the Council Brothers helpmate-check on the superior (Goldfrank 2000). His mental world allows for schemes or tricks: 'demonic' to subvert probity and piety and 'divinely wise' to entrap heretics, as well as God's own devices to effect human salvation via Christ's descent to Hades (Hell). Virulent opposition by several of Nil's followers to Iosif's defence of monastery wealth and advocacy of a lethal inquisition led eventually to the analytical narrative of an attractive, 'critical', authoritative Nil opposing a rigid, ritualistic, intolerant, and hence obsolete Iosif in much of the scholarship of the past two centuries, even after proof of their collaboration surfaced in the late 1970s (Goldfrank 2008a).

Iosif's junior kinsman Dosifei Toporkov created the first *Russian Chronograph*, integrating native and world history. Iosif's successor abbot Daniil (Metropolitan, 1521–1539) generated the authoritative common-Rus' *Nikon Chronicle* (as it was later called), which appropriated the foundation narrative of the *Tale of Bygone Years* and forged the lasting grand narrative of Novgorod-to-Kyiv-to-Vladimir-to-Moscow succession for the first nine centuries of Russian history. Daniil also oversaw the foundation of the female Novodevichii Monastery outside Moscow, established specifically to pray for dynastic fecundity.

Archbishop of Novgorod and then Metropolitan Makarii (r. 1526–1542–1563), trained in the same cloister as Iosif, orchestrated the sacral coronation of Ivan IV as 'Tsar' in 1547 and presided over the reforming, disciplining *Stoglav* (Hundred Chapters) council (1551). He also commissioned a mega-anthological hagiographic and theological *Great Reading Menology* as well as the Rus'–Muscovy sacred historical *Book of Degrees* (*Stepennaia kniga*), which became Russia's most widely read historical work in the latter sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Hamburg 2016). The coronation and *Menology* represented nativist appropriations of the Byzantine imperial legacy, with a Russian now as emperor and Russian saints' lives and texts sitting alongside translations from Greek originals. The *Stoglav* responded to current practical issues, and also enshrined the then

peculiar Russian use of two fingers (not three as elsewhere in the Orthodox world) for the sign of the cross. By modelling the progression of native history under pious princes and metropolitans on the classic *Ladder of Divine Ascent* of John Climacus, the *Book of Degrees* utopianized the Muscovite order (Miller 1979; Halperin 2014). It is thus no accident that this work cuts off before Ivan IV's brutal *Oprichnina*.

The Church at this time was not simply a conservative monolith. Some Orthodox opposed execution of even the most dangerous heretics, and Metropolitans Daniil and Makarii had to ward off attempts to place the huge collectivity of church lands under state control. After Pskovian painters introduced some Western motifs in Moscow's Annunciation Cathedral, Makarii forced penance on the leading foreign affairs official, Ivan Viskovatii, who had protested—an interesting reversal whereby the authoritative cleric bent tradition and the knowledgeable layman resisted (Kriza 2016). The popular *Domostroi* (*Household Rules*) of Makarii's Novgorodian protégé, the priest Silvestr, integrated piety, morality, and patriarchal and matriarchal discipline into practical prescriptions for lay people. Makarii and Silvestr opposed astrology and other predictive systems, but later copies of *Domostroi* included divination tables (Pouncy 1994). Makarii's commissioned *Tale of Peter and Febronia* extolled both monasticism and genuine conjugal love, while mixing magical folklore and hagiography in depicting boyar opposition to a prince marrying a skilled commoner. The author, priest then monk Ermolai-Erazm, elsewhere also a Trinity-devotee expounding on the ubiquity of triads, penned a brief reformist tract demanding, *inter alia*, the abolition of personal rule of warrior estate-holders over the peasants who supported them and the prohibition of taverns and daggers (Goldfrank 2008b).

The prestigious voice of the invited Italian-educated humanist and theologian Maksim the Greek (in Russia, 1518–1555) challenged Russians to be more literarily supple and receptive to Western models that conformed to Orthodox ideals such as monarchal rule of law and monastic poverty, while he used the Church Fathers to judge new works printed in the West by Roman Catholics. His ever-moralizing theology was standard for Greek Orthodoxy without hesychastic overtones, while his critique of Russian monastic estates actually misrepresented similar practices at Mt. Athos. The Russian Church formally indicted him as a heretic and confined him from 1525 to 1555, but after 1580 his lucid expositions and polemics elucidating and defending Orthodoxy ended up being copied far more than Nil's or Iosif's works. Later Old Believers may have used Maksim's prestige in defending the two-finger sign of the cross, but his popularity among bookmen foreshadowed Russia's hesitating but unavoidable westward intellectual turn in the seventeenth century (Haney 1973; Olmsted 1994).

Overall, the combination of the Council of Florence, the fall of Constantinople, and Moscow's supremacy in Eastern Rus' produced such metaphorical claims as Moscow was the 'New Constantinople' and thus the 'New Jerusalem', as Constantinople had been termed. The early sixteenth-century monk Filofei of Pskov, a strident opponent of Vasilii III's German Church Union-promoting court astrologer-physician Nicholas Bulev, created the most original variant on this theme, namely that Russia was the Third (and necessarily final) incarnation of 'Rome'—Rome itself constituting the last of the four

kingdoms in the authoritative, apocalyptic Old Testament book attributed to the Prophet Daniil. Complementing Iosif's claim that other realms had collapsed due to abandonment of Orthodoxy, Filofei placed the new Russia on the edge of endtimes. His musings would morph into later identification of Moscow itself as the third Rome—at first in the late sixteenth century simply as a holy city, and then in the hands of some nineteenth-century visionaries, with the meaning that Russia had a messianic world mission (Ostrowski 1998; Poe 2001).

Crises, Troubles, Imperfect Retrenchment

By the 1570s the Reformation, Counter-Reformation and their alluring education opportunities forced the Orthodox elites of Poland–Lithuania to adapt. Led by urban brotherhoods and several aristocratic families, the Ruthenian Orthodox established schools in L'viv and also Ostrih, where they printed a revised version of Gennadii's Bible (1581). Russia lagged behind Ruthenia in erudition and sophistication of theological and ecclesiological treatises and polemics and had no one like the grammarian and prelate Meletij Smotryc'kyj (1577–1633), who wavered between pure Orthodoxy and Union with Rome (Frick 1995). Still, the intellectual and cultural developments among the Orthodox of both parts of Rus' were intertwined, a few Ruthenians as late as the 1620s uncharacteristically airing hostility to the Western pedagogical curriculum and the 'satanic' seven liberal arts (Tschižewskij 1975). Some Muscovite officials wished to prevent Ruthenian writings and ideas from migrating eastward across porous borders to curious recipients, but this proved impossible.

Meanwhile the succession from Ivan IV to his feeble son Fëdor in 1584 found Russia in crisis due to the fallout from Ivan's brutal political murders and the demographic weakening of central provinces from wars, expansion, taxation, and poor weather. Ivan himself may have facilitated the restoration of systematic order via the commemorations for about 2000 of his known victims that he financed before he died. On the ideological plane, in the 1590s a monk from the prestigious Solovetskii monastery on the White Sea composed a Life of the martyred Metropolitan Filip (r. 1566–1568), depicted as heroic opponent of Ivan IV's brutal *Oprichnina*—a motif promoting Church independence as a check on potentially tyrannical secular power (Bushkovitch 1994).

By this time, Fëdor's brother-in-law Boris Godunov had forced the Greek East to elevate Metropolitan Iov to the rank of 'Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus'' (r. 1589–1605), thereby strengthening the Russian Church's prestige. Iov in turn aided Boris's succession to Fëdor with a coronation slogan equivalent to *Vox populi vox Dei*. Boris himself was the first Russian tsar to promote Westernized education, while simultaneously advancing Moscow's image as the 'New Jerusalem'. Meanwhile the new Moscow patriarchate implicitly challenged the Polish–Lithuanian crown and Orthodox Church authorities.

In turn, as a means of increasing their authority, six of the Polish–Lithuanian realm's eight Orthodox bishops accepted Union, which the crown forced upon the Ruthenians in 1596, only to face massive popular resistance for decades.

Any possible Russian rejoinder was preempted by the famine-induced crisis which gripped Muscovy in 1601, hastened Boris's death in 1605, and caused a brutal civil war with armed Polish and Swedish intervention until the securing of the new Romanov dynasty (1613). These events revealed interesting aspects of Christianity in Russia. While Muscovites evinced visceral hostility to haughty Catholic Poles in Moscow for Pseudo-Dmitrii I's wedding to Marina Mniszek, resident Poles were well treated. Common Orthodoxy did not prevent Ukrainian Cossacks from looting Russian monasteries, but the Poles who occupied the Moscow Kremlin in 1611–1612 were sufficiently realistic not to try to spread Church Union to Russia itself. Nonetheless, Orthodox retrenchment in the form of Trinity Monastery's withstanding two sieges, one lasting sixteen months, Patriarch Germogen's dying appeals under arrest in Moscow for a united resistance, and Trinity Monastery Cellarer and military commander Avraamii Palitsyn's reconciliation of government and loyal Cossack forces for the final liberation of Moscow and the election of the young Mikhail Romanov (r. 1613–1645) were crucial factors in Russia's successful exit from this crisis (Gruber 2011).

Tsar Mikhail's imposing father, Patriarch Filaret Romanov (r. 1619–1633), wished wistfully to combine Ruthenian learning with Muscovite pretences of purity, as he required rebaptism of Orthodox Christians coming from Poland–Lithuania. Having been forced into a monastery by Boris Godunov, released and made Metropolitan of Rostov by Pseudo-Dmitrii I (1605), named Patriarch Elect by Pseudo-Dmitrii II (1609), and then imprisoned by the Poles for eight years, Filaret assumed office upon return home and built up the patriarchate as an administratively potent semi-state-within-a-state. Playing an important role in diplomatic ceremony and debriefing, he had the Typography (Printing Office) initiate stricter control over reading matter. He also presumed to vet educated Ruthenians employed to manage censorship and filter out dangerous new ideas, but they actually hoodwinked him. Moreover, foreign notions, customs, clothing, and music could not be kept out, given the many Europeans in Russia even in normal times, not to say the Swedish occupation of Novgorod during 1611–1617, the Polish marriage embassy and then occupation of Moscow (1605–1606, 1611–1612), the hiring of mercenary soldiers, Russian diplomatic missions and information gathering abroad, and the court's acquisition of current foreign gadgets and other elite consumption goods (Michels 2010).

Russian Christianity was of course a good deal more than the patriarchate. Society reared its head in the guise of writings, such as Avraamii Palitsyn's popular *History* of the Troubles and their preceding years, which blamed the disorders on the ruling class and state oppression of the lowly. In contrast, the *d'iak* Ivan Timofeev's *Vremennik*, extant in one copy only, blamed the Troubles on the sinfulness of his contemporaries. On the plebeian level, local cults of wonderworkers were common, and such expressions of lay piety as group single-day erections of shrines in wooded areas were reported. By the 1640s or early 1650s, among Muscovy's imports numbered relatively cheap printed icons from Poland–Lithuania that violated iconographic standards, but were popular due to

their low price. Yet despite all of these difficulties, the notion of 'Holy Rus", with a variety of meanings to different people gained currency.

Greco–Ruthenian Orientation and Church Schism

The passing of Filaret in 1633, a year before the Moldavian-origin Metropolitan Peter Mohyla upgraded Kyiv's Brotherhood School (founded in 1615) to a Collegium (future Academy) with a sanitized, Jesuit-inspired, partially Thomistic curriculum, ushered in an unbroken period of circulation of Ruthenian ideas in Muscovy. Meanwhile a potent moral regeneration movement led by secular priests known as 'Zealots of Piety' obtained the ear of Tsar Mikhail's son and successor Aleksei (b. 1629, r. 1645–1676) and his confessor Stefan Vonifatiev (d. 1656). This paralleled puritanical turns in seventeenth-century Europe hostile to the semi-pagan carnavelesque admixtures that medieval and Renaissance Christianity had tolerated. One result was the state-supported, widespread destruction of musical instruments and activities of Russia's *skomorokhi* (mummers). By 1647, on the reformers' initiative, the Typography issued a model sermon book (Bushkovitch 1992). It presents an interesting parallel: John Chrysostom's homilies, which predominated in that printing, were as prestigious as Augustine's in the West and circulated there too.

Allied to the 'Zealots' was Aleksei's talented and trusted court and state official Fëdor Rtishchev (1626–1673), who in 1646 was permitted to found the Moscow suburban Andreev Monastery and stock it with Ruthenian monks. By 1652 a brotherhood school operated there, led by the exceedingly erudite Ruthenian translator, preacher, and writer Epifanii Slavinetskii (ca. 1600–1675), who had interests in classical literature and science. Fortified by his disciple, Epifanii Chudvoskii (d. 1704), Slavinetsii's circle soon issued translations of useful Greek texts. By 1681 a Typography school for Greek operated under the Russian monk Timofei. In 1685 its students transferred to the new 'Helleno-Greek' Academy, set up under the Greek, Padua-educated Leichoudes brothers, using textbooks they prepared for their Jesuit-influenced curriculum, with formal instruction also in Latin and Slavonic, the seven liberal arts, and a modernizing curriculum in natural science. The so-called 'Grecophiles' and their educational programme represented a form of intellectual latinizing no less than did the so-called 'Latinophiles' (Chrissidis 2016).

The energetic reformist spirit and the turn towards Ruthenian learning found their synthesis in the ingenious, powerful, and charismatic partially Mordvinian parish priest Nikita Minin (1605–1681), originally from Nizhnii Novgorod province. Losing his three sons to disease, he became the monk Nikon in Solovetskii's Anzer Hermitage (1639), and then enterprising hegumen of the Kozheozero Monastery in Karelia (1643), before being named by Tsar Aleksei Archimandrite of Moscow's Novospasskii Monastery (1646).

There Nikon introduced the Ruthenian Baroque-style iconostasis frame to Russia, interested the tsar's family in the relics and 'miraculous' icons that the Ottoman Greeks were cleverly peddling, and served as Aleksei's personal gatekeeper for petitions. Appointed Metropolitan of Novgorod (r. 1649–1652), Nikon helped pacify the 1650 local uprising and presided over the translation of Filip's relics from Solovetskii to Moscow in 1652, as if the crown were atoning for the murderous sins of Ivan IV. That year Aleksei appointed Nikon Patriarch (r. 1652–1666), who in turn promoted the notion of Russia as successor to New Rome/Constantinople, with Aleksei as a 'New Constantine'. These policies entailed the delicate and controversially explosive matter of bringing some of Russia's rituals into line with contemporary Greek and Ruthenian practice, for which the Western-educated Arsenios was the chief translator from recent Greek service texts printed in Italy.

Nikon made his office even more powerful within the Church and quickly built three richly endowed and strategically located monasteries that evoked Holy Places—Iverskii (from a 'miraculous' Athonite Theotokos icon) near the routes from both Moscow and Novgorod towards Smolensk and Poland–Lithuania, Krestnyi (True Cross) near the Gulf of Ostrobothnia and the Swedish frontier, and Resurrection west of Moscow on the route to either of the other two, and called by Aleksei himself 'New Jerusalem'. Simultaneously, Nikon's ritual reforms rode roughshod over Muscovite traditions, since issues such as insisting on extending three instead of two fingers in making the sign of the cross were immensely important to some Russians, and Nikon was telling fellow Russians to repudiate as 'heretical' their vaunted past. After he attempted at a Moscow Synod of 1654 to mandate three fingers by fiat, another such synod in 1656, attended by four major outside prelates, approved his lengthy *Skrizhal'* (Tablet), an encyclopaedic, late sixteenth-century Greek explanation of Orthodox liturgy, rituals, and symbolism based chiefly on Byzantine commentary. Nikon's printing of it added the three finger sign.

Nikon also vigorously supported Aleksei's wars against Poland–Lithuania (1654–1667) and Sweden (1655–1661) by making available the Church's vast material resources, protecting the tsar's family while he was at the front (1654–1666), and issuing propaganda urging the tsar to take first Cracow and then Stockholm. But his overdoing the cult of relics, when the 1656 campaign against Sweden went sour, backfired. Then came the disloyalty of the Ukrainian hetman Ivan Vyhovsky (r. 1657–1659), whom Nikon had patronized. Perhaps most crucial, the rivalries and enemies among many lay and clerical elite and commoners alike led to a snub by Aleksei in 1658 that the patriarch boldly refused to endure. He retreated to 'New Jerusalem' and remained patriarch there in name only until his opponents convinced two of the Greek patriarchs to come to a synod in Moscow in 1666, which formally deposed him.

The charges against Nikon were rather contrived—the tsar himself had initiated use of the now allegedly offensive address 'Great Sovereign' (*Velikii gosudar'*) for Nikon and the potentially heretical sobriquet 'New Jerusalem' for the Resurrection Monastery. The accusations of 'papacizing' his office expressed more fear and hostility to clerical supremacy in the political sphere than the reality of Nikon's thought warranted. His

thoroughly Byzantine view of harmony between *sacerdotum* and *imperium*, as well as his iconography showing him as helpmate of the tsar, expressed the supremacy of the latter. The 1667 verdict against Nikon affirmed that secular and spiritual authority are both instituted by God and are separate, that diocesan boundaries are to be respected, that all church life is governed by established canons, and that Russia is part of the larger Orthodox world, while the synod mandated his ritual reforms (Meyendorff 1991; Kain 2012; Kain 2017).

By the time of Nikon's deposition, resistance to these reforms, viewed as a betrayal of Orthodoxy, had been brewing for over a decade, bolstered by the ascetic-puritanical 'Kapitons' of Vladimir and Kostroma provinces, and merged with all sorts of opposition to heavy-handed patriarchal and episcopal tyranny over individual clerics or popular cults, as well as with the apocalypticism in the air at the time and not only in Russia. Among the dissident activists were Bishop Aleksandr, whom Nikon had transferred to the new diocese of Viatka when the patriarchate swallowed up the diocese of Kolomna in 1657; the truculent, congregation-haranguing Moscow priest Ivan Neronov (1591–1670); the fiery Nizhnii Novgorod-origin priest Avvakum (1620/1–1682), who composed Russia's first autobiography, with the teller as hero-martyr; and Solovetskii monks, who staged a six-year armed rebellion against accepting the new rituals (1668–1674). In reaction to enhanced persecution and abetted by some thieving cynics, a most extreme apocalypticism intersected with opposition to the new rituals in the form of mass suicide by immolation, which other, soberer dissidents condemned. Avvakum, who defended the two-finger sign of the cross as representing the crucifixion and two natures of Christ, demanded the tsar support traditional Russian practices, and was burned at the stake during the 1682 succession crisis (Michels 1999; Hunt 2008).

Two of Nikon's successors—his protégé, the Kiev-educated Muscovite Ioakim (r. 1674–1690), and the latter's protégé Adrian (r. 1690–1700)—were influential in their own right as they promoted education, but also sought to limit creeping Westernization among the elite, even trying to ban Western dress. Among the most effective Westernizing Ruthenians was the court preacher and tutor Simeon Polotskii (1629–1680). He arrived in 1664 on Tsar Aleksei's invitation and played a capital role in the 1666–1667 synod that deposed Nikon, condemned opponents of the ritual reforms and, against some Greek advice and Nikon's now more conciliatory inclination, introduced Catholic inquisitional norms against them. Such measures converted them from a diverse hodgepodge into a more identifiable, if still variegated, loose sect of schismatic Old Ritualists or Old Believers. The more organized and educated among them created their own history and narrative, whereby later generations treated the schism inaccurately as a conflict between two giants, Nikon and Avvakum. Close examination of the schismatics' writings from the 1670s to 1700 shows that they were not simply archaic conservatives, but evinced the higher level of erudition found in newer, Ruthenian-influenced printed works (Crummey 2011). For many Russians, strict confessional lines between Orthodox and schismatics did not really exist, as they were theologically and devotionally quite similar. The main charge against them, as from Epifanii Slavinetskii, was disobedience to established authority in opposing the new service books.

The official Church played a role in Russia's late seventeenth-century modernization, not only by fostering schools with instruction in Greek, Latin and the liberal arts, but also in Ioakim's composing the 1682 decree abolishing *mestnichestvo* (lineage ranking) with an appeal to 'brotherly love' as necessary for 'civility'/'citizenship' (*grazhdanstvo*). Slightly later, the 1682–1689 regent Sofiia (sister of Ioann V and half-sister of Peter I) and her backers attempted to utilize holy female imagery and her semantic connection with the notion of 'Sophia the Wisdom of God' to secure her authority (Thyrêt 2001). Ioakim also insured that Moscow's new academy did not fall into the hands of Polotskii's disciple, the recklessly pro-Sophia Silvester Medvedev (1641–1691), who promoted (as had Mohyla) the Roman Catholic understanding of the Eucharist with arguments based on the 'physics' of the time, and was executed for treason soon after she fell from power (Chrissidis 2016). Yet earlier, in 1689, in a striking show of mutual understanding among established Christian confessions, Ioakim burned at the stake the illegally proselytizing German mystic and chiliast poet Quirinus Kuhlmann, so denounced by the German Protestant authorities of Moscow's *Nemetskaia Sloboda* (foreign enclave) (Collis 2012).

Epifanii Slavenetskii's and Simeon Polotskii's sermons and pedagogy, as well as the diverse activities of the patriarchal Typography, helped condition elite Muscovites to Western notions in the literary-rhetorical, philosophical, social, and scientific realms. Subsequently, the opening of the Academy in 1685 initiated the training of dozens of Russians to think like educated Europeans. Even without the Academy, Karion Istomin (1640s–1718/1722)—a student of Medvedev, Typography official, and prolific, versatile writer—availed Russians their initial direct access to St. Augustine's theology of love, via his translation from a Ruthenian translation (Marker 2017). On these foundations, Vladimir Solov'ev and Sergei Bulgakov would elaborate their own theology of love two centuries later. And even without the Academy, such a protégé of Ioakim and student of Epifanii as Archbishop Afanasii of Kholmogory (r. 1682–1702) could be simultaneously a fierce opponent of the Old Belief, a collector of Greek, Latin, and German books on all sorts of subjects, a builder, and a promoter of practical scientific knowledge—thus paving the way for the power-oriented Tsar Peter I to force state, society and Church into new directions when he assumed power in 1695 (Michels 2001).

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CHAPTER 2

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS LIFE IN IMPERIAL RUSSIA

NADIESZDA KIZENKO

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries form a distinct period in Russian religious life. Russia was now a multinational, multiconfessional empire, and the Orthodox Christian autocrats who ruled it could shape religious policy more forcefully than many of their European counterparts. However, ecclesiastical structures and individual actors, apart from the sovereign, provided a framework allowing both continuity and evolution in Russian Orthodox religious life. The structures included the liturgy, the sacraments, legislation, monasteries, theological academies, book and journal publishers, and bureaucratic institutions like the Consistories and the Holy Synod. The actors included bishops, spiritual elders and eldresses, publishers and writers, priests, and educated lay-people. For the non-Orthodox absorbed into the empire as a result of military conquests or diplomatic negotiations (Greek and Roman Catholics, Jews, and Protestants as well as Muslims and Buddhists), these centuries marked a time of renegotiation with new state structures and policies and a new self-articulation, sometimes as a direct result of their contacts with Russian imperial authorities, and sometimes independently (Werth 2014). Their collective interaction shaped Russian religious life.

The Eighteenth Century

The ruler who begins this period is emblematic. Peter I's general approach to religion was that of someone who regarded contemporary Protestant countries as models from both the point of view of personal piety and church–state relations (Zhivov 2004). In 1700, Peter shifted to the Julian calendar used in contemporary Protestant countries

(so that the New Year was now an official holiday celebrated with fir boughs and fireworks on January 1, not September) and in 1708 introduced a new typeface meant to distinguish secular books from those printed by and for the Orthodox Church. These initiatives marked an explicitly secular sphere, and marked the state as defining that sphere. A series of measures steadily reduced monasteries' numbers and strength. In 1721, Peter replaced the long-dormant Patriarchate with a Holy Synod, and assigned a lay Ober-Procurator over that Synod (Cracraft 1971). Like European rulers and religious authorities, and like Patriarch Nikon, Petrine authorities sought to control the population and standardize its religious practices (Lavrov 2000). All this began to shift Russian Orthodox piety in the direction of Europe's 'disciplinary revolution'.

It is important to bear in mind, however, that these reforms were not Peter's alone, nor did they necessarily come from a wish to secularize as such. Peter would not have been able to accomplish his goals without allies among hierarchs in the Orthodox Church. The writer of the strongest religious legislation in the Petrine era was not Peter, but Bishop Feofan Prokopovych (1681–1736) (Shevelov 1985). Like many other Ukrainian theologians, Feofan had studied theology in Rome. Unlike them, however, Feofan was more struck by contemporary Protestant thinking: it seemed to point to how Orthodoxy could be freed of 'magical' thinking and brought closer to what he saw as 'true' Christianity. His sermons on justification and salvation by faith found several champions in the Russian court. Feofan's and Peter's success suggests that for religious reforms to work, in Russia as in England centuries earlier, they needed a combination of ruler, hierarch, and elites.

Their most ambitious reforms, the Spiritual Regulation of 1721 and its 1722 Supplement, sought to reform adherents of the state Church along the lines of contemporary Europe (Muller 1972). Peter and Feofan did not want Russians to put their faith in relics, or visits to monasteries: regular confession and communion were the only real means of salvation. The Holy Synod remained cautious about any manifestations of the supernatural for over a century, confiscating alleged miracle-working icons, virtually refusing to canonize new saints, and subjecting any purported miracle even at recognized sites to rigorous investigation. First emphasized by Ukrainian theologians and used as an attempt to control the population by Tsar Aleksei Mihailovich, from 1700 onward confession played a steadily important role in disciplining Orthodox subjects (including new converts), educating them as to what was 'Orthodox', and internalizing Orthodox teaching (Kizenko 2018). The annual confession requirement also identified Old Believers and other dissenters from the state church. The instruction for priests to report anything they learned at confession of intended treason, however, marked a clear break with canon law. Although that part of the Supplement was rarely followed, its very existence signalled that state goals took priority over religious ones, and that both religion and state ought to have as their shared goal the common weal (Freeze 1985).

The new priority on confession continued Russian integration into broad European religious trends. Ukrainian clerics and bishops like Ioannikii Haliatovskyi (ca. 1620–1688), Innokentii Gizel' (ca. 1600–1683), Archbishop and Patriarchal locum tenens Stefan Iavorskii (1658–1722), and St. Dimitri (Tuptalo) of Rostov (1651–1709) had already

drawn on Roman Catholic theology and devotion in their writings. After Feofan, bishops began to embrace aspects of Protestant thought and piety as well. The Holy Synod used Martin Luther's Larger Catechism for most of the eighteenth century. Russian court sermons, catechisms, and devotional readings reflected the influence of Johann Gerhard and Johann Arndt. This helped to foster a general identification on the part of the court elite with Christendom writ large and a more ecumenical religious culture (Zhivov 2009; Ivanov 2017).

At the same time, other elements of Russian religious life remained relatively constant. Changes in ritual, such as the words of the absolution formula, did not happen as a result of Peter or Feofan, but via Metropolitan Petro Mohyla and Patriarch Nikon in the seventeenth century (see Chapter 1 in this *Handbook*). Indeed, the relative stability of the post-Nikonian liturgy, which reached far more Russians than did court sermons or catechisms, may have allowed more flexibility in other areas. But it is only in the eighteenth century that rulers appear to have awakened to the use of the liturgy for state purposes. The recitation of the names of the Imperial family at the Great Entrance, litanies commemorating the Imperial House, and state holidays linked to the throne, mark a new and distinctly baroque type of Russian Orthodoxy (Zitser 2004). The service cycle Peter commissioned on the occasion of the Russian victory at the 1709 Battle of Poltava was the first of its kind: compared to such earlier commemorative forms as church war memorials and sermons, services reached the greatest number of people with the same message on the same day, developed the intended political message in greatest depth, and lent it solemnity and authority. Empress Elizabeth showed particular originality when she replaced the existing service to the parents of St. John the Baptist, mentioning only Zacharias, with a newly-commissioned one to his mother—Elizabeth, her patron saint. This St. Elizabeth service, the court's fostering of the cult of St. Catherine, and new iconographic representations of the Crowning of the Virgin, similarly supported the principle of female rule (Iarygina 1994; Marker 2011).

The experience of the Russian Orthodox liturgy changed in style as well. If one were to only consult service books containing the lines priests said or the gestures they performed, one might not notice. The changing sheet music of court and parish choirs, however, would tell a different story. Such church composers as Dimitri Bortniansky, Artem Vedel', Maxim Berezovsky, Giuseppe Sarti, and Stepan Degtiarev (a serf), wrote new hymns (in the musical notation used elsewhere in Europe, rather than the unique notation Old Believers continued to use) that remain staples of the Russian Orthodox repertory (Ritzarev 2006). Particularly interesting are their free compositions of Biblical verses (*kontserty*) meant to be sung during the communion of the clergy. This time at the end of the Divine Liturgy had been a kind of 'dead zone' for the Russian Orthodox: as the Royal Doors were closed during the clergy's communion, and as few of the faithful partook of the sacraments outside Great Lent, there was not much for parishioners to do as they waited for the doors to open again. The eighteenth-century choral concerto gave the flock a more elaborate and more musically ambitious piece to enjoy than what the liturgy proper could accommodate. Even in the provinces, merchants and nobility vied

with one another to see who could muster the best peasant choirs (Ransel 2008). To criticize such musical developments as Westernization or decadence is to miss an important point: they allowed Russian elites to continue their intellectual and aesthetic engagement with their Church, and introduced non-elites to new musical approaches (Kizenko 2012).

These aural changes were accommodated by better-known visual developments in Orthodox art and architecture. The needle-pointed Church of Saints Peter and Paul (1712–1733) in the fortress of the same name resembled churches in Amsterdam; the Kazan Cathedral (1801–1811) that of St. Peter's in Rome. They, along with Rastrelli's Smolny Cathedral (1748–1764) and their numerous epigones outside the new imperial capital of St. Petersburg, told the Russian elites that they were in Europe aesthetically and aspirationally as well as geographically. The interiors of these churches matched their exteriors: naked cherubs with rosy cheeks cavorted in fluffy clouds on pale blue skies in elaborate gilded frames. Like the Gothic cathedrals built as pan-European monuments to the struggle of Christianity against Islam, the Gothic style churches in Russia from the second half of the eighteenth century to the first third of the nineteenth commemorated Russia's victories in the numerous little wars with the Turks. Alexander Vitberg's original 1817 plan for the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow, meant by Alexander I to signify 'Our gratitude to Divine Providence for saving Russia', and as a memorial to the sacrifices of the Russian people in the Napoleonic wars, was a neoclassical design loaded with Freemasonic symbols. The Orthodox liturgy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thus managed the rather neat feat of incorporating contemporary Western Christian aesthetic styles, and giving its adherents a sense that they were part of a broader Christendom, while also letting them believe that they were still in the line of the Eastern tradition. Far from remaining static, Russian Orthodox liturgy showed itself capable of accommodation and resiliency (Kizenko 2008a; Spasskii 2008).

The same may be said for representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy. Metropolitan Platon Levshin (1737–1812) and St. Tikhon of Zadonsk (1724–1783) represent the new ideal type of the enlightened eighteenth-century Russian bishop (Wirtschafter 2013; Ivanov 2017). Platon, educated at the Slavonic Greek Academy, so impressed Catherine II that she made him religious instructor of the future Emperor Paul I and eventually a member of the Holy Synod. Platon opposed serfdom and was more lenient to religious dissenters than his predecessors, allowing Old Believers to establish chapels in Moscow and formalizing the arrangement known as *edinoverie*, allowing Old Believer communities to join the established church while maintaining their traditional form of worship. He laid the groundwork for the Russian Bible Society, which was established the year he died. As Platon grew increasingly disenchanted with the restrictions emperors placed on him, he adopted a firmer and more confrontational posture towards the state, though he spoke candidly only to foreigners and only in private, suggesting that being even an enlightened bishop had its limits (Hamburg 2016).

St. Tikhon, a renowned ascetic who had read the Pietists, enjoined his clergy to preach at every service (something not yet standard in Russia), to read the Gospel daily, and wrote a guide enabling them to better confess their flocks. His devotional texts include

Journey to Heaven (1770), *On True Christianity* (1776), and collections of widely distributed inspirational aphorisms. He is generally regarded to have inspired elements in several of Dostoyevsky's characters, including Tikhon in *The Demons* and both Alyosha and Zosima in *The Brothers Karamazov* (Gorodetzky 1997). The time-lag between Tikhon's death and Dostoyevsky's work is not surprising: Catherine II's secularization of monastic estates in 1764, like Joseph II's 1780s reforms in the Habsburg empire, meant less opportunities for eighteenth-century Russians either to join monasteries or visit them. Although monasteries continued to fulfil their function of incarcerating individuals undergoing public penance (most often for such sins as adultery or missing confession and communion), 60 per cent of the monasteries in the empire closed; the number shrank from 954 to 387 (Smolitsch 1997).

Paradoxically, Catherine's reform actually helped spark a monastic revival later in the nineteenth century. By confiscating monastic estates and curtailing the number of monks, Catherine ensured that monasteries attracted a different class of people. Monasteries began to draw their recruits mostly from commoners, and these changes helped to reinvent monasticism as an institution (Kenworthy 2010). In the late eighteenth century, it was now so hard to enter a monastery that people began to seek alternatives. Some women formed informal religious communities (over two hundred such communities were formally established between 1764 and 1907) (Meehan 1993). The most notable counterexample to government pressure against monasticism was St. Paisii Velichkovskii (1722–1794), who pursued a kind of monasticism in exile. Born in Poltava (Ukraine), he spent time in monasteries on Mount Athos and in the Danubian Principalities. His community translated into Slavonic such Patristic classics as the *Philokalia* (*Dobrotoliubie)*, Isaac the Syrian, Theodore the Studite, and Gregory Palamas (Palmer et al. 1979–1995; Featherstone 1989). Paisii's revival of contemplative monasticism, known as hesychasm, inspired St. Seraphim of Sarov (1759–1833), one of the greatest hermit-turned-popular-saints, and the Optina elders (Nichols 2000–2001).

The second partition of Poland in 1793 brought about one hundred thousand Roman Catholics, about eight hundred thousand Uniates, and two million Ruthenians overall into the Russian empire, challenging Catherine's avowed principles of religious tolerance. The argument that Ruthenians suffered under the Polish yoke and from their 'unnatural' separation from their mother church was incorporated into Russians' political consciousness and led to a massive campaign to convert Uniates to Orthodoxy (Skinner 2009). The partitions of Poland also gave the Russian empire its first significant Jewish population. Russian government policy towards Jews from then on reflected an unresolved tension between integration and segregation resulting in contradictory laws and regulations. Catherine's legislation regarding Jews fostered their segregation from the rest of the population by ratifying their communal autonomy and religious institutions, but encouraged their integration into such new administrative institutions as merchant guilds and artisans' associations. In a state and legal system in which no one enjoyed the natural right to live anywhere and where residence was regarded as a privilege extended by the state, Jews were permitted to reside in the areas of the empire in which they had lived at the time of annexation (the Pale of Jewish Settlement). When Jews moved into

the area known as New Russia (southern Ukraine), Odessa became one of the major Jewish centres of the world (Nathans 2002).

Catherine's policy of religious toleration made Islam an essential pillar of Orthodox Russia. Russian rulers supported official Muslim authorities willing to submit to imperial directions in exchange for defence against brands of Islam they deemed heretical and destabilizing. Russian officials thus became arbitrators in disputes between Muslims, and Muslims became integrated into the empire, shaping imperial will in communities stretching from the Volga River to Central Asia (Crews 2009). Conversion was not a one-sided process from Islam to Orthodox Christianity: Muslim education helped to Islamize Finno-Ugric and Turkic peoples in the Kama-Volga region, and Tatar women, both Krashen (baptized, Christian) and Muslim, played a crucial role in transmitting Sufi knowledge (Kefeli 2014).

The Nineteenth Century

Nicolas Berdyaev famously quipped that St. Seraphim and the poet Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837), although contemporaries, lived in completely different worlds: the religious genius had no idea the poetic one existed; the writer never heard of the saint (Berdyaev 1962). There is no way of knowing whether the assertion is true. But, although Vasilii Rozanov would dismiss as inane Berdyaev's query as to whether it would be better for Russia spiritually to have had two saints but no Pushkin, the very fact that a Russian thinker at the end of the nineteenth century could pose such an opposition betrays not so much an ignorance of great men's biographies as of early nineteenth-century religious life (Rozanov 2017). Although the mystical hermit and the great poet do seem at first glance to be worlds apart, upon closer examination the early nineteenth century's bridges between the salon and the monastic hut become more evident (Zorin 2016).

Annual confession and communion, for example, figure in both biographies. So does a growing interest in mysticism. Freemasonry, originally brought to Russia by foreign officers in the Russian service, included the Emperor Paul among its members and had such local masters as Nikolai Novikov (1744–1818), a professor at the newly opened Moscow University, and Aleksandr Labzin (1766–1825). Novikov published secular satirical journals in the vein of *The Spectator* and *The Tatler*. Labzin, who founded the influential The Dying Sphinx lodge, produced *Messenger of Zion* (*Sionskii Vestnik*), a monthly journal that emphasized the 'religion of the heart' (Jones 1984; Smith 1999). In a rare example of writing as a shared pursuit among a married couple, Labzin's wife Anna also published her own account of the period (Marker 2000). Both men fell in and out of political favour as Russian rulers variously associated them with the French Revolution, Napoleon's invasion, the Holy Alliance, and the Greek Revolution.

The reign of Alexander I (1801–1825), perhaps the most genuinely religiously tolerant of all Russia's emperors, marked the high point of Russian elite involvement with such Western religious personalities as Madame de Guyon and Juliane von Krüdener, and with

an ecumenical approach broadly speaking. Indeed, from 1817–1824 the state attempted to administer all its faiths from a single Ministry of Religious Affairs and Popular Enlightenment. Alexander's proposal for a Holy Alliance among European monarchies opposing revolutionary movements in 1815 after the Napoleonic wars came out of a similar pan-European, pan-Christian impulse. This generally tolerant approach encouraged some to start their own mystical circles emphasizing the believer's personal connection to the divine. Ekaterina Tatarinova's group, which included the celebrated painter Vladimir Borovikovskii (1757–1825), was only one such instance (Emeliantseva 2008).

A reaction eventually crystallized around the figures of Mikhail Magnitsky (1778–1844), Admiral Alexander Shishkov (1754–1841), and Archimandrite Fotii (Spasskii) (1792–1838). The Bible Society was closed in 1826; Masonic and mystical publications and circles followed (Martin 1997). All this, however, paled in comparison to what would happen after Alexander's unexpected death in 1825. Freethinking noble officers took advantage of the interregnum to rebel against Nicholas I, the second of Alexander's younger brothers, in favour of a republic. When the rebellion was put down on 14 December 1825, what remained of publicly sanctioned liberalism went with it. Leading Decembrists, followed by their wives into Siberian exile, earned an aura of secular martyrdom against an overweening state.

The long reign of Nicholas I (1825–1855) brought reaction in the religious sphere as much as the political. The redesign of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is emblematic: Vitberg's neoclassical, Freemasonic design was replaced by Konstantin Thon's Russian Revival variant. It joined St. Isaac's Cathedral (1818–1858) as a massive monument to the new reigning doctrine, Sergei Uvarov's 'Official Nationality', also articulated as 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality'. This triad would link the Orthodox Church to the state and to evolving notions of Russian nationality. Autocracy's foes thought Official Nationality tarnished the Church's reputation, but the vague formula also provided a useful creative framework for religious patriots who could elaborate on its significance as they saw fit (Bushkovitch 1992). Fearing believers' disaffection to Old Belief, sectarianism, and scientific rationalism, the Synod softened its stance towards the laity's steadfast belief in miracles. This allowed for the printing of miracle stories in the Church's new religious journals and pamphlets and for the canonization for St. Mitrofan of Voronezh (1832). Nicholas's quashing of the Polish insurrection of 1830–1831 and the revolutions of 1848 associated Russia with reaction—a sentiment fostered by Herzen, Bakunin, and the many Polish Catholic emigrés who fled to other European countries. (The compulsory 1839 conversion of Greek Catholics in the Western provinces to Orthodoxy did not help.) Anti-Russian and anti-Orthodox pamphlets and cartoons in the 1830s and 1840s in both France and England helped fuel support in those countries for the Crimean War. Annual confession became enforced more aggressively in Nicholas's reign at both the level of the empire and of individual celebrities: when Nikolai Martynov killed the poet Mikhail Lermontov in a duel in 1841, Nicholas insisted he be assigned a church penance, just as he had insisted that Pushkin partake of the sacraments when dying from his duel-inflicted wounds in 1837 if he wanted his family to collect his pension. This was the last time a Russian emperor would seek to play such a direct role in the sacramental lives of his elite subjects.

Jewish communities now had to join the empire's other nationalities and denominations in providing recruits for the army: these young recruits, known as cantonists, were now actively encouraged to convert to Orthodox Christianity. The divisiveness and social dislocation that resulted from Nicholas's conscription policy besmirched the internal leadership of Russian Jewry, who were perceived to have favoured their own sons when exempting recruits. In another integrationist move with unexpected consequences, the Russian state in 1844 established special schools for Jewish children, meant to teach them Russian and basic secular subjects. *Maskilim*, the adherents of the Jewish Enlightenment movement, hailed these schools, but the traditionalist majority feared and hated them. The government of Nicholas I also abolished the *kahal*, the executive agency of the autonomous Jewish community, placing Jews under the formal control of local state authorities; at the same time, however, Jews were permitted to run their own religious affairs (Stanislawski 1983, 2010).

Nicholas encouraged scholarship in some spheres of religion. The Russian Spiritual Mission in Jerusalem opened in 1847 under the direction of Archimandrite Porfirii (Uspenskii), the scholar of antiquity in the Christian East who led archaeological expeditions to Palestine, Syria, Sinai, and Egypt. Missionary efforts flourished as well. In Alaska, St. Innocent Veniaminov (1797–1879) worked with Native leaders to develop an alphabet for the Aleut language, translating liturgical texts into both Aleut and Tlingit, and writing scholarly works about the indigenous populations. The continuing identification of Native Alaskans with Orthodox Christianity stems in large measure from his efforts. From 1842, the Kazan Theological Academy focused on missionary activity among local Tatar and Mongol populations. Believing that mother tongue instruction was key to fostering piety, Nikolai Il'minskii (1822–1891) directed the teaching of Arabic, Turkish, Tatar, Mongol, and Kalmyk (Geraci 2001). Fedor Solntsev (1801–1892), a painter and art historian, preserved medieval Russian culture in minutely accurate drawings of Russian antiquities. His discoveries and restoration projects included the mosaics and frescoes of Kiev's St. Sophia Cathedral and the Monastery of the Caves, and the Cathedral of St. Dimitrii in Vladimir (Whittaker 2010). Pavel Mel'nikov-Pecherskii (1818–1883) sympathetically depicted Old Believer skete life and argued for religious tolerance for Old Believers in particular.

Most Orthodox inhabitants of the Russian empire encountered Orthodoxy in the context of their rural parish and locally revered icons of the Mother of God, chapels, the Psalter, and such paraliturgical rites as *akafist* hymns. Their priests occupied a unique role. By the end of the eighteenth century the parish clergy became a largely closed social estate, with priests' daughters marrying priests' sons and eventually together 'inheriting' their parents' parishes. Several factors fostered the clergy's estate isolation from both the uneducated classes and the nobility: clerical family networks provided security; members of the clerical estate were exempt from the poll tax; and priests' children were educated in a separate system of church-run elementary schools.

The *akafist* hymn genre praising Christ, the Mother of God, and saints became a widespread form of devotional expression. Part of the *akafist*'s appeal was that chanting

could be entirely initiated by laity; the presence of clergy was not necessary. Nobles, peasants, merchants, and government bureaucrats all composed *akafists* in Church Slavonic (one honouring Russia's famous Vladimir icon of the Mother of God was written by a laywoman). Although the eloquent Innokentii (Borisov), Archbishop of Kherson (1800–1857), was particularly celebrated both for his *akafists* and his sermons during the Crimean War, his 1847 publication of *Last Days of Jesus Christ* made Jesus's life accessible as a devotional text, just as Alexander Ivanov's *The Appearance of Christ Before the People* (1837–1857) did in painting. *Tales of the Earthly Life of the Most Holy Mother of God*, which went through numerous editions after its first publication in the 1860s, similarly 'domesticated' Mary for a growing reading public of popular religious literature (Shevzov 2003, 2012).

Russian monasticism began a steady revival in the reign of Nicholas I. The ratio of nuns, monks, and novices relative to the Russian Orthodox population nearly tripled between 1840 and 1914, rising from 11,080 in 1825 to 94,629 in 1914. Monasteries became the destination for the massive upsurge of pilgrimage in the nineteenth century, as millions of believers from all social backgrounds were drawn to monasteries' relics of famous saints, solemn services, and living holy people. The number of men's monasteries shot up in the 1830s and 1840s, and started to rise again at the end of the 1870s. As in Roman Catholic Europe, the number of convents increased most dramatically from the 1880s to 1914, so that women, who had once been a minority in monasteries, made up over three-quarters of the total of monastics by the early twentieth century (Wagner 2006). As elsewhere, Russian women religious were more heavily involved in social ministry (teaching, caring for the poor and sick), while male monasteries in the Russian empire (unlike the Catholic world) continued their traditional contemplative emphasis (Kenworthy 2010). Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Mount Athos, fostered by both the Imperial Palestinian Society and Athonite *metochia* in Odessa, also became a mass phenomenon.

The Optina Hermitage and its example of 'inner work' flourished in the nineteenth century. While elite women had never stopped their interest in the monastic life, for the first time in over a century monasteries again started to attract such men from elite backgrounds as Bishop Ignatii Brianchianinov (1807–1867) and Archimandrite Leonid (Lev Kavelin) of Optina (1822–1891). Optina elders including Lev, Makarii, Anatolii, and Amvrosii inspired several generations of Russian writers and thinkers including Nikolai Gogol and Ivan Kireevskii (and, later, Dostoevsky and Leontiev). Optina and many other leading Church institutions and individuals owed their flourishing and their publication work in large measure to elite women who became prominent supporters, and, in some cases, collaborators (Paert 2010). Natalia and Ivan Kireevskii's joint projects with Optina helped extend the Patristic revival and hesychastic practices into the broadest reaches of society. The fabulously wealthy Countess Anna Orlova-Chesmenskaia (1785–1848) supported Archimandrite Fotii (Spasskii), with whom she maintained a lively correspondence, and single-handedly funded numerous monasteries, leaving over a million and a half rubles to 340 monasteries in her 1848 will.

Metropolitan Filaret Drozdov (1782–1867) influenced Russia both politically and culturally in his more than forty years as Metropolitan of Moscow: he wrote the text of the 1861 Emancipation Proclamation (although he had misgivings about ending serfdom), defended the Bible's translation into modern Russian, and composed the thanksgiving service after the last Grande Armée soldier quit Russia. The atmosphere of Pietism and mysticism he encountered in his early years inspired his involvement in translating the Bible into modern Russian, together with Archpriest Gerasim Pavskii (1787–1863), one of the founders of modern Biblical scholarship in imperial Russia, and brought him to a rediscovery of the early Church Fathers and contemplative prayer (Tsurikov 2003; Batalden 2013). Filaret was no less important for his lifetime correspondence with Russian elite women, including both Empresses Maria Fedorovna and Alexandra Fedorovna. Filaret's lengthy correspondence (1822 to 1849) with Ekaterina Novosil'tseva, née Countess Orlova, best shows how Orthodox women entered into literary dialogues with, and themselves offered advice to, their clerical correspondents.

Similarly extensive was the correspondence and publishing legacy of Bishop Feofan 'the Recluse' (1815–1894). Bishop Feofan, who began his career in the Russian Mission in Jerusalem and taught at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, later became a hermit, but continued to correspond with women including Princess Praskovia Lukomskaia, and published a more extensive Slavic version of the *Philokalia* than existed in the Greek original. As a result of their correspondence with clerics and monks, women like Natalia Fonvizina (the wife of one of the Decembrists) produced ego-documents drawing on models coming in part from Orthodox sources. The line between monastics, laity, and clergy could be blurred, with monks and nuns intensifying practices used by some members of the laity, or laity adapting monastic practices (Kizenko 2014).

Contact with monasteries, confessional texts, and the disclosure of thoughts to a spiritual elder benefited the Kireevskiis and such other writers as Fedor Dostoevsky and Konstantin Leontiev (1831–1891), who advocated closer ties between Russia and the East against what he saw as the West's catastrophic utilitarianism, egalitarianism, and revolution. It had a less salutary effect on the writing of Nikolai Gogol (1809–1852). Under the impact of a spiritual crisis, Gogol burned the second volume of his *Dead Souls* and produced *Selected Passages from Correspondence with My Friends* (1847), which, by emphasizing personal asceticism over correcting social ills, appeared to defend serfdom and the knout. This didactic text alienated both Slavophile and Westernizer friends and cost Gogol much of his popularity. It also cast Orthodox Christianity as defender of reaction. Gogol did help inspire perhaps the most original thinker among Orthodox monks in the reign of Nicholas I, Archimandrite Fedor (Bukharev) (1822–1871). In his 1848 letters to Gogol and to Aleksandr Lebedev, Bukharev developed a positive theology of the body and emphasized the need to Christianize all spheres of contemporary life (Valliere 2001). When the Synod stopped publication of his work on the Apocalypse, he left monasticism and continued to publish as a secular writer.

The poor showing of Russia in the Crimean War and the death of Nicholas I in 1855 inspired Alexander II, 'The Tsar-Liberator' (1855–1881), to undertake a series of radical

reforms. The abolition of serfdom, a reform of the judicial system, the abolition of corporal punishment, the promotion of local self-government, and the introduction of universal military service were accompanied by relative tolerance for religious and national minorities including Roman Catholics, Uniates, Protestants, the Armenian Gregorian Church, Old Believers, and a range of such smaller groups as the Dukhobors and the Molokans. Alexander II retained and expanded the policy of integration of the Jews into the Russian body politic, but under a far more liberal guise than that of his predecessor: conscription of Jewish children was outlawed, Jewish residence outside of the Pale of Settlement was expanded, and economic and educational restrictions against the Jews were lifted (Nathans 2002). The 1864 legal reform affected both perception and practice of religion: sensational legal cases and trials involving abbesses' misuse of funds, sects of self-castrators, and accusations of ritual murder entered the public domain (and found reflection in Dostoevsky's works).

The Great Reform climate inspired Russian clerics to pursue their own measures for improving Russian Orthodox religious life. These included elementary education in both parish and state schools and a wide range of publications. Scholarly journals published by the theological academies, diocesan newspapers (*eparkhial'nye vedomosti*), and some periodicals were aimed explicitly at clergy, most notably, the weekly *Guide for Rural Pastors* (*Rukovodstvo dlia sel'skikh pastyrei*). Mass-circulation saints' lives, prayer and hymn books, and the Gospels (often with a paragraph at the end summarizing the valuable lessons believers might learn—visiting the sick, preserving chastity, avoiding gossip, going to confession and communion) were especially popular among laity (Coleman 2014).

Particularly ambitious were periodicals aimed at attracting and engaging a wider reading public in Orthodox, or broadly Christian, issues. *Strannik* (1860–1917), *Dukhovnaia beseda* (1858–1876), *Domashniaia beseda dlia domashnego chteniia* (1858–1877), *Dushepoleznoe chtenie* (1860–1917), and *Chteniia v Moskovskom obshchestve liubitelei dukhovnogo prosveshcheniia* (1863–1917) devoted great space and attention to reviews of foreign publications and events as well as Russian ones. The Trinity-Sergius Lavra's *Trinity Leaflets* (*Troitskie listki*), distributed free to pilgrims, became one of the most popular and widely disseminated series of religious pamphlets throughout Russia. By the 1880s, the total number of *Leaflets* printed each year numbered 7 to 8 million. Contemporary literature and music reflected this interest: Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Nikolai Leskov, and Anton Chekhov described parish and monastic life in intimate detail. Tchaikovsky composed for the Russian Orthodox Church and incorporated religious motifs in some of his most famous compositions, including the *1812 Overture*. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Russian Easter Festival Overture: Overture on Liturgical Themes* (1887–1888) was similarly based in the Russian *obikhod* chant tradition (Morosan 1994). The scholarly study of the Russian Orthodox Church reached a professional level, with Metropolitan Makarii (Bulgakov)'s *History of the Russian Church* followed by similarly massive works by Evgenii Golubinskii (1834–1912). The otherwise resolutely secular social historian Vasilii Kliuchevskii (1841–1911) devoted a separate study to *Old Russian Saints' Lives as a*

Historical Source (1871) and spoke eloquently in 1892 on the meaning of St. Sergii of Radonezh for Russian history at the 500th anniversary of the founding of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra.

During the second half of the nineteenth century Russia experienced the rapid social change, industrialization, urbanization, spread of literacy, and greater social mobility that were part of modernity elsewhere. These were accompanied by many different religious responses. Greater mobility resulting from a growing railroad network made possible the boom in pilgrimage to such destinations as the four Lavras—Trinity-Sergius near Moscow, Alexander Nevsky in St. Petersburg, the Kiev Caves, Pochaev—and the Solovetskii monastery in the far north. Monasticism, pilgrimage, and *starchestvo* (spiritual eldership) developed in ways that were close to mass society, so that Russia did not experience the same degree of anti-clericalism as some other countries in Europe. Millions of people continued to see monastic spirituality as the ideal, and the revival of contemplative monasticism transformed both monasticism and Russian Orthodoxy: if the institution of elders was still controversial when Dostoevsky wrote *The Brothers Karamazov* (1878–1880), by the time of the revolution it was almost universally accepted (Robson 2007).

At the same time, the parish clergy produced its own response to modernity. Like Father Adolphus Kölping (1813–1865) in Germany, the holy Father Ioann Sergiev exemplified the active social consciousness of the Reform-era Orthodox Church: he gave to the poor, created shelters, developed employment programmes, and participated in the temperance movement. But, like St. Jean-Marie Vianney (1786–1859) in France, he also embodied a new type of charisma, serving ecstatically and calling the faithful to the chalice. Unusually, Father Ioann remained virgin throughout his marriage: this extraordinary step both signalled his continuity with earlier notions of asceticism and anticipated some of the 'God-seeking' practices described in this volume. The public acknowledgement of Father Ioann's miracles in the St. Petersburg newspaper *New Time* made Kronstadt one of the pilgrimage sites in Russia. Father Ioann became the first modern Russian religious celebrity, with his image on souvenir scarves, mugs, placards, and postcards. His cathedral was so packed at peak times during Great Lent that he was allowed the extraordinary step of conducting public mass confessions—something that would be cited as a precedent in the Soviet period. When Father Ioann was asked to minister to the dying Alexander III in 1894, his fame became international, attracting correspondents from Europe and the United States. His combination of social service, liturgical revival, charismatic prayer, and healing seemed to embody the answer of the Orthodox Church to the challenges of secularism, urbanism, and sectarianism. Father Ioann's published diary extracts (all priests were encouraged to keep diaries from the 1860s onwards) spurred religious autobiographical writing. With the rise of terrorism and the revolutionary movement, however, Father Ioann allied himself increasingly with the politics of the far right, raising the question of whether the Orthodox Church was fated to support the right in any political struggle (Kizenko 2000).

The assassination of Alexander II in 1881 ushered in a new era in Russian history. Alexander III (1881–1894) committed himself to stemming the tide of revolutionary

sentiment in the country by reversing his father's liberal policies in all areas of life, particularly towards non-Russian nationalities (including the previously loyal Armenians, Georgians, and Finns) and Jews (Geraci and Khodorkovsky 2001). There was an unprecedented boom of church construction in the neo-Russian style, beginning with the famous Savior on the Blood (1883–1907) on the spot where Alexander II had been assassinated: more churches and monasteries were consecrated in the thirteen-year reign of Alexander III than in the previous fifty. Particularly aggressive was the campaign to build large Russian churches in the empire's Western borderlands and abroad: Russian churches in the Russian style went up in Helsinki, Riga, Vilnius, and Warsaw, on the location of the battle at the Shipka Pass in Bulgaria in the Russo–Turkish War of 1877–1878, and in Paris (Kizenko 2008b). The Cathedral of St. Vladimir in Kiev, built on the 900th anniversary of the baptism of Rus', continued the tradition of engaging leading contemporary artists in Church projects, decorated as it was with frescoes by Vasnetsov, Nesterov, and Mikhail Vrubel (Pevny 2010).

By almost any external indicator—statistics of confession, communion, monastic enrolment, and conversion; religious and scholarly publications; pilgrimage; church construction and attendance; literary representations—Orthodox Christianity was a powerful force in late imperial Russia, engaging both intellectuals and the population as a whole and, thanks in part to new technologies, reaching the Russian masses more successfully than ever. The steady rise of nihilism, populism, anarchism, and revolutionary terrorism, however, suggested a potent counter-narrative. The acquittal of Vera Zasulich for her 1878 shooting of Governor-General Fedor Trepov for his brutal treatment of a political prisoner and Ilya Repin's 1885 painting of a political prisoner proudly refusing confession from a faceless priest were signs that the intelligentsia had identified a secular form of martyrdom explicitly opposed to traditional Orthodox values (Siljak 2008). Although some liberal Orthodox priests attempted to engage the workers' movement and the intelligentsia, others argued that liberals were a lost cause, and the Church should concentrate its energies on the village (Manchester 2008). The death of Alexander III left the Russian Orthodox Church much as it did the rest of the Russian empire: apparently strong and thriving and successfully engaging modernity, with but faint presentiment of the cataclysms ahead.

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CHAPTER 3

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND RELIGION IN REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA, 1894–1924

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In November 1917, in the midst of Russia's revolutionary upheaval, and only two weeks after the Bolsheviks' coup, Tikhon (Belavin, 1865–1925), son of a rural parish priest and recently elected Metropolitan of Moscow, was installed as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. He was the first patriarch to occupy that seat in two hundred years. With Emperor Nicholas II's abdication and the subsequent fall of the Romanov dynasty the previous spring, the imperial presence and lavish public ceremony that historically would have dominated this rite were conspicuously absent. Instead, the ceremony—updated to take into account the absence of an emperor—took place amidst artillery-damaged Kremlin churches, groups of Bolshevik guards, and a procession of workers and soldiers carrying red banners to the graves of fallen comrades buried in the Kremlin. This scene did not go unnoticed by observers. More than one newspaper described it as an encounter between 'two worlds'—be it a 'capricious interweaving' by fate, or one of total, mutual incomprehension (Silano 2019).

Internally coexisting and often divisive ideational worlds were not new to Russia. Nevertheless, insofar as members of these worlds mnemonically engaged Orthodoxy—or another metaphysically informed 'religion'—1917 marked an unprecedented watershed.[1]

[1] As a 'semantic black hole' (de Vries 2008, 8), 'religion' continues to be a contested term. For the purposes of this chapter, 'religion' refers to a metaphysically and dialogically oriented worldview, embracing both the 'immanent' and perceived 'transcendent' realms, in which prayer figures as 'one of its central phenomena' (Mauss 2003, 21). This definition presupposes an understanding of religion as both a sui generis phenomenon, as well as a humanly constructed one. As such, it includes the 'world religions' (Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, etc.), the numerous indigenous religious traditions, as well as the non-confessional religious worldviews that found their homes in imperial Russia. It does not, however, include the 'scientific-materialism' that informed the official Bolshevik worldview (Luehrmann 2015).

Despite an outwardly antiquated 'look', by 1917, the 'Orthodox world' that Patriarch Tikhon represented had emerged as avant-garde within its tradition. The reign of Nicholas II, and a brief period of Provisional Government rule, saw an upsurge in lived, intellectual, and artistic engagement with and within Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy's church intelligentsia, most of whom had attended Russia's theological academies, actively engaged in pressing issues of the day—democracy, socialism, freedom of conscience, personhood, and 'progress'. At the same time, however, inextricably tied with a regime in the throes of rapid industrialization, a prolonged bloody World War, and increasing social and political unrest, Russia's institutional Church faced harsh realities associated with modernity: individual autonomy, civil freedoms, scepticism, and pluralism.

The germination of a renewed Church—free from state control and intellectually prepared to meet such challenges—took place, therefore, in the midst of a fierce political storm. The years 1894 to 1917 witnessed the gradual erosion of bonds between the Church and the emperor, whose active involvement in Orthodox Church life had been understood as part of the 'sacred order of things' since Byzantine times (*Zhurnaly* 1:140). The Church's uncoupling from the state did not, however, come easily. Rapidly evolving events exposed deep philosophical fault lines among Orthodox Christians across all segments of society. Orthodox hierarchs proved particularly vulnerable to criticism as 'servants of the state' for supporting, if not directly contributing to, Orthodoxy's imperial legacy, internal corruption, and institutional stagnation. Despite the Church's entanglement with a crumbling imperial regime, widespread Orthodox debates about the fate of the Church as an institution and community, and about the viability of Orthodoxy and religion more generally in modern times, nonetheless demonstrated a staunch commitment to a world with which any future regime would have to contend.

Modern Orthodox thinking and reform efforts were interrupted, however, by a series of unanticipated events: the Bolshevik coup in October 1917; the Bolsheviks' dissolution of the Constituent Assembly; a brutal civil war; the new regime's recourse to extreme violence; and its commitment to a utopian vision that sought to cultivate a new 'godless' Soviet person. In the span of weeks, the position of Orthodoxy as an institution and a faith shifted dramatically. The Bolshevik regime not only homogenized Orthodoxy into the mix of 'traditional faiths'—all of which were submerged under the single canopy of 'religion' and pinpointed for eradication, or, at best, 'natural death'—but also relegated Orthodoxy to the position of least desired and most hazardous within that mix. Despite Bolshevik policies that initially seemingly privileged Russia's non-Orthodox faiths, all confessions ultimately converged in their eyes. As Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924) noted, they were all 'unspeakable abominations'—or, as the managing director of the Council of the People's Commissars V. S. Bonch-Bruevich (1873–1955) maintained, 'superstitions' that the new regime had the ability to destroy with a 'heavy hand' (Luchshev 2012, 9; 2016, 39).

The history of Orthodoxy during the Soviet period has received significant academic attention. Indeed, some scholars have even concluded that the 'history of direct and indirect control of religious believers under Soviet rule has been exhaustively researched' (Kelly 2016, 12). The fact remains, however, that there is a dearth of English-language

studies about Orthodoxy and religion during the years of Russia's revolution and civil war (Kenworthy 2018). Furthermore, scholars have yet to grasp fully the complex nature of the Bolshevik project from the perspective of 'religion', and the project's long-term impact on Russia's numerous religious traditions and their adherents.

The Twilight of Orthodox Imperial Rule

On the eve of the First World War, the Orthodox Church enjoyed a formidable presence in Russia's landscape, appearing deceptively united and stable. As an institution, it boasted 54,174 churches and 23,593 chapels served by some 113,129 clergymen distributed among the empire's sixty-three dioceses. Many of the more than 1,000 male and female monastic communities, in which some 21,303 male and 73,299 female monastics and novices lived and worked, served as pilgrimage destinations for millions of people (*Vsepoddaneishii*; Worobec 2009). The imperial regime considered Orthodoxy as the 'primary and predominant' faith, thereby privileging the Orthodox Church as a state church.

At the same time, Orthodoxy was only one of many faiths in Russia. Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Shamanism, Catholicism, various Protestant groups, Orthodox Old Believers, along with a host of indigenous religious traditions and 'sects', cultivated their own faith cultures, and Russia's culture overall. Based on the long-rooted premise that 'each people had its own "natural faith" (*prirodnaia vera*)', the imperial regime defined its subjects primarily in confessional, rather than ethnic or national, terms (Werth 2014, 45). Consequently, its laws made no provision for the 'non-religious' or 'unaffiliated' in the contemporary sense of this term (Lee 2015). Accordingly, if by the term 'Russian' we mean the territorial '*rossiiskaia*', and not the ethnic '*russkoe*', the history of 'Russian religious thought' would include an impressive, culturally diverse array of thinkers associated with a wide variety of faith traditions.

Although privileging Orthodoxy, the imperial state governed its diverse groups of imperial subjects through what Paul Werth has termed a 'multiconfessional establishment'. Despite its politically motivated strategies, the state was surprisingly mindful of the integrity of Russia's numerous non-Orthodox confessional communities. Not only did Russia's state officials involve non-Orthodox religious representatives in deliberations regarding the codification of their respective laws, but state officials also attempted to ensure that regional legal codes were based on each faith's traditions (Werth 2014). Ironically, although only the Orthodox Church enjoyed the right to proselytize, Orthodox subjects were also the most constrained in terms of their freedom to choose faiths. Until 1905, conversion from Orthodoxy was prohibited.

Nevertheless, even though its 'favoured' imperial status gave the Orthodox Church an aura of invincibility and stability, it also contributed to the Church's social marginalization

and lack of internal cohesion. Aware of the compromised position in which Orthodoxy found itself as the state's 'primary faith', clergy and educated laity began advocating for the Church's institutional independence from the state in order to allow for its members more effectively to navigate the social and political turmoil increasingly engulfing Russia.

Two major factors underpinned the Church's institutional struggles for self-determination in the years before 1917: (a) a two hundred-year-old state-imposed infrastructure based on a view of Orthodoxy as little more than 'a body of beliefs shared by the emperor's subjects' (Meyendorff 1978, 170), which left the Church with no structurally independent identity or shared self-definition among members; and (b) state ascription of the 'Russian people' to Orthodoxy from birth (through the sacrament of baptism). Both of these factors problematized the meaning and understanding of 'Church', the nature of 'belonging', and the imagined sacred worldview and order that 'Church' represented (Shevzov 2004).

Contrary to conventional wisdom, Orthodoxy's legally privileged position became an increasing burden and liability to its members, especially as revolutionary undercurrents grew stronger. Although many of Russia's state bureaucrats may have considered themselves Orthodox, their primary concern was Russia as a state and empire. Consequently, state officials often utilized Orthodoxy and the Church strategically, to serve their political goals. In doing so, they often engaged issues inherent to Church affairs without even consulting state-appointed members of the Church's ruling body, the Holy Synod (Werth 2014).

The politically oriented world of State Orthodoxy, accordingly, had its own 'sacred' ordering principles that did not necessarily correspond with most believers' existential day-to-day realities; it had little interest in the notion of 'Church' defined as a community of freely ascribed believers. In many ways, Nicholas II only exacerbated the institutional Church's burdens. Legally endowed with the position of 'guardian of Orthodoxy' and 'Head of the Church' in the spirit of his Byzantine imperial predecessors, Nicholas II held a deep commitment to the perceived sacrality of his office. As a result, however, Nicholas II generally regarded Orthodox bishops and clergy as little more than state functionaries, whose primary obligation was loyalty to the emperor and shepherding 'the Russian people' accordingly (Firsov 2002a, 64). Moreover, his sometimes mystical approach to his duties, and his firm belief in an indissoluble sacred bond between himself and 'the people', blinded him to the conditions in which those same people lived and died.

After 1905, Nicholas II's and Empress Alexandra's close relationship with the pseudo-elder Grigory Rasputin (1869–1916) only further compromised the Emperor's image as a competent head of Church and state. Even though they subsequently attempted to warn the Emperor about Rasputin's questionable character, several of St. Petersburg's high-placed clergy nonetheless had initially facilitated the lay Siberian peasant qua elder's entry into aristocratic circles (Smith 2016, 263). The Church, therefore, did not escape Rasputin's shadow. Rasputin's subsequent influence over the promotion of clergymen to the episcopal ranks only bolstered growing frustrations among well-known hierarchs with the tsarist regime.

In addition to an understanding of the Church as 'one' with Russia's ruling regime, Nicholas II also inherited a legal definition of 'Church', focused primarily on clergy as a distinct state service rank; lay men and women were excluded since, as imperial subjects, their service lay elsewhere. Such an identification of 'the Church' exclusively with clergy ran counter to the ancient Orthodox-embraced understanding of Church as *ekklesia*, referring both to the local assembly of Christians and to the universal community of Christians that each local assembly was understood to embody. Indeed, according to Russia's Petrine-inspired law code, lay believers, for all practical purposes, were incidental to the definition and institutional functioning of 'the Church' (Shevzov 2004, 23).

Insofar as it was identified with the state, therefore, the institutional Church entered Russia's years of revolutionary upheaval with a massive public image problem, fuelled by the fact that, independently from the state, it and its membership were ill defined. Even Russia's legal experts and historians of church (or canon) law could not agree on a definition of the term 'Church' (Dorskaia 2004, 99). Whether cultivated through lived experience, or impression from a distance, peoples' associations with 'the Church' were conflicted at best. When identified with the episcopacy and bureaucratic chancellery officials, 'the Church' often repelled those seeking existential authenticity, prompting them to search for life-meaning elsewhere. In contrast, for those who thought of 'Church' primarily in terms of the sacred space of a church building (*khram, tserkov'*) and the prayer and rituals associated with it, parish clergy were primarily facilitators of an experience-based 'ritual knowledge'. In this context, clergy were not part of an 'institution'; they were a part of a broader sensory and relational field by in which believers 'construed and constructed their worlds' (Jennings 1996, 112). For the vast majority of believers, bishops figured little, if at all, in this sacred place-defined notion of 'Church'.

Not surprisingly, then, debates about 'the Church'—what it was and what it should be—dominated Orthodox discourse during the final years of Romanov rule and the short period of Provisional Government rule. Despite the fact that both Russia's intelligentsia and members of the Church's institutional establishment had long spoken of mutual estrangement, many of Russia's intelligentsia were children of clergy (Manchester 2008). Moreover, a long history of personal interactions among Russia's lay theologically trained 'church intelligentsia', university-trained intelligentsia, and clergy helped to shape prominent trends in both 'religious' and 'Orthodox' thought. Therefore, while members of the Church establishment and Russia's intelligentsia may have perceived each other as inhabiting 'different worlds', their history of interaction testifies to a more complex relationship. Indeed, initiated by D. S. Merezhkovsky (1865–1941) and his friend, V. A. Ternavtsev (1866–1940), a lawyer, theological academy auditor, and one-time secretary for the reform-minded Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, Antony Vadkovsky (1846–1912), the groundbreaking Religious–Philosophical Meetings in St. Petersburg were more of a manifestation of a rich history of cultural interactions *within* an Orthodox-informed hermeneutical cultural circle than a meeting of two hermeneutically isolated and opposing worlds.

Characteristically, the first gathering of the Religious–Philosophical Meetings in 1901 featured Ternavtsev's lecture on the topic 'The Russian Church before a Monumental

Task' (Polovinkin 2005, 5–19). The subject of his talk—'the Church'—generated heated discussion. Commenting on Ternavtsev's presentation, the dean of St. Petersburg Theological Academy Sergius (Stragorodskii, 1867–1944) underscored the inaccurate yet widespread identification of the term 'Church' exclusively with clergy. The religious philosopher V. V. Rozanov (1856–1919) summarized the problem from the perspective of many of Russia's educated lay believers, in particular the intelligentsia:

> I am a believer, but experience some bewilderment. I have wandered in faith . . . but why? Well, where was I supposed to go? The understanding of the Church as the eternal body of Christ developed at this meeting was very beautiful. . . . But, pardon me, where, nevertheless, am I supposed to go with my doubts—to this same intangible 'Body of Christ?' . . . Asking myself about the Church, I can find its doctrines, its liturgical services and its rituals. But I open the pages of Filaret's [Drozdov, 1882–1867] catechesis and read: 'the Church is the community of believers united together dogmatically and sacramentally'. Then I look around and ask myself, 'Well, where is this community?' . . . It is proposed that the intelligentsia 'reconcile themselves with the Church', that they enter 'the Church'. So, here I am—a member of the intelligentsia. But I do not know with whom I am supposed to reconcile, or where I am supposed to go, because that which according to Filaret is designated as 'the Church' . . . does not seem to exist. (Polovinkin 2005, 40)

Although Orthodox believers might have empathized with Rozanov's complex identification with—and simultaneous sense of alienation from—'the Church', believers' 'Church experience' was anything but uniform. Insofar as it was not generally linked to frequent participation in the Eucharist, the communal experience that the phenomenon of 'Church' implied was not necessarily sought in the parish church to which believers were territorially assigned. People could experience 'Church' in a variety of settings, including chapels, pilgrimage sites, monasteries, icon visitations and processions, and family home prayer, thereby making regular church attendance an arbitrary marker of committed Orthodox belonging. In this sense, 'Church' was a fluid notion. Furthermore, negative 'Church' experiences also varied widely. The source and long-term consequences of Rozanov's sense of alienation, for instance, differed from that of a fourteen-year-old girl's, who felt her sacred sensibilities so violated by a 'bad confessional experience' that she abandoned her desire to embark on a monastic life and eventually became an atheist. ('Avtobiografii', 157–8).

Despite Orthodoxy's protean Church culture and the variety of 'Church experience', countless lay people were invested in the 'life' of their temple. Contrary to church-related state legislation, which had little to say about lay believers' roles in managing Church affairs, state legislation on rural governance empowered Russia's peasant majority to participate in this management via village assemblies. State law, for instance, charged village assemblies with the financial support of parish clergy, the construction and maintenance of their church building, and the oversight of charitable work. Consequently, although legally the parish community and the village community were two separate entities, in lived reality, the latter administrative unit played a critical role in the management of the former ecclesial one (Shevzov 2004, 80–93).

In terms of the fate of the Orthodox Church (as an institution and body of faithful) in revolutionary Russia, such seemingly minor details had significant consequences. First, from the perspective of the majority of Russia's officially Orthodox population, the village assembly provided a legally established context in which to discuss church-related matters. Second, such an arrangement challenges the persistent impulse to identify 'the Church' and its governance exclusively with clergy. Although the village assembly discussed church-related matters, according to law, the parish priest could not attend these assemblies unless invited. Therefore, church-related discussions often took place in his absence, and decisions became subject to the local moral economy. The blurred boundaries between village and parish administration, therefore, resulted in priests routinely complaining long before 1905 or 1917 that 'the people' considered church property *theirs* to oversee, often protesting when clergy infringed upon their perceived *right* to do so (Shevzov 2004, 84–5).

Local parish priests, therefore, were frequently left navigating a complex network of relationships within and between villages in order to negotiate positions of authority (and financial stability for their families). Whereas members of the urban intelligentsia, such as Rozanov, may have felt as outsiders with respect to 'the Church', ironically, in the case of rural parish communities, it was not uncommon for clergy to experience an analogous emotion.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly with respect to the notion of 'Church', the legal ascription of the 'Russian people' to Orthodoxy from birth made it virtually impossible to distinguish between self-identified, committed Orthodox believers, non-Orthodox believers, non-confessional believers, agnostics, atheists, and the indifferent. As a result, some saw 'the Church' in Russia more as a 'mob' than a community (Sokolov 1906). The management of rural church affairs often found Orthodox believers positioned between the parish clergy on the one hand, and their fellow villagers on the other—villagers who, while Orthodox by state ascription, did not necessarily share the same sacred sensibilities.

In terms of Orthodoxy's uncoupling from the state, then, 1905 marked a modest though significant turning point. On 17 April 1905, Nicholas II issued his decree 'On Strengthening the Principles of Religious Toleration'. Although limited in scope, the decree legalized conversion from Orthodoxy to other Christian confessions. As a result, the decree initiated the arduous processes of differentiating religious from ethnic identity, and distinguishing self-identified committed Orthodox believers from 'the Russian people' at large, in effect ratifying the long-existing reality of religious diversity among Russia's state-ascribed Orthodox population.

Although threatening to shrink the size of the institutional Church's membership through conscientious attrition, the April decree and the subsequent 1905 October Manifesto counterintuitively generated potential for more Orthodox cohesiveness as a result of such a potential exodus. Indeed, prior to 1905, committed Orthodox believers would be difficult to identify (although scholars often look to the problematic source of state-imposed annual confession records in attempts to do so). Most Orthodox hierarchs and clergy at that time, however, failed to see the liberating aspects of the 1905 legislation (i.e. a smaller, but committed, known 'flock'). Concerned more with the

quantity than the quality of their flock, church hierarchs remained focused on the relatively disadvantaged position in which the Manifesto left the institutional Church. They objected to the Church remaining legally bound to the state, lacking the legal freedom necessary to engage creatively with the growing marketplace of religious ideas.

With mounting pressures around confessional politics, Nicholas II granted the Holy Synod permission to begin deliberations for a future Church Council. In 1906, a Preconciliar Commission consisting of forty-nine participants—most of whom represented Russia's theological academy-trained 'church intelligentsia'—convened to draft a vision for institutional reforms, and to articulate the theological and canonical principles that would best ensure the integrity of Orthodoxy in a modern age. United in their appeals to the Khomiakovian notion of *sobornost'* (see Chapter 8 in this *Handbook*)—which by this time had become normative in official Orthodox discourse—the Commission's participants nevertheless remained divided over the term's meaning and implications for the institutional ordering of Church life (Shevzov 2004, 35–45; 2013). Based on a vision of human relationality transfigured by the power of the Holy Spirit—with no difference between 'the scholar and the unlearned, the cleric and the lay person, men and women, king and subject' in matters of faith (Khomiakov 1907, 91)—the idea of *sobornost'* revitalized the existential significance of 'Church', making the 'communal' integral to the ancient Orthodox understanding of the personal path of *theosis* (Shevzov 2004, 31–2).

To a large extent, the notion of *sobornost'* prompted thinking about 'Church' in the critical decades before 1917, helping to elucidate the wide range of coexisting views regarding the definition of Church. For many clergy and laity at the time, *sobornost'* offered a means to embrace modern democratic ideals in an Orthodox key; for others it implied limitation of episcopal authority. Insofar as it suggested an institutional administrative structure that included laity, the notion of *sobornost'* left many clergy and laity guarded during the revolutionary years. They feared that those who remained Orthodox 'by ascription only' might become active in church affairs and decide to control matters in inimical ways (*Zhurnaly*, 1:47, 50; 3:73–4).

Despite the Preconciliar Commission's historic work, Nicholas II's failure to convoke an All-Russia Church Council left Church reforms on hold. Instead, the debates continued mostly in the public domain. In the final decade before 1917, impassioned discussions about 'Church' took place in the secular and religious press and found their way into the discourse of rural believers.

February 1917: The Push for Orthodox Self-Determination

The abdication of Nicholas II on 2 March 1917, and the subsequent dissolution of the Romanov dynasty, caught many of Russia's Orthodox Christians off guard. In the span of days, Russian Orthodoxy and monarchy had become untethered. Orthodoxy's

two-hundred-year legal 'primary' status was rendered not merely meaningless, but an increased liability. Reflecting deep disenchantment with the imperial regime, the members of the Holy Synod issued no public call for support of the monarchy.[2] On March 6, 1917—four days after Nicholas II's abdication—the Holy Synod sent a brief directive to clergy to conduct a special prayer service for the 'calming of passions'. Henceforth, prayers for the Provisional Government officially replaced those for the Tsar during liturgical services.

The rapidly changing socio-political environment provided little support for a Church standing 'before the totally unknown' (*VTsOV*, no. 2, 1917). For the next five months, while attempting to come to a consensus regarding the sacred principles underlying Church order, Orthodox Christians faced a barrage of unprecedented challenges, many of which were aggravated by, or fallouts from, the fading imperial past.

First, Orthodox Christians had to negotiate with two coexisting centres of political power: (a) a self-appointed, democratically oriented Provisional Government, which, while not ideologically inimical towards Orthodoxy, advocated moving gradually towards separation of church and state; and (b) the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, whose largely Marxist-informed worldviews were hostile towards the Orthodox Church as both a religion and an emblem of the tsarist regime. The dual power of the Provisional Government and Petrograd Soviet only exacerbated Orthodox Christianity's own internal turmoil.

Second, although presumably free from imperial state interference, the Holy Synod nevertheless saw little change in the state's relations towards the Church under the Provisional Government. The government's liaison with the Synod, V. N. Lvov (1872–1930)—a self-identified Orthodox believer with liberal leanings—assumed the functions of an 'old style' chief procurator. With seemingly little trust in the Holy Synod to steer the institutional Church in the 'proper' direction in the new political waters, Lvov repeatedly made unilateral decisions, defending his actions as removing 'the pernicious sources of gangrene in the Church' (referring primarily to Rasputin-related episcopal appointments) (*VTsOV*, no. 63, 1917, 2). He agreed to relinquish authority as the Church's 'overseer' only to an elected Church body—namely, the anticipated Church Council.

Third, while members of the Holy Synod continued to push for independence from state interference, rural parish communities drew on decades of lived experience, with many parishioners adopting the notion of *sobornost'* to articulate their democratically informed visions of Orthodoxy's institutional future. During the spring of 1917, clergy and laity convened in assemblies in most dioceses (Leontiev 1997; Kail 2013; Evtuhov 2014). Delegates prepared for elections to the upcoming Council and instituted the election of parish priests and, in some cases, diocesan bishops. Such rapid changes resulted

[2] The institutional Church's lack of public support for the monarchy has led some historians to find the institutional Church largely responsible for the monarchy's downfall (Babkin 2011).

in at least some eyewitnesses noting that they 'had never seen such disorder . . . even their former . . . supposedly drunken village assemblies were better' (Leontiev 1997).

The culmination of these diocesan assemblies was a ten-day meeting in June 1917 of an All-Russia Assembly of Clergy and Laity. Drawing some 1268 participants, it was unique for its general lack of episcopal oversight. The assembly supported the downfall of the tsarist regime, and honoured all those who had 'selflessly suffered and died in the struggle for the rights of the people' during the February uprisings. Delegates favoured a future state (preferably democratic) that embraced 'popular rule, full freedom of religion, and independence of the Church from state interference'. Yet, despite the Church's recent negative experience with Petrine-inspired imperial rule, key delegates, including S. N. Bulgakov (1871–1944) and E. N. Trubetskoi (1863–1920), resisted the idea of a *full* separation of church and state. They imagined a democratic state in which the Church would retain its autonomy from the state, yet in terms of state support, Orthodoxy would enjoy the status of 'first among confessional equals' (*VTsOV*, no. 53, 1917).

Delegates were also reluctant to support a secular educational system in which students would have no access to religious instruction. In discussing the existing views on the issue, an editorial in the liberal central church publication, *Tserkovno-obshchestvennyi vestnik*, maintained that the majority of the population (mostly peasants) had not yet had adequate time to process the implications of a 'non-religious state'.[3] As a compromise, an anonymous author suggested that each school offer students religious instruction according to their confessional identities; if students had a 'non-confessional status', they would be exempt from such instruction (*VTsOV*, no. 62, 1917, 1).

Fourth, despite the lack of consensus within society on the issue, the Provisional Government remained committed to a gradual separation of church from state (Odintsov and Red'kina 2016). The new laws—'On the Abolition of Confessional and National Restrictions' (March 1917) and 'On the Freedom of Conscience' (July 1917)—were steps in this direction, formally bringing Orthodoxy's 'primary' status as a state religion to an end, and introducing a progressive 'non-confessional' legal category.

Although citizens designated 'Orthodox' by ascription were now technically free to choose any confessional identity—or none at all—they did not necessarily do so. Many retained their one-time state-ascribed Orthodox status, if only out of habit, despite the fact they may had long ceased to be, or never had been, committed believers. Histories of Orthodoxy in Russia during this period often fail to recognize this factor, hence indiscriminately interpreting all church-related activism in the period between February and October 1917 as necessarily involving Orthodox *believers*.

Yet, because of the difficulty of distinguishing between committed self-defined Orthodox believers and nominal state-ascribed Orthodox Russians whose religious

[3] The history of the church publication *Tserkovno-obshchestvennyi vestnik* (*Church-Societal Herald*) in 1917 reflects the ecclesial turmoil during this fateful year. The *Herald*'s editorial oversight changed three times during the course of that single year.