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Redaktore: **Laine Kristberga**

Literārā redaktore: **Arta Jāne**

Maketētāja: **Margarita Stoka**

Vāka dizaina autori: **Kārlis Koņkovs, Matiss Kūlis**

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### Zinātniskās redakcijas kolēģija

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## **SOCIO-POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND MOVEMENTS IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> – 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURIES**

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*Religious-Philosophical Articles XXV* are dedicated to the international conference *Socio-Political and Religious Ideas and Movements in the 20<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> Centuries* organised by the researchers of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia. The conference was held in cooperation with colleagues from the Institute of Political Science of the University of Opole, the Institute of International Studies of the University of Wrocław, the Institute of General History of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Philosophy of the St. Petersburg State University. The conference took place in Riga on 4–5 October 2018. Thus, the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology fulfilled its commitment in 2016, after the International Conference *The Church and Totalitarian Regime: Secularization and Strategies of Survival*, to become one of the centres for international cooperation on the topic of the Church-power relations.

The conference was attended by scholars from Latvia, as well as Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Estonia, England and Hungary. As in 2016, the conference was attended by a large group of academics from Russia – both from the St. Petersburg State University and the institutes of Russian Academy of Sciences as well as religious educational institutions such as St. Filaret Orthodox Christian Institute.

The conference served as a platform to exchange ideas and the results of the latest studies on the reciprocity and significance of religious and socio-political views and ideologies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and nowadays. In

the modern-day ever-changing political situation, increasing danger to the safety and stability of society in Latvia and other European countries is caused by the manipulation of the seemingly traditional conceptions of ethical, religious and cultural values evident in the public discourse and media space. Under the impact of global processes, social anxiety and moral disorientation facilitate a dangerous trend to trust the populist ideologies and quasi-religious ideas, as well as increase the level of radicalisation of religious communities.

For a better understanding of the current processes, it is necessary to examine the experience of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the so-called 'Soviet-bloc' countries, where the processes of the secularisation of society took place under the circumstances of authoritarian/totalitarian regimes. Such kind of secularisation facilitated not only profoundly rooted political and social myths in society and cultivated them in the educational system and media space, but also radically changed the religious experience of believers. Looking from this viewpoint, it is crucial to establish a multi-dimensional understanding of the connection between the socio-political ideas and religious consciousness in the society.

Papers presented at the conference covered a wide range of topics connected to the above-described processes in modern society and to the retrospective analysis of the cases of the last century. The participants of the conference discussed the following issues: the interchange of socio-political ideologies and religious movements in the post-secular society; political and religious movements in the USSR (Bolshevism and the reaction of the Church towards it; the atheism and the problems of preservation of religiosity: the dissident movement and the Church; non-traditional religious groups in the circumstances of the Communist regimes); interchange of political and religious movements in Latin America (Communism and liberation theology); religion and the role of religious institutions in peace processes in the 20<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries; religion and conflicts on a global scale in the current century; the potential of religious groups in the socio-political sphere and the current tendencies and problems in the Baltic states and the EU.

In *Religious-Philosophical Articles XXV*, we have published a part of extended texts of the papers that had been read at the conference. The authors represent different approaches and methodologies, but, at the same time, they are united by the aim to understand the complicated links between politics and religion and the mutual impact of both spheres. We are sure that the studies, published in this volume, will be of interest also to our readers.

**Solveiga Krumina-Konkova**  
**Inese Runce**

## SOCIĀLI POLITISKĀS UN RELIĢISKĀS IDEJAS UN KUSTĪBAS 20. UN 21. GADSIMTĀ

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*Reliģiski-filozofiski raksti XXV* ir veltīti starptautiskajai konferencē "Sociāli politiskās un reliģiskās idejas un kustības 20. un 21. gadsimtā", kuru organizēja Latvijas Universitātes Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūta pētnieki. Konferences organizēšanā piedalījās arī kolēģi no Polijas Opoles Universitātes Politiskās zinātnes institūta un Vroclavas Universitātes Starptautisko pētījumu institūta, Krievijas Sanktpēterburgas Valsts universitātes Filozofijas institūta un Krievijas Zinātņu akadēmijas Vispārīgās vēstures institūta. Konference notika Rīgā 2018. gada 4. un 5. oktobrī. Tādējādi tika īstenota Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūta apņemšanās, kura izskanēja 2016. gadā organizētās starptautiskās konferences "Baznīca un totalitārais režīms: sekularizācija un izdzīvošanas stratēģijas" noslēgumā: Latvijas Universitātes Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūtam jāklūst par vienu no starptautiskās sadarbības centriem Baznīcas un varas attiecību tēmas izpētē.

Konferencē piedalījās zinātnieki no Latvijas, kā arī no Polijas, Lietuvas, Igaunijas, Anglijas un Ungārijas. Tāpat kā 2016. gadā konferencē piedalījās arī liela zinātnieku grupa no Krievijas – no Sanktpēterburgas Valsts universitātes, Krievijas Zinātņu akadēmijas institūtiem, kā arī tādām garīgām mācību iestādēm kā Sv. Filareta Pareizticīgais Kristīgais institūts.

Konferencē notika plaša apmaiņa ar idejām un aktuālo pētījumu rezultātiem par reliģisko un sociāli politisko uzskatu un ideoloģiju mijiedarbību un nozīmi 20. gadsimtā mūsdienu sabiedrībā. Mūsdienu mainīgajā sociāli politiskajā situācijā arvien lielākus draudus sabiedrības drošībai un



stabilitātei sagādā publiskajā diskursā un mediju telpā veiktā manipulēšana ar šķietami tradicionāliem priekšstatiem par ētiskajām, reliģiskajām un kultūras vērtībām. Globālo procesu ietekmē sociālā trauksme un ētiskā dezorientācija veicina bīstamu tendenci uzticēties populistiskajām ideoloģijām un kvazireliģiskajām idejām, kā arī pastiprina reliģisko kopienu radikalizēšanās pakāpi.

Lai labāk izprastu aktuālās norises, nepieciešams analizēt 20. gadsimta pieredzi, it īpaši t. s. padomju bloka valstīs, kur sabiedrības sekularizācijas procesi notika autoritārā / totalitārā režīma apstākļos. Šāda sekularizācija veicināja ne tikai politisko un sociālo mītu iesakņošanu sabiedrībā un to kultivēšanu izglītības sistēmā un mediju telpā, bet radikāli izmainīja arī ticīgo cilvēku reliģisko pieredzi. Raugoties no šāda skatpunkta, ir svarīgi izveidot daudzdimensionālu izpratni par sociāli politisko ideju saikni ar reliģisko apziņu sabiedrības dzīvē.

Konferencē nolasītie referāti aptvēra plašu tēmu loku, kas ietvēra kā iepriekš aprakstīto mūsdienu sabiedrībā notiekošo procesu, tā arī pagājušā gadsimta būtiskāko gadījumu analīzi. Konferencē diskutējās tika aplūkoti šādi jautājumi: sociāli politisko ideoloģiju un reliģisko kustību mijiedarbība postsekulārajā sabiedrībā; politiskās un reliģiskās kustības PSRS (boļševisms un Baznīcas reakcija pret to; ateisms un reliģiozitātes saglabāšanas problēmas; disidentu kustība un Baznīca; netradicionālās reliģiskās grupas komunistiskā režīma apstākļos); politiskās un reliģiskās kustības Latīņamerikā (komunisms un atbrīvošanas teoloģija); reliģisko grupu potenciāls sociāli politiskajā sfērā un pašreizējās tendences un problēmas Baltijas valstīs un ES.

*Reliģiski-filozofisku rakstu XXV* laidienā publicējam daļu no konferencē nolasīto referātu paplašinātiem tekstiem. To autori pārstāv dažādas pieejas un metodoloģijas, taču tai pašā laikā viņus vieno mērķis izprast sarežģītās sasaistes starp reliģiju un politiku un šo abu sfēru abpusējās ietekmes. Mēs esam pārliecināti, ka šajā krājumā publicētie pētījumi būs interesanti arī RFR lasītājiem.

**Solveiga Krūmiņa-Koņkova  
Inese Runce**

**Dalia Marija Stančienė**

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## **INTER-CONFESSIONAL DIALOGUE IN POST- SECULAR SOCIETY**

### **Abstract**

The article analyses Inter-Confessional Dialogue in post-secular society. Inter-religious dialogue helps to control the situation and reduce religious confrontation during inter-confessional disagreements, acts of terrorism, war in Syria and Libya, Iraq and Yemen, as well as Islamist terrorist attacks. The article draws attention to the Paris Statement *A Europe We Can Believe In* signed by the European intellectuals in Paris, the purpose of which is to help people understand a political and religious situation in post-secular society intellectually and spiritually. Another important aspect of analysing cultural changes in the world is related to internal destructive processes that destroy the cultural tradition. The secularization process has affected not only the West, but also the Islamic cultural sphere where there is a fight between the fanatical absolutism and a tolerant rationality, the cultural spheres of Hinduism and Buddhism, which in their fight against Western rationality and the Christian faith try to preserve their own identity. In postmodern society, religion becomes a form of dealing with various public affairs, and not of enabling a doctrinal content, therefore, we cannot forget the important place of Christian values in the construction of Europe. The article also discusses the importance of the interreligious dialogue between Islam and Christianity and highlights the relevance of the Document on Human Fraternity, which was signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb at the Interreligious Meeting held in Abu Dhabi, in maintaining peaceful coexistence in the world.

**Keywords:** inter-confessional dialogue, post-secular society, Christianity, Islam, Human Fraternity

## Introduction

Post-secular society is understood as a society, which takes care of religious communities and their symbiosis in a secularized environment. According to Jürgen Habermas, in post-secular society unbelieving citizens with believing citizens “have cognitive reasons to take seriously each other’s contributions to controversial subjects in the public debate”.<sup>1</sup>

During debates concerning the EU Constitution in 2003, the Holy See underlined that the Constitution had to define the status of confessions and their communities based on the Christian values on which Europe was based. On January 19, 2004 a meeting–discussion on *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion* took place between German philosopher Jürgen Habermas and Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in Munich at the Catholic Academy of Bavaria. On the basis of this discussion, a book was prepared and published in 2005.

In this book, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (he was elected as Pope Benedict XVI in 2005) emphasized that if we want to have a discussion on fundamental issues of human existence today, then the prerequisite is the existence of the intercultural dimension, since the discussion “cannot be carried on exclusively either within the Christian realm or within the Western rational tradition”.<sup>2</sup> According to Pope Benedict XVI, both Christianity and Western culture themselves and *de iure* are perceived as universal, but *de facto* “they are accepted only by parts of mankind, and that they are comprehensible only in parts of mankind.”<sup>3</sup> These two cultures face greater or lesser contradictions from time to time, therefore,

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<sup>1</sup> Jürgen Habermas. *Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State?* In Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) and Jürgen Habermas, *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*. Translated by Brian McNeil, C.R.V., San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. *That Which Holds the World Together: the Pre-political Moral Foundations of a Free State*. In Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) and Jürgen Habermas, *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, p. 73

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Pope Benedict XVI concludes that in post-secular society they have to take over the experience of “a polyphonic relatedness, in which they themselves are receptive to the essential complementarity of reason and faith, so that a universal process of purifications (in the plural!) can proceed”.<sup>4</sup>

At the meeting in 2005 with Spanish bishops, Pope John Paul II noticed that:

“A mindset inspired by a secular outlook is spreading in society. This ideology leads gradually, more or less consciously, to the restriction of religious freedom to the point that it advocates contempt for, or ignorance of, the religious environment, relegating faith to the private sphere and opposing its public expression.”<sup>5</sup> In his opinion, however, the Church cannot fail to see that “In the contemporary social context, new generations of Spaniards are growing up influenced by religious indifferentism and by ignorance of the Christian tradition with its rich spiritual heritage. Moreover, they are exposed to the temptation of moral permissiveness.”<sup>6</sup>

In the same year, Pope John Paul II sent a letter to the bishops of France in which he wrote:

“Nor can we forget the important place of Christian values in the construction of Europe and in the life of the peoples of the Continent. Christianity largely shaped the features of Europe. It is up to the people of our day to build European society on the values that prevailed when it was born and that are a part of its richness.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. *That Which Holds the World Together: the Pre-political Moral Foundations of a Free State*, p. 79

<sup>5</sup> Address of Pope John Paul II to Spanish Bishops on their “Ad Limina” Visit. January 24, 2005. § 4. Available at: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2005/january/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_20050124\\_spanish-bishops.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2005/january/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20050124_spanish-bishops.html) (Visited on March 20, 2019).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Letter of Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of France. § 5. Available at: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/2005/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_let\\_20050211\\_french-bishops.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/2005/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_20050211_french-bishops.html) (Visited on March 20, 2019).

In this letter, Pope John Paul II emphasized that the principles of secularity correctly understood were also raised in the Catholic social doctrine which was based on Christ's call: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Lk 20: 25)

Pope Francis openly talked with the bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Lithuania on their 'Ad Limina' Visit on 2 February 2015 about difficulties faced by the whole world, about a secularization process, a situation of the Church, cultural changes and the issues of emigration. The Pope emphasized that "the Church in your country was long oppressed by the regimes founded on ideologies contrary to human dignity and freedom, today you are faced with other hidden snares, such as, for example, secularism and relativism. For this reason alongside the tireless proclamation of the Gospel and of Christian values, constructive dialogue with all should not be forgotten, even with those who do not belong to the Church or who are far removed from the religious experience".<sup>8</sup>

The relevance of the problem is confirmed by the Paris Statement *A Europe We Can Believe In* signed by the European intellectuals in Paris on 7 October 2017.<sup>9</sup> The Statement was signed by ten famous intellectuals from various European countries: Philippe Bénéton (France), Rémi Brague (France), Chantal Delsol (France), Roman Joch (Czech), Láncki András (Hungary), Ryszard Legutko (Poland), Pierre Manent (France), Janne Haaland Matlary (Norway), Dalmacio Negro Pavón (Spain), Roger Scruton (United Kingdom), Robert Spaemann (Germany), Bart Jan Spruyt (Netherlands), Matthias Storme (Belgium). The statement states: "In order to recover our political and historical agency,

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<sup>8</sup> Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Lithuania on their "Ad Limina" Visit. Available at: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/february/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150202\\_ad-limina-lituania.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/february/documents/papa-francesco_20150202_ad-limina-lituania.html) (Visited on March 20, 2019).

<sup>9</sup> "A Europe We Can Believe In". Available at: <https://thetrueeurope.eu/a-europe-we-can-believe-in/> (Visited on March 22, 2019).

it is imperative that we re-secularize European public life.”<sup>10</sup> In his interview to Lithuanian readers, one of the authors, i.e. Rémi Brague, emphasized that “the real purpose of the statement is to help people understand intellectually and spiritually. Therefore, its authors are philosophers, not politicians”.<sup>11</sup>

Another important event which signified the urgency of the problem was the conference (*Re)thinking Europe*<sup>12</sup> held in Vatican on 27–29 October 2017. It claimed that the European Union is Christian project by its very nature and discussed a possible contribution of Christians to European future. One of the participants of the conference, i.e. Lithuanian bishop Kęstutis Kėvalas, maintained that the project was the project of hope, which served the purpose of peace. According to him, “economic and political unity is not sufficient and needs to be supplemented with axiological unity. But there is no consensus between neoliberals and Christians in the understanding of human nature, family and many other extremely important values”.<sup>13</sup>

The role of the interreligious dialogue was clearly demonstrated at the interreligious meeting held in the United Arab Emirates on 3–5 February 2019. Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb signed a *Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*. As Andrea Tornielli, editorial director of the Vatican’s Dicastery for Communications, observes “The two religious leaders ask all people of religion and culture, as well as the media, to rediscover and spread ‘the values of peace, justice, goodness, beauty, human fraternity and coexistence’. And they firmly affirm their belief ‘that among the most important

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<sup>10</sup> “A Europe We Can Believe In”. Available at: <https://thetrueeurope.eu/a-europe-we-can-believe-in/> (Visited on March 22, 2019), § 24

<sup>11</sup> Available at: <http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/2018-02-26-zmonijos-pabaiga-gali-ateiti-per-leta-ir-laipsniska-issekima-remi-brague-a-kalbina-povilas-aleksandravicius/168523> (Visited on March 27, 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Available at: <http://www.comece.eu/rethinking-europe> (Visited on March 20, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Available at: [http://lt.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/10/29/dialogas\\_vatikane\\_pokalbis\\_su\\_dalyviais\\_i%C5%A1\\_lietuvos/1345855](http://lt.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/10/29/dialogas_vatikane_pokalbis_su_dalyviais_i%C5%A1_lietuvos/1345855) (Visited on March 20, 2019).

causes of the crises of the modern world are a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values and a prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies’.”<sup>14</sup>

### Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) on intercultural dialogue

In 1999, commenting on the Encyclical ‘Fides et Ratio’, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger emphasized that philosophy revealed “universal tendency of great cultures, their transcending of time and space, and thus the forward impetus they impart to man’s being and to his highest capacities. Therein exists the capacity of cultures to enter into dialogue with one another.”<sup>15</sup> The Encyclical defines the criteria of contact between pre-Christian cultures and Christian faith.

Indian culture serves as an example of pre-Christian cultures. Cardinal Ratzinger points out that the Encyclical distinguishes spiritual ascent of Indian thought “which struggles to free mind and spirit from the limitations of time and space and thus effects that metaphysical opening up of man that has then also been given form in the thought of several important philosophical systems.”<sup>16</sup> This contact of Indian culture and Christian faith, according to Cardinal Ratzinger, is the first criterion of the general relationship of the Christian faith with pre-Christian cultures – “the universality of the human spirit, whose basic needs are the same in the most disparate cultures”.<sup>17</sup>

The second criterion is the Church inculturation in the world of Graeco-Latin thought. The third criterion relates to reflections on the

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<sup>14</sup> Andrea Tornielli. *Pope and the Grand Imam: Historic declaration of peace, freedom, women’s rights*. Available at: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-02/pope-francis-uae-grand-imam-declaration-of-peace.html> (Visited on March 20, 2019).

<sup>15</sup> Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. *Faith, Truth, and Culture. Reflections Prompted by the Encyclical Fides et Ratio*. Available at: <https://matiane.wordpress.com/2018/11/24/cardinal-joseph-ratzinger-faith-truth-and-culture/> (Visited on March 25, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

nature of culture. Cardinal Ratzinger emphasizes that it cannot be held that “a particular cultural tradition should remain closed in its difference and affirm itself by opposing other traditions”.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, cultural heritage acquires the status of a bearer of the common truth of faith and reason. Faith incorporates culture into the process of self-transcendence and, according to Cardinal Ratzinger, “that helps us to understand why it was that the Christian proclamation sought points of contact with philosophy, not with religions”.<sup>19</sup>

Rémi Brague’s reasoning is similar, he argues that Christianity is a form and not a substance in terms of European culture, and in this way “historically it acted as a guardian of paganism in European culture. It is the Renaissance art, which became possible thanks to patristics and medieval allegorism, that warranted the survival of the old gods.”<sup>20</sup> Brague believes that a preservation of Christianity is a preservation of pan-European culture.

In the book *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, Cardinal Ratzinger observes that the New Age has seen the double rupture of the European consciousness and made a new reflection into culture. The first rupture is related to the discovery of America during which a meeting with peoples “who did not belong to the Christian structures of faith and law”<sup>21</sup> was held. The meeting with new cultures and the laws of those peoples helped to shape international law that “is antecedent to the Christian legal form and is charged with ordering the right relations among all peoples”.<sup>22</sup>

The second rupture is related to the fragmentation of Christianity itself, when many communities and even those who are fighting against

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<sup>18</sup> Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. *Faith, Truth, and Culture. Reflections Prompted by the Encyclical Fides et Ratio*

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Rémi Brague. *The Eccentric European Identity. (Europe, la voie romaine)*. Translated from French to Lithuanian by R. Matuzevičiūtė and K. Kazakevičiūtė. Vilnius: *Aidai*, 2001, p. 164

<sup>21</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) and Jürgen Habermas, *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, p. 68

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



each other emerged. Therefore, according to Cardinal Ratzinger, we had to look for an antecedent to dogma: “The source of this law then had to lie, no longer in faith, but in nature and in human reason”.<sup>23</sup> Theologians, lawyers and philosophers found a way out of this situation by creating “the natural law, which transcends the confessional borders of faith by establishing reason as the instrument whereby law can be posited in common”.<sup>24</sup>

The natural law, especially the Catholic Church, has become the main argument in the dialogue with a secular and pluralistic society and the foundation of the ethical principles of law in a secular society. However, Cardinal Ratzinger thought that this argument was inappropriate because nature and reason coincide in this concept and it therefore follows that nature itself is rational. Since nature itself is not reasonable, then rational law that has survived out of natural law in the modern period has become the basis of human rights.

The concept of human rights is based on the postulate that a human being belongs “to his membership in the species ‘man’, [and] is the subject of rights and that his being bears within itself values and norms that must be discovered – but not invented”.<sup>25</sup> Today, in Cardinal Ratzinger’s view, the doctrine of human rights should be accompanied by human obligations. This would help to understand whether there is a rationality of nature and rational law for man and for his existence. The analysis of the problem would necessarily be intercultural in its structure and in its interpretation.

Another important aspect of analyzing cultural changes in the world is related to internal destructive processes that destroy the cultural tradition. The secularization process has affected not only the West, but also the Islamic cultural sphere where there is a fight between the fanatical absolutism and a tolerant rationality, the cultural spheres of Hinduism and Buddhism, which in their fight against Western rationality and the

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<sup>23</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) and Jürgen Habermas, *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, p. 69

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 71

Christian faith try to preserve their own identity. Similar processes are taking place in the tribal cultures of Africa and Latin America, which openly disagree with Western rationality. Cardinal Ratzinger concludes that there is a need for correction of European secularization from a comparative study of cultures and the sociology of religion positions. This relates to the fact that Western secular rationality faces specific cultural contexts, and, therefore, the whole of mankind is not equally accepted. Thus “the rational or ethical or religious formula that would embrace the whole world and unite all persons does not exist”.<sup>26</sup>

In the Encyclical Letter *Spe Salvi* published in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI wrote that “a self-critique of modernity is needed in dialogue with Christianity and its concept of hope”.<sup>27</sup> The Encyclical Letter emphasized that a contemporary idea of progress was associated with reason and freedom. The reason itself is perceived as a force of good contributing to move forward towards perfect freedom. Thus “freedom is seen purely as a promise, in which man becomes more and more fully himself”.<sup>28</sup> However, technical development and the industrialization have changed the structure of society and opened up appalling possibilities for evil, therefore, according to Pope Benedict XVI, a secular society needs moral growth on the part of humanity in order for intercultural dialogue progress to take place.

### Interreligious dialogue: the role of religions in the construction of world peace

The Document on Human Fraternity, which was signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb at the Interreligious Meeting held in Abu Dhabi, emphasises “the role of religions in

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<sup>26</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) and Jürgen Habermas, *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, p. 76

<sup>27</sup> Pope Benedict XVI. Encyclical Letter *Spe Salvi*, November 30, 2007, § 22. Available at: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20071130\\_spe-salvi.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.html) (Visited on March 25, 2019).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, § 18

the construction of world peace”.<sup>29</sup> It is worth noting the message about Pope Francis’s visit to the United Arab Emirates which was disseminated by *Vatican News*: “This year that marks the eight-hundredth anniversary of the historic meeting between Saint Francis of Assisi and Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil.”<sup>30</sup>

There are no approved historical documents about the mission of St. Francis of Assisi to Middle East in 1219 during the Fifth Crusade (1217-1221) in order to recover the occupied Holy Land from the Muslims, instead there are legends and stories in chronicles. One of the important testimonies about the meeting of St. Francis of Assisi and his travelling companion Friar Illuminato with the Sultan of Egypt in the Egyptian city of Damietta at the mouth of the Nile is the biography *The Life of Saint Francis of Assisi*<sup>31</sup> written by general of the Franciscan order Saint Bonaventure (1221-1274) in 1263.

Saint Bonaventure writes: “When that prince demanded of them from whom, and for what purpose, and after what manner they had been sent, and how they had come thither, the servant of Christ, Francis, made answer with undaunted heart that he had been sent not by man, but by God Most High, that he might shew unto him and his people the way of salvation, and might preach the Gospel of truth.”<sup>32</sup> Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil was positively impressed by St. Francis of Assisi and he allowed him and his brother Illuminato to travel freely around the territories under his control and to visit Jerusalem, even though it was forbidden for Christians to pray at the tomb of Christ at that time.

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<sup>29</sup> Available at: [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/travels/2019/outside/documents/papa-francesco\\_20190204\\_documento-fratellanza-umana.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/travels/2019/outside/documents/papa-francesco_20190204_documento-fratellanza-umana.html) (Visited on March 26, 2019).

<sup>30</sup> Available at: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-01/pope-francis-morocco-visit-logo-hope-interreligious-dialogue.html> (Visited on March 26, 2019).

<sup>31</sup> Saint Bonaventure. *The Life of Saint Francis of Assisi*. Translated by E. Gurney Salter. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1904. Available at: <https://www.catholic2000.com/bonaventure/assisi/francis.shtml> (Visited on March 26, 2019).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter IX, § 8.

In assessing an interreligious conversation that took place eight hundred years ago, Paul Moses, the author of the book *The Saint and the Sultan: the Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace*,<sup>33</sup> says that it is not important whether this conversation really took place, because an important thing is that “the story of Francis Assisi and Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil says there is a better way than resentment, suspicion, and warfare. It opens the door to respect, trust, and peace”.<sup>34</sup> Reflection on the Christian and Muslim historical meeting between the Saint and the Sultan is important because the story started a Christian-Islamic dialogue. The dialogue between St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil symbolises Christians and Muslims living peacefully.

The choice of the logo of Pope Francis for his visit, i.e. a dove with an olive branch, is also symbolic. It is a symbol of peace and a reference to the primordial flood mentioned by many religions. Explaining the choice of the logo to the participants of the interreligious meeting, Pope Francis recalled that the Bible recounted that “in order to preserve humanity from destruction, God asked Noah to enter the ark with his family”; he also emphasised that by choosing this logo he wanted to say that “today, we too in the name of God, in order to safeguard peace, need to enter together as one family into an ark which can sail the stormy seas of the world: the ark of fraternity”.<sup>35</sup>

In the signed Document on Human Fraternity, Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb emphasised the importance of the role of religions in the construction dialogue between believers and different cultures. Led by Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) and Gianni Vattimo, philosophers discussed the significance of religion in the modern world at the seminar, which was held on the island of Capri from February 28, 1994 to March 1, 1994. The participant of this seminar, Spanish

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<sup>33</sup> Paul Moses. *The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace*. New York: Random House, 2009, p. 320

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 11

<sup>35</sup> Available at: <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2019/02/04/pope-francis-worlds-religious-leaders-we-build-future-together-or-there-will-be-no> (Visited on March 27, 2019).

philosopher Eugenio Trias (1942–2013) emphasised that “recent events at the forefront of media attention, such as the collapse of the authoritarian regimes of the East, the Persian Gulf crisis and the conflict in Yugoslavia, have left no doubt as to the crucial importance of the religious or cultural-religious substrate in sustaining the societies that compete for supremacy in the world today”.<sup>36</sup>

In his opinion, we have to prepare the ground in order to create conditions for the true *religion of the spirit*, prophesied in the 12th century by the Calabrian abbot Joachim of the Flowers. According to Trias, the downturn of the idea of a united Europe which is taking place due to trust in the blind economic and bureaucratic forces makes one to choose between two options: “that of withdrawing completely from the whole wretched process of decomposition and regression to a still worse past, or that of opening one’s eyes and mind wide to universal vistas”.<sup>37</sup>

Johannes Rau (1931–2006), a German politician, president of Germany (1999–2004), also stresses the importance of religion and its strength in building society. In his view, the preparation of religion for a dialogue between confessions and different cultures will help to constructively deal with a peaceful coexistence. Rau is convinced that a dialogue does not mean giving up one’s own attitude, but on the contrary, “dialogue will only be possible when the conversation partners themselves become aware of their thinking and activities”.<sup>38</sup> He also draws attention to the importance of ethics in the dialogue between religions, especially in the fields of bioethics and genetic engineering.

Discussing the problems of the existence of a human being in society and in personal life, Pope John Paul II recognized the importance of

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<sup>36</sup> Eugenio Trias. *Thinking Religion: The Symbol and the Sacred*. In *Religion* ed. by J. Denida and G. Vattimo. Translated by Samuel Weber. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998, p. 95

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p. 101

<sup>38</sup> Johannes Rau. *Dialogue of Cultures – Culture of Dialogue. Tolerance instead of Depreciation of Meaning* (Germ. “Dialog der Kulturen - Kultur des Dialogs. Toleranz statt Beliebigkeit”). Translated from German by V. Sprogytė. Vilnius: *Dialogo kultūros institutas*, 2005, p. 113

a dialogue in shaping and deepening people's solidarity, their presence and functioning 'together with others'. The societal nature of a human being "first of all denotes the reality of existence and functioning 'together with others'".<sup>39</sup> The soul of a human being is an implicit ethical dimension, like its moral identity, which guides a person to the earthly life and leads him to assume responsibility for the actions taken. Moral efforts of a human activity reveal the nature of a human being and legitimize the application of the concept of moral identity in the public order, which means that society perceives itself as a moral subject with certain moral principles, a certain hierarchy of values and functioning together with others.

Mondher Kilani, Professor Emeritus of Cultural and Social Anthropology at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland, investigated the manifestations of religiousness in the postmodern world and asked whether the present revival of religiousness is a slowdown of the secularization process, or maybe something that has nothing to do with the manifestations of faith is happening. In Kilani's opinion, "religiousness intrudes into the consciousness of society actors not by personally accepting the doctrine or through the voice of the collective authority, such as the Church, but as an identity factor in a troubled context".<sup>40</sup> Thus, in postmodern society, religion becomes a form of dealing with various public affairs, and not a doctrinal content.

The interreligious dialogue helps to control the situation and reduce religious confrontation during inter-confessional disagreements, acts of terrorism, war in Syria and Libya, Iraq and Yemen, as well as Islamist terrorist attacks. The document signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb is a powerful force in the world that spreads the message of social justice and peace.

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<sup>39</sup> Karol Wojtyła. *The Acting Person* (Lith. "Asmuo ir veiksmas"). Translated from Polish by R. Plečkaitis. Vilnius: *Aidai*, 1997, p. 327

<sup>40</sup> Mondher Kilani. *Religion in the Civil Sphere: Criticism of "Revenge"* (Lith. "Religija pilietinėje sferoje: "Atkerėjimo" kritika"). Translated from French by P. Aleksandravičius. Available at: <http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/2011-12-05-mondher-kilani-religija-pilietineje-sferoje-atkerėjimo-kritika/73087> (Visited on March 27, 2019).

## Conclusions

The importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue emerges in post-secular society. During the secularization process, the growing power of mind nurtured the intellectual elite and gave religion autonomy by separating the Church from the state institutions. However, despite the secularization process, the fundamental nature of religiousness, as the basis of certain value systems, has not lost its moral authority in the socio-cultural context.

Rethinking the place of Christianity in European culture reveals that it is a part of European cultural content. According to Cardinal Ratzinger, cultural heritage has acquired the status of a bearer of the common truth of faith and reason. Faith incorporates culture into the process of self-transcendence and that helps us to understand why it was that the Christian proclamation sought points of contact with philosophy, not with religions. In this way, Christianity is not as much a substance as it is a form in terms of European culture.

The secularization process has affected not only the West, but also the Islamic cultural sphere where there is a fight between the fanatical absolutism and a tolerant rationality. The internal Islamic conflict is penetrating Europe, therefore, an interreligious dialogue and an appropriate education system that helps develop critical thinking are needed in the context of Muslim integration. Pope Francis's visit to the United Arab Emirates and the Document on Human Fraternity, which was signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb, are especially important for the peaceful coexistence of the two monotheistic religions; the Document emphasised the importance of the role of religions in the construction dialogue between believers and different cultures.

**Dalia Marija Stančienė, PhD**, professor and senior research fellow at Klaipeda University, editor-in-chief of the journal of religion, philosophy, comparative cultural studies and art *Logos*. Research interests: history of philosophy, philosophy in the middle ages, metaphysics, phenomenology, philosophy of culture and media, philosophy of religion, social ethics.



Boris Filippov

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## LEAVING SOCIALISM BEHIND: HOW CHURCHES IN THE POST-SOVIET TERRITORIES ADAPTED TO A NEW LIFE IN RUSSIA AND POLAND

### Abstract

It is not possible to reduce the heritage of the Socialist system to the restoration of the historical justice through the restitutions and to the constitutional definition of the principles of the Church-state relationships. During the first 10-15 years after the fall of the communist regimes, these problems were recognized and solved in most of the post-Soviet countries at the legislative level. By the time of the collapse of the socialist system, the Russian Orthodox Church (hereinafter the ROC) and the Roman Catholic Church of Poland (hereinafter the RCC) had different institutional and intellectual resources. The Catholic Church in Poland was a powerful national institution with a developed infrastructure. The position of the Russian Orthodox Church was fundamentally different. The key problem for it was the restoration of the church infrastructure that was almost completely destroyed by the Soviet authorities.

Nevertheless, a much bigger problem for both Churches was the fact that social and mental consequences of their forced adaptation to the previous system did not disappear with the deconstruction of the regimes. As a result of this adaptation, it was the phenomenon of *homo sovieticus* that emerged in all the countries of the Soviet system. This article examines the influence of the *homo sovieticus's* mentality on the churches in Poland and Russia. It should be pointed out that the existence within the socialist system morally deformed the clergy. At the same time, this deformation continues to influence the modus vivendi of the clergymen that adopted the socialist system, having become *homo sovieticus*.

Meanwhile, it was not enough for a priest, both in the USSR and in the People's Poland, to perform liturgy and rites. In order to fulfill their mission, the

clergy in Russia and Poland had to make compromises with the communist authorities. I refer to the conclusion made by Yuri Levada (1930–2006): “At the individual level, the typically soviet kind of deal with the authorities tended to the moral corruption, hypocrisy, scams, bribery, doublethink as the necessary conditions for the functioning of the economy and society.”

As a result, today, it is not only the senior generation of the clergy, but also that part of the young clergymen that is not able to start a dialogue with a democratic society with its freedom of religion and religious pluralism. Idealizing the past, the clergy have been attempting to find the answers for their essential questions in the past. At the same time, the service of the Church under the socialist regimes provoked the rise of the unique methods of pastoral activity, which are mostly quite inadequate under the new post-socialist conditions. The search for new methods of communication with society is the main problem of the leaving the regime behind.

The author concluded that those methods of pastoral activity that allowed churches to survive the socialist realities have been impeding the leaving the authoritarian system. Today, almost everyone writing about *homo sovieticus* in the Russian Church quotes the prophetic words of sister Maria (Skobcova). Yet in 1936, she spoke about the “corrupted, bond and ill mentality” that was brought up among the young people in Soviet Russia. According to her, when “the people that was brought up by this authorities come to the Church, they would come with this mentality [...] One should not have any illusions: in the case of recognition of the Church in Russia, it would not have other people except the people brought up in the spirit of non-critical, dogmatic and authoritarian thinking”. It was Russian biblical scholar and publicist prof. Andrej Desnitsky who reminded later about the equity of mother Maria (Skobcova)’s statement. Her words would be quoted by archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz during his meeting with the Catholic clergymen in Saratov.

The overwhelming majority of the clergy (both Catholic and Orthodox) came out of the Soviet system with a distorted understanding of the ‘morally permissible’. These words seem to be very vague, but they should be kept in mind talking about the ‘heritage’ with which the Church left the system. There is a principal difference between the Polish and the Russian Churches in their post-socialist existence. The strong intellectual movement existed in Poland, being supported by Cardinal Karol Wojtyła. It was Karol Wojtyła who had initiated a discussion on the Church problems within the socialist regime. This discussion has influenced the pastoral methods of the PCC.

By the time of the collapse of the system, neither the ROC nor Soviet science possessed the required number of qualified sociologists and religious scholars to organize a full-fledged discussion. The first analytical articles on the problems of the ROC appeared only a decade later, at the beginning of the new century. The first analytical papers (articles, interviews) would appear only 10 years later, and the first attempts to lead a public discussion on this topic would be made only 20 years after the fall of the USSR. These discussions have been the main sources for this article.

As it was shown in the conclusion, it is the heritage of the *homo sovieticus* mentality that does not allow for using the potential of the young people and lay-people to resolve the Church's problems. The paternalistic model that was formed during the Soviet period continues influencing the post-Soviet life of the Churches and prevents carrying out the Church's mission. Another negative feature of *homo sovieticus* that is evident even today is the attempts to find the answers for current questions in the past.

Having resolved with the help of the EU institutions legal, property, and financial problems, the Central European Churches did not find understanding in their striving to be a bearer of the common values of the union. Just as in the Soviet Union, the Christian Church is supposed to play the role of a museum in the European Union. The attempts of the ROC to be a moral authority were also not successful.

**Keywords:** The socialist system, Russian Orthodox Church, Roman Catholic Church of Poland, transformation, *homo sovieticus*, nationalism, provincialism, “performers of rites (*treboispolniteli*),” the bishop Alfons Nossol, mother of Mary (Skobtsova), pr. Georgij Mitrofanov, Furov W., Levada Y., pr. Jozef Tischner.

For Churches and religious communities, the process of adaptation to the new realities of life in the post-Socialist society cannot be reduced just to the restitution, restoration of historical justice and the formally acknowledged new principles of coexistence between the Church and the State. In most ex-Soviet countries, these problems were solved and new laws formalizing the principles of the Church-State relations were passed

in the first ten to fifteen years after the fall of Socialism<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, there were other issues and problems that the Churches and States faced under the new conditions. These problems could not have been solved with new laws and required much more time and effort.

By the time of the collapse of the socialist system, the Russian Orthodox Church (hereinafter the ROC) and the Roman Catholic Church of Poland (hereinafter the RCC), figuratively speaking, had different 'weight categories'. The Catholic Church in Poland was a powerful national institution with a developed infrastructure. It had everything: temples overflowing with believers, enough educational institutions and Sunday schools,<sup>2</sup> monastic orders, Catholic media<sup>3</sup> and clubs of the Catholic intelligentsia. There were professionally trained clergy and episcopate that worked for the Polish Church.<sup>4</sup> During the political crises of October 1956, December 1970 and 1981–1989 Polish Episcopate acted as an ally of the authorities, contributing to the peaceful resolution of the problems.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See: Federal'nyj zakon Rossijskoj Federacii on 30 nojabrya 2010 g. № 327-F3 «O peredacze religioznych organizacijam imuszczestwa religioznogo naznaczeniya, nachodyszczegosya v gosudarstvennoj ili municypalnoj sobstvennosti» // *Rossijskaya gazeta*. 2010. 3 dekabrya; Robbers, Gerhard (ed.). *State and Church in the European Union* Baden-Baden, Nomos, 2005, p. 589

<sup>2</sup> Religious education in the country never stopped during the whole history of the Polish People's Republic. The RCC had 100 seminaries with about 6 thousand seminarians. There were catechesis centers in all the parishes. Besides, the Catholic University of Lublin (Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, KUL) had the status of a state educational institution.

<sup>3</sup> It had 29 publishing houses, which published fiction alongside the religious literature. In 1983 there were 89 Catholic magazines, which all together made up 1.5 million copies. (Dudek A., Gryz R. *Komuniści i Kościół w Polsce*. Wydawnictwo: Znak, 2003. pp. 425–426).

<sup>4</sup> At the time of the collapse of the system, the RCC structure consisted of 76 dioceses, 8.3 thousand parishes with 24 678 priests. In 1986 alone, 3000 church facilities were built (see: Kościół katolicki w Polsce. Read on November 26, 2018, available at: [https://sciaga.pl/tekst/14784-15-kosciol\\_katolicki\\_w\\_polsce](https://sciaga.pl/tekst/14784-15-kosciol_katolicki_w_polsce)); *Przewodnik Katolicki*. Poznań, 1990. №2. 14 stycz. S.8; Dudek A., Gryz R. Op.cit.

<sup>5</sup> On this subject there are many publications in Polish. For example, *Taine Dokumenty: Państwo - Kościół 1980-1989*. Londyn-Warszawa, "Anex", 1993, p.590; In Russian: Filippov, B.A. Kesarevo. Tserkov' i gosudarstvo v kommunisticheskoi Pol'she // Filippov B.A. Ioann Pavel II. Pol'sha. Politika, pp. 254–272. M. : Izd-vo PSTGU, 2013.

The position of the Russian Orthodox Church was fundamentally different.<sup>6</sup> It had a destroyed infrastructure and semi-educated clergy, including the episcopate. Among 6000 Orthodox priests, only about 250-300 people had a secular higher education, and the Russian Orthodox Church had no higher educational institutions of its own. Religious education of children and youth was completely absent. Moreover, it was legally prohibited. In the USSR, the Church milieu was completely destroyed, and the language in which the church sermon was built was forgotten.

In the USSR, the church service was reduced to reciting the liturgy, carrying out of sacraments, and performance of occasional religious rites (christening, marriage, funeral, etc.). The acceptance of these power-imposed terms was a sign of loyalty to the system and, at the same time, refusing to preach the gospel. Additionally, the shortage of clergy made the situation in which the performance of occasional religious rites was practically the only possible form of service for a priest. It is the unhappiest thing that most of the clergy started to understand the performing of the rites to be their SERVICE itself. Those few who tried to preach or work with the young were punished by transferring from one parish to another less well-off one or even prohibited by the security services. However, one should not be rigorous about it. Being burdened by their large families, the clergy were completely defenceless.

It is important to mention two intellectual and pastoral traditions that had been developed in the Polish RCC. Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński (1901–1981) personified one of them, Cardinal Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II; 1920–2005) was an embodiment of another one. Opposing the system, Cardinal Wyszyński relied on the popular religiosity of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And this strategy allowed the Church to withstand the time of the communist system. In this religiosity, there were strong manifestations

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<sup>6</sup> By 1988 the Russian Orthodox Church consisted of 76 dioceses, 6893 parishes with 6674 priests, 22 monasteries with 1990 monks, 5 church educational institutions (2 academies and 2 seminaries) (see: Gordienko N.S. (red.) *Pravoslaviye. Slovar' ateista*. Moskva, 1988. p. 203). The Orthodox publishing house published 10 publications in a limited number of copies, which were hard to access.

of nationalism and provincialism. It was characteristic for this type of religiosity to make a great performance organizing religious ceremonies and rites. "In this situation, moral principles and in-depth shepherding, theology and public opinion were relegated to the background. It could be said that the decisions of the Second Vatican Council were also faded into the background. This was the 'baggage' with which the Church entered the period of the state transformation. The Church found itself in the new political and social, as well as the economic system and faced new challenges", concluded professor Roman Rogowski<sup>7</sup>, the author of the paper *Perplexed Church* delivered at the conference *Polish Catholicism at the Turn of the Century* (Poznan, 2000).

In his turn, Cardinal Wojtyła made a bet on the 'open', post-council Catholicism, based on work with young people and intellectuals. He believed that the Church would not be able to fulfill its mission without well-educated clergymen. And the struggle to raise the intellectual level of the clergy was the struggle for the future of the Church. It should be recalled that the authorities both in Poland and the USSR sought to lower the social status of the clergy.<sup>8</sup> "Theological seminaries were supposed to be only vocational schools with as little theological and philosophical knowledge as possible so that the priest would think independently as little as possible," cardinal Marian Jaworski would say a decade later.<sup>9</sup>

The clergy and laity, who were under the influence of Cardinal Wojtyła, grouped around the clubs of the Catholic intelligentsia and several journals published by these clubs and monastic orders. Nevertheless, because of their novelty, the pastoral initiatives of the future pope could not become the main tactics in the confrontation of the Church with Communism. Meanwhile, it was these clubs that became a milieu for the for-

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<sup>7</sup> Rogowski R. Kościół zagubiony // *Katolicyzm polski na przełomie wieków. Mity, rzeczywistość, obawy, nadzieje!* Baniak J. (red.). Poznań, 2001. pp. 89-90

<sup>8</sup> 3 seminaries and 2 academies of the Russian Orthodox Church were considered secondary schools.

<sup>9</sup> Tomasik K. Kard. Marian Jaworski: Nie ma Kościoła bez dobrze wykształconych duchownych. Read on December 17, 2018, in electronic format: <https://ekai.pl/kard-jaworski-nie-ma-kosciola-bez-dobrze-wykształconych-duchownych/>

mation of the experts and leading politicians of post-Soviet Poland who were supporters of Polish reintegration into the united Europe. Already in the first decade after the fall of the system, the authors and readers of these journals published articles and books about the problems the RCC faced after the fall of the system. Additionally, the Catholic intelligentsia contributed to a church-wide<sup>10</sup> and academic discussion on these problems.<sup>11</sup>

By the time of the collapse of the system, neither the ROC nor Soviet science possessed the required number of qualified sociologists and religious scholars to organize a full-fledged discussion. The first analytical articles on the problems of the ROC appeared only a decade later, at the beginning of the new century. The first analytical papers (articles, interviews) would appear only 10 years later, and the first attempts to lead a public discussion on this topic would be made only 20 years after the fall of the USSR.<sup>12</sup> These discussions will serve as the basis for this article.

## Churches at the time of Transformation

The transformation of the regime had begun in the climate of general enthusiasm and euphoria in Poland while the collapse of the USSR caused the cultural shock among the Russian population. Nevertheless, the euphoria about the fall of the system soon was replaced by the disappointment and political apathy, both in Russia and in Poland.<sup>13</sup> The fall of the system brought not only democracy, liberalism, the free market and

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<sup>10</sup> Gowin J. *Kościół w czasach wolności*. Kraków: Znak, 1999. Ed.2. pp.28-39.

<sup>11</sup> Katolicyzm polski na przełomie wieków. Mity, rzeczywistość, obawy, nadzieje. I Ogólnopolska Konferencja Naukowa Zakładu Filozofii Chrześcijańskiej UAM w Poznaniu 21-23 listopada 2000 roku.

<sup>12</sup> See, Cenczukowa M., Galperina A. Cerkow' w postsowetskoj Rossii: chto wozrozdalos' i chto budet dalshe? Read on November 23, 2018, in electronic format: // <https://www.pravmir.ru/cerkov-v-postsovetskoj-rossii-chto-vozhrozdalos-i-chto-budet-dalshe/>

<sup>13</sup> See, Nossol Alfons, bp. Ekumeniczne implikacje przemian w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej // *Roczniki teologiczne*. Lublin, 1994. Z.7. p.6; Levada Yu.A. Homo Post-Soveticus // *Obshchestvennyie nauki i sovremennost'*. 2000.№ 6. p. 6.

privatization, but also unemployment, impoverishment of some and enrichment of others, the cult of money, as well as moral relativism.

The fall of the system coincided with the world religious rise of the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>14</sup> Thousands of people of different ages, including young people, filled the temples of Poland and Russia. This was understood by believers and by the clergy to be a VICTORY over the 'atheistic dragon'. Meanwhile, these 'new believers', as the atmosphere itself, created fundamentally new problems for the Churches. Neither in Poland, nor in Russia did the episcopate pay attention to the warnings of sociologists that the arrival of tens of thousands (and young people as well) in churches was not the result of a church sermon,<sup>15</sup> but a manifestation of the wave of religious (spiritual) tension. It would take effort for these young people to remain in the Church. The majority of modern believers in Russia who came to churches were not rural residents, but residents of large cities in their adulthood, with a higher education and fundamentally new spiritual needs.

Neither the Orthodox Church in Russia, nor the Roman Catholic Church in Poland was ready for the fundamental changes of the conditions for their mission. All the methods of pastoral work that have been developed over the centuries were not up-to-date in the last decades before the collapse of the system. It had become clear when the clergy understood the struggle against liberalism, abortion, birth control, and homosexuality to be the main goal of their service. However, it turned out that these questions worry every year a smaller number of believers who make decisions in this area at their own discretion, often contrary to the Church recommendations. Many problems being withheld for a long time has come out under the new conditions. There were two camps that manifested themselves among the clergy: the traditionalists (the majority) and

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<sup>14</sup> See, Hervieu-Leger D., Champion F. *Vers un nouveau christianisme. Introduction à la sociologie du christianisme occidental*. Paris, 1986; Micklethwait J., Wooldridge A. *God Is Back. How the Global Revival of Faith Is Changing the World*. L., 2009.

<sup>15</sup> See, Woroncowa L.M., Filatov S.B., Furman D.E. *Religiya w sowremennom mas-sowom soznanii // Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniya*, № 11. 1995. pp. 81–91.



the supporters of significant reforms in the Church to make it able to perform its service.

The factors that impeded the transformation of the Church in face of the challenges of the new socio-political realities became the subject of scientific analysis both in the RCC and, much later, in the ROC. It was the bishop of Opole Alfons Nossol who, one of the first, proposed his analysis of the issue, highlighting the following three problems:

The **first one** is the preservation of the social type of *homo sovieticus*<sup>16</sup> in terms of worldview and behaviour. The author understood under the concept “features that characterize a person formed in the process of Sovietization, (...) in the whole space of Soviet domination”<sup>17</sup>;

The **second one** is the heritage of the pre-war nationalistic ideology both in the society and in the Church;

and the **third one** is the provincial and anti-Christian consciousness of believers and clergy who do not accept the ideals of a United Europe.<sup>18</sup>

The Russian Orthodox Church in Russia also faced all these problems, though with certain modifications.

### The question of *homo sovieticus* in the Church

The concept of *homo sovieticus*<sup>19</sup> has become generally accepted among authoritative Polish,<sup>20</sup> German<sup>21</sup> and Russian church authors writing

<sup>16</sup> Homo Sovieticus. This sarcastic definition of a ‘soviet human’ was introduced into the modern scientific literature and journalism in 1982 by Alexandr Zinoviev (1922–2006). See: Alexandr Zinoviev. *Homo Sovieticus* (1982).

<sup>17</sup> Nossol Alfons, bp. *Ekumeniczne implikacje przemian w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej*, p.6.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> This phenomenon was described in detail by sociologist Yuriy Levada (See: Levada Yu. A. *Homo Post-Soveticus // Obschestvennyie nauki i sovremennost*. 2000. № 6. pp. 5–24), and bishop Alfons Nossol’s description of homo soveticus preceded his analysis of the situation in RCC in Poland (Nossol Alfons, bp. *Op.cit.* pp.7–9).

<sup>20</sup> All the prominent Polish authors from the circle of Karol Wojtyła spoke on this topic: bp. Tadeusz Pieronek, eds. *Tygodnik powszechny* Jerzy Turowicz i ks. Adam Boniecki, ks. Jozef Tischner.

<sup>21</sup> Cardinal Karl Lehmann (1936–2018).

about the problems of the Church in the post-Soviet period. According to bishop A. Nossoll, the overcoming of the phenomenon of *homo sovieticus* is par excellence a moral task for the Christian Churches, a task that no one else can cope with. This is a correct formulation of the issue. Nevertheless, considerable difficulties arise while attempting to resolve these questions, since the majority of the Soviet-born priests were also deeply influenced by Sovietization.

Both in Poland and the USSR, the clergy mostly has accepted the conditions of life and service imposed by the anti-church system. Of course, both in Poland and the USSR, nonconformist priests secretly worked with young people, shared religious literature with believers, and organized the charity actions. Meanwhile, both in Poland and the USSR the share of nonconformist priests was insignificantly little. It was the participation in the general elections to the Sejm that was an important indicator of the loyalty of the clergy in People's Poland. According to the former head of the Department of Religious Affairs Kazimierz Kąkol, 95% of the clergy, (including about 75% of the bishops) participated in the elections 'as it had to be done'.<sup>22</sup>

One of the indicators of the 'adoption of the system' by the clergy of the PCC was an unexpected increase in the number of the clergymen cooperating with the security services during the last years of the regime's existence. The analysis of this phenomenon could be found in the research of professor Jan Żaryn, the largest Polish specialist in the Church history of the socialist period.<sup>23</sup> Before the opening of the archives, we cannot speak with certainty about the scale of the cooperation of Orthodox clergy with the state security services.<sup>24</sup> S. Chapnin writes:

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<sup>22</sup> Kąkol K. Nie wyrzucajcie mnie z Biblii // Torąńska T. *Byli*. Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2006. p.130; On the loyalty of Orthodox clergy in the USSR, see: Furov W. Otczet Sowietu po delam religij - czenam CK KPSS // *Vestnik RSHD*. Paris-New York-Moskwa, 1979. No 130. pp.274-344

<sup>23</sup> O metodach walki z Kościołem prowadzonej przez peerelowskie służby bezpieczeństwa. Z Antonim Dudkiem, Janem Żarynem i prok. Andrzejem Witkowskim rozmawia Barbara Polak // *Biuletyn IPN*. Warszawa, 2003. № 1. p.18.

<sup>24</sup> CM.: Molitwa na Lubiankie // *Izwestiya*. Moskwa. 1991. № 260. 31 okt.

“By that time (1970s to 80s – B.F.) the church, and especially the episcopate, had already become completely Soviet. The highest episcopate became the part of the Soviet establishment, and the priests, if they agreed to restrict their activities to worship, received enormous financial resources. Even after the fall of the Soviet Union, the state of the ‘Soviet conservation’ was very suitable for many people.”<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, it was not enough for a priest, both in the USSR and the People’s Poland, to perform liturgy and rites. In order to fulfil their mission, the clergy in Russia and Poland had to make compromises with the communist authorities. I refer to the conclusion made by Yuri Levada (1930–2006): “At the individual level, the typically soviet kind of deal with the authorities tended to the moral corruption, hypocrisy, scams, bribery, doublethink as the necessary conditions for the functioning of the economy and society.”<sup>26</sup>

The overwhelming majority of the clergy (both Catholic and Orthodox) came out of the Soviet system with a distorted understanding of the ‘morally permissible’.<sup>27</sup> These words seem to be very vague, but they should be kept in mind talking of the ‘heritage’ with which the Church left the system.<sup>28</sup> According to the Polish Catholic thinker from the circle of Karol Wojtyła ks. Professor Józef Tischner (1931–2000), within the totalitarian system,

“The Church was doomed to the morally ambiguous existence. It should be understood: The Church was doomed and doomed itself. It was the basis of the existence in the communist system: everyone was guilty. The authorities were satisfied with this, because it

<sup>25</sup> Czapnin S. *Cerkownoje wozrozdzenie. Itogi*. Moskwa: Izdat.-wo Eksmo, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Levada Y. *Homo Post-Soveticus* // Op.cit. p. 5. ; Jerzy Turowicz. *Pamięć i rowód. Tygodnik Powszechny*. No 45, 1993; Tischner J.: *Etyka solidarności i Homo sovieticus*. Kraków: Społeczny Instytut Wydawniczy Znak, 1992.

<sup>27</sup> See: Edel’stein Georgij, prot. *Zapiski sel’skogo swyaszczennika*. Moskwa: Izdatelskij dom RGGU, 2005. p.6

<sup>28</sup> In the post-Soviet time, a priest who accepted the terms of the system will take dirty money and build and decorate a temple on it.

allowed for having more allies. Nobody was guiltless in the totalitarian system, if they were not abroad or in the grave”.<sup>29</sup>

The similar opinion was expressed by cardinal Karl Lehmann (1936 – 2018), who wrote at the same time: “Those, who withstood the pressure of the system, also were corrupted and weakened.”<sup>30</sup>

Today, almost everyone writing about *homo sovieticus* in the Russian Church quotes the prophetic words of sister Maria (Skobcova). Yet in 1936, she spoke about the ‘corrupted, bond and ill mentality’ that was brought up among the young people in Soviet Russia. According to her, when “the people that was brought up by these authorities come to the Church, they would come with this mentality <...> One should not have any illusions: in the case of recognition of the Church in Russia, it would not have other people except the people brought up in the spirit of non-critical, dogmatic and authoritarian thinking”.<sup>31</sup> In 1953 philosopher Ivan Ilyin would write about this in the exile. In the early 1960s, Moscow’s famous archpriest and re-emigrant<sup>32</sup> Vsevolod Spiller<sup>33</sup> would write to Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) about the issue of the young episcopate educated in the USSR.<sup>34</sup> It was Russian biblical scholar and publicist prof. Andrej Desnitsky who reminded later about the equity of mother Maria (Skobcova)’s statement.<sup>35</sup> Her words would be quoted by archbishop

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<sup>29</sup> Lehmann Karl. Neu-Evangelisierung in Ost und West // *Die Politische Meinung*. 1992. H. 267. p. 60

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Maria (Skobcova). Doklad, pročitannyj w marte 1936 g. w Parize na monaszskom sobranii pod predsedatel'stwom mitropolita Ewlogiya // <https://ahilla.ru/vskore-oni-stanut-govorit-ot-imeni-tserkvi/>

<sup>32</sup> Re-emigrant, that is, the one who did not pass Sovietization.

<sup>33</sup> Spiller Wsewolod, prot. *Stranicy zyzni w sobraniiwszybsya pis'mab*. Krasnoyarsk, 2002. pp. 243-272

<sup>34</sup> Nikodim Rotov (1929–1978) is an Orthodox metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod (1963–1978)

<sup>35</sup> Desnickij A. Homo Sovieticus Christianus // *Киевская Русь*. Киев. 2001. Read on November 10, 2018, in electronic format: ([kiev-orthodox.org/site/byauthor/558](http://kiev-orthodox.org/site/byauthor/558)).

Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz during his meeting with the Catholic clergymen in Saratov.<sup>36</sup>

Unlike Polish historians,<sup>37</sup> Russian church historians have little idea of the form of service of the Orthodox episcopate in the last decades of the history of the USSR.<sup>38</sup> The only documentary evidence, the so-called 'Furov's Report', shows a complex picture of the part of the episcopate confronting the requirements of the system; this confrontation was also conducted in according with the 'rules' of the system<sup>39</sup>.

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In the 1990s, the ROC experienced an unprecedented wave of believers, mass baptisms, mass openings of churches. Meanwhile, the mass baptisms were not preceded by any catechism, and the newly baptized people "did not seek to be transformed spiritually and morally, were not going to become members of church communities and participate in sacraments", as it was said 20 years later by the priest and professor of Saint Petersburg Theological seminary Georgi Mitrofanov.<sup>40</sup> This statement may explain why in a country where 60% of the population is baptized, Sunday visits to churches do not exceed 3-6% of believers.

The religious rise and the material assistance of the authorities allowed the ROC for rapid reconstruction of the infrastructure destroyed by

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<sup>36</sup> Kondrusiewicz Tadeusz, arcybiskup. Formacja miryan na postsowieckim prostranstwie k zyzni w Cerkwi XXI weka. Wystuplenie na 13 -oj pastyrskoj konferencji eparhii sw. Klimenta w Saratowe. Wilnyus, 20 maja. 2011 g. Read on November 08, 2018, in electronic format:// <http://dscs.ru/archives/392>

<sup>37</sup> In Poland there is a large scientific literature devoted to the history of dioceses in the period of the Polish People's Republic and the service of the most famous bishops.

<sup>38</sup> O episkope Germogene (Golubewe): Byczkow S. Oswobodzenie ot illuzij. Moskwa: Tetis Pabliszn, 2010: Ob episkopah Ural'skogo regiona (1958–1964) see: Marczenko A., prot. *Religioznaja politika sowetskogo gosudarstwa w gody prawoleniya N.S. Hruszczewa i ee wliyanie*. Moskwa: Krutickoje Patriarszje podworje, 2010.

<sup>39</sup> Furov W. Otczet Sowjeta po delam religij – czlenam CK KPSS // *Vestnik RSHD*. Paris- New York - Moskwa, 1979. № 130. pp. 274-344.

<sup>40</sup> Mitrofanov Georgij, prot. *Nulewyje gody stali dla nas ocen' nulewymi*. Kak zhywyt Cerkow' posle padenia SSSR // *Ogonyok*. Moskwa, 2011. № 45. p. 16.

the Soviet regime. Three years after the collapse of the USSR (1994), there were almost 16 thousand parishes in the ROC.<sup>41</sup> New cadres for the Church were prepared by 3 ecclesiastical academies, 14 seminaries, 28 religious schools. The Orthodox St. Tikhon's Theological Institute, the regent and icon-painting schools have been opened.<sup>42</sup> And this rise has been continuing till now.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, the seminaries opened in each diocese were not able to prepare the required number of the priests. At the same time, the seminaries and religious schools did not have enough qualified professors to teach the clergy. (Self-)Educated priests have been much in demand as teachers.

Mentioning the increase in the number of 'performers of rites (treboispolniteli)' among the clergy, Fr Georgi Mitrofanov would say after decades about *homo sovieticus* that came to the Church in the 1990s:

"Many priests and laypeople that started to play an active social and Church role while continuing to be ideologically uncommitted people. <...> Orthodox religion started to be understood not as the belief in Christ but as a totalitarian ideology with the ideas of greatness of the country, non-tolerance against the internal and external enemies, the need to feel like a powerful community. These stereotypes and clichés of Soviet mentality have acquired an Orthodox entourage."<sup>44</sup>

Sergey Chapnin, executive editor of the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (2009-2015), echoes him:

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<sup>41</sup> Statistika Russkoj Prawoslawnoj Cerkwi. Read on September 07, 2018, in electronic format:// URL: <https://drevo-info.ru/articles/11316.html>.

<sup>42</sup> There were almost 13 thousand (12 841) priests per 16 thousand (15 985) parishes. In all types of church educational institutions in 1994 there were about 4 thousand students, and about 6 thousand in total including the part-time students (Ibid.)

<sup>43</sup> As at the early 2017, the Russian Orthodox Church had over 36 thousand churches, slightly under 35 thousand priests and 944 monasteries. In February 2011 the Russian Orthodox Church had 92 educational institutions (5 academies, 2 orthodox universities, 47 seminaries, 37 colleges) (Ibid.)

<sup>44</sup> Mitrofanov Georgij, prot. *Nulewyje gody stali dla nas ocen' nulewymi.*

“About 10-15 years ago a new type of priest emerged. The priest of this type does not see any connection between the tasks of baptizing and the task of teaching. The commandment of the Savior ‘go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit’ (Matt. 28, 19) for many years turned out to be almost forgotten. Such a priest is not able to create a parish community, is not capable of being a confessor. He is deeply indifferent to the interests of the parishioners. Moreover, he is little interested in the issues of spiritual life”.<sup>45</sup>

The hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church is aware of this and is taking vigorous measures to raise the educational level of the clergy: it is forbidden to ordain persons without special education, and in their turn, the seminaries are required to undergo the state accreditation.<sup>46</sup> But these efforts can hardly bring results in the coming decade. As Professor Alexander Desnitsky wittily remarked, “changing the hammer and sickle to an eight-pointed cross or another religious symbol is much easier than parting with the Soviet-style thinking. It can be said that the future of Christianity in Russia depends on how the present-day Russian Christians cope with this task”.<sup>47</sup>

One of the unfortunate consequences of the symbiosis of *homo sovieticus* with the pseudo-Orthodox mentality of the young clergy was the emergence of a ‘*mladostarchestvo*’. It could be described as an Orthodox version of Catholic clericalism. There is another formidable phenomenon that cannot be ignored by the Church today. The matter concerns the revival of the nationalist ideology in the post-communist countries. It influenced the situation in the churches of these countries.

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<sup>45</sup> Czapnin S. Sowetskoje i postsowetskoje w sowremennoj cerkownoj kul'ture: obraz pastyrya, swidotelstwo, sluzenie. Doklad Sergeja Czapnina, na Menewskih czteniyah 10 sentyabrya 2011 goda. Read on November 18, 2018, in electronic format: [http://chapnin.ru/articles/sovetskoe\\_i\\_postsovetskoe\\_64](http://chapnin.ru/articles/sovetskoe_i_postsovetskoe_64)

<sup>46</sup> *Missiya w miru*. Interwyju arhiepiskopa Wolokolamskogo Ilariona // *Ekspert*. Moskwa, 2009. 15 июня. №23.

<sup>47</sup> Desnickij A. Homo soveticus christianus. Read on November 10, 2018, in electronic format: <http://www.kiev-orthodox.org/site/byauthor/558>

## On Church nationalism and provincialism

The collapse of the communist ideology, which, for decades, was supposed to determine the sense and modus of the activity of Soviet people, left *homo sovieticus* without a coherent worldview, without spiritual leadership, without any original support. That provoked the pseudo-church type of thinking (psevdocerkovnost'), substitute ideologies, and the revival of traditional nationalism. The birth and popularity in Russia of the pseudo-religious terrorist organisation Aum Shinrikyo that was supported by some Russian politicians (R. Hasbulatov,<sup>48</sup> A. Ruckoj,<sup>49</sup> O. Lobov<sup>50</sup>) can exemplify this spiritual vacuum after the decline of Marxist ideology.

At the same time, the bishops of the PCC and ROC regarded the supporting of national tradition, Christian values, and patriotism to be a good way to increase their authority among the society. This discourse was especially influential in the 1990s. According to Polina Gorkunova: "Such concepts as faith, salvation, God were lost against the backdrop of this discourse. That is why Soviet authorities understood the Church to be a public institution on a par with parties or trade unions."<sup>51</sup> The participation of the bishops in the elections in the 1990s can be regarded to be a bad-experience: the electorate did not follow the recommendations of the bishops.

It should not be forgotten that the entire interwar (1918–1939) history of the Balkans and Eastern Europe was full of various border conflicts and nationalist intolerance against national minorities. In post-war Eastern Europe, national and ethnic conflicts were mostly resolved or, to be more precise, were just 'frozen'. The Soviet Union did not allow for

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<sup>48</sup> Ruslan Khasbulatov-Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation (1991-1993)

<sup>49</sup> Alexander Rutskoy – Vice-President of the Russian Federation (1991-1993)

<sup>50</sup> Oleg Lobov, the first Deputy Chairman of the government of the Russian Federation (1991)

<sup>51</sup> Gorkunowa P.I. Cerkowno-gosudarstwennye otnoszeniya w postsowetskuyu epohu // Molodoj uczenyj. 2009. №11. pp. 221-223. Read on November 11, 2018, in electronic format: // <https://moluch.ru/archive/11/804/>



appearance of the open conflicts between the ‘fraternal’ nations. Nevertheless, after the collapse of the system, it turned out that traditional, historical, national, religious and cultural contradictions, as well as evil doings, painful experiences and poignant memories continued to exist under the cover of the ideological fiction of the ‘socialist community’.

The worldview of a *homo sovieticus* was corrupted by suspicion and fear. This attitude was transferred into his new life. There are “other enemies that have been proposed instead imperialists, Zionists, spies and saboteurs. First of all, it is favourite fairy tale characters as Masons or Jew Masons, Church modernists. <...> All other enemies originate one way or another from the first ones. Including <...> the Pope who was supposed by the authors of various brochure-horror stories to be a member of one Masonic lodge or another.”<sup>52</sup> All these statements are present in Polish nationalist Catholic literature excepting the accusations against the Polish Pope John Paul II. The American imperialism in this discourse is replaced by German and Russian ones. Other things are identical. Both cases include the fear of liberals, Church modernists, and the corrupting influence of Western culture.

The development of nationalism in post-communist Europe is also associated with the conscious destruction of local, neighbours and social networks that was conducted by the communist authorities. As Nossol writes, the post-socialist societies are still atomized and, during “economically difficult periods, they easily become ‘crowds’, being a fertile ground for populist-nationalist slogans and for chauvinism”.<sup>53</sup> The fact that these conflicts can lead to armed conflicts, as it was during the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, testifies to the survivability of the old ethnic and religious disagreements. The revival of these conflicts in the post-Soviet countries has created serious obstacles not only on the path to integration

<sup>52</sup> “Izdawaja hristianskije knigi i prodawaja ich, glawnoje nie prodad’ zaodno i hristianstwo”. Interview with the head of the publishing group *Quo Vadis* Evgeniem Awramczukom. 24 April 2009. Read on November 10, 2018, in electronic format: <https://credo.press/102935/>

<sup>53</sup> Nossol Alfons, bp. *Ekumeniczne implikacje przemian w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej*, p.11

with the EU, but also for normal interstate cooperation and cultural exchange.

Bishop Alfons Nossol pays attention to another factor that feeds nationalism in Eastern Europe. Almost all these countries are young national states. This *national* form of statehood has not been regarded by them to be an ‘anachronism’, or ‘the political concept of the past’. Additionally, these countries became the members of the EU only after resolving the territorial conflicts with their neighbours. On the one hand, this appeal to the past, as Bishop Alfons Nossol has written, revives former nationalistic prejudices, and, on the other hand, it feeds on all kinds of complexes that impede reintegration and integration both of Poland and Russia into the European and world community. It splits society and the Church.

In these post-Socialist realities, Poland was split into supporters of the ‘special Polish way’ of the party *Law and Justice* (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość) and supporters of the early European integration from the anticlerical party *Civic Platform* (Platforma Obywatelska). Nevertheless, it was John Paul II who constrained these nationalistic tendencies until he died in 2005. Everything has been changed after the victory of the Polish traditionalist party *Law and Justice* that represented themselves to be Christian Democrats. Foreign, cultural and ‘historical’ policy that was carried out by the governments formed by this party (2005–2007; since 2015) seem very similar with the politics of the communist authorities during the late socialism period. That is why some researchers consider the activity of this party as a continuation of the tradition both of the pre-war National Democracy and of the Soviet mentality of the period of the Polish People’s Republic.<sup>54</sup> In the PCC, *Radio Maryja* is a very influential force that consolidates traditional nationalists seeing Poland to be the stronghold of Catholicism in the East. The confident victory of the party *Law and Justice* at the parliamentary elections in 2015 formed favourable conditions for

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<sup>54</sup> Adam Zamojski. The Problem With Poland’s New Nationalism. Read on November 26, 2018, in electronic format: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/27/the-problem-with-polands-new-nationalism/>

the rise of the traditional Polish Catholicism with its anti-Russian and anti-German ideology. This is a great challenge for the Catholic Episcopate.

At the same time, the cultural shock caused by the collapse of the USSR is not the only reason for the rise of nationalism in Russia with its traditional Soviet anti-liberalism and anti-Americanism. Long before the collapse of the regime (1974), Protoiereus Alexander Shmeman pointed out the danger of the Russian national arrogance and the “seducing dreams of the universal theocratic kingdom”. Addressing the supporters of the ideology of a strong power, Father Alexander said: “What are we striving for? (...) To be sure that our Russian flag flies around the world? But then it is the Soviet power that is the limit of all our desires, their disfiguring caricature. After all, Russia has never been so externally strong before. Neither under Peter and Catherine, nor at the times of Pushkin, Dostoevsky or any one of the Russian saints. Only under Stalin”.<sup>55</sup>

Nevertheless, it is the nostalgia for a ‘former greatness’ that causes the emergence, among some Orthodox people, of such myths as the stories about Stalin or Zhukov as ‘secret Christians’, the veneration of the icons depicting Stalin, the ideas to canonize Ivan the Terrible, etc. Additionally, all Orthodox nationalists represent themselves to be supporters of the reconstruction of the Orthodox empire. Chapnin characterizes the modern stage in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church as “neo-imperial one or, taking into account the synthesis of Soviet and Orthodox traditions, neo-Soviet one”.<sup>56</sup>

Both in Poland and Russia, the Second World War (Poland) or The Great Patriotic War (Russia) have been serving as a catalyst of patriotic moods. These ideas attract the people seeking for a satisfaction in the victories of their states during the Second World War. The people “regard the Western secular world to be too complex and seek for a basis in

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<sup>55</sup> Shmeman Aleksandr, prot. Duhownye sud’by Rossii // *Sobranie statej 1947—1983*. Moskwa: Russkij put’, 2009. p.667.

<sup>56</sup> Czapnin S. Cerkownoje wozrozdzenie. Itogi.

provincialism with its patriotic and religious slogans”.<sup>57</sup> Idealizing the past, they have been attempting to find in the past the answers for their essential questions.

## Conclusion

The euphoria accompanied the fall of the socialist regimes does not exist anymore. Today, the respectable Polish bishops have been following the sociologists of religion in arguing for the “disorientation of the Church”.<sup>58</sup> In such a way, Bishop Andrzej Czaja writes: “There is no doubt that our Church is confused today”.<sup>59</sup> According to his view, the reason of this is “maintaining and strengthening the old structures and the *homo sovieticus* mentality that manifests itself, among other things, in the simulation of activity.” The bishop also regards the “great and intensive changes and metamorphoses of the contemporary world” to be the factor that complicates the situation. He concludes his essay arguing that “it is difficult both for the Church and for an individual to find their place” under the new conditions.<sup>60</sup>

It is the heritage of the *homo sovieticus* mentality that does not allow for using the potential of the young people and laypeople to resolve the Church’s problems. The paternalistic model that was formed during the Soviet period continues influencing the post-Soviet life of the Churches and prevents carrying out the Church’s mission. Another negative feature of the *homo sovieticus* is the striving to find the answers for up-to-date questions in the past.

Having resolved legal, property, and financial problems with the help of the EU institutions, the Central European Churches did not find understanding in their striving to be a bearer of the common values of the

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<sup>57</sup> Adam Zamojski. The Problem With Poland’s New Nationalism

<sup>58</sup> Rogowski R. Kościół zagubiony, p.91

<sup>59</sup> Czaja Andrzej, bp. Potrzeba pogłębionej eklezjologii i formacji eklezjalnej w dzisiejszej sytuacji Kościoła w Polsce // *Tarnowskie studia teologiczne*. 2015. № 1, p. 169.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

union. Just as in the Soviet Union, the Christian Church is supposed to play the role of a museum in the European Union. The attempts of the ROC to be a moral authority were also not successful.

In 1991, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI) compared the fall of the walls separating the countries of the socialist system from the rest of Europe with the fall of the walls of the biblical Jericho.<sup>61</sup> A quarter of a century later, another biblical image comes to mind: the exodus from Egypt of Jews, who were wandering in the desert for 40 years. Ralf Dahrendorf prophetically said in the early 1990s that 40 years would not be enough for us to leave the system behind.<sup>62</sup>

The future model of the Church, as it is seen by the hierarchy of the two Churches, is the Church-community. This perspective was formulated by the Pope Francis. The patriarch Kirill also talks about it, even though in a less radical form. Nevertheless, this vision of the Church requires a radical reconstruction of the paternalistic models of the Churches both in Russia and in Poland.

**Boris Filippov, PhD of History** since 1970, professor of History department at Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University since 1995. Taught History in Pedagogical Institutes in Ryazan and Orel from 1974 to 1991. Senior research associate at the Institute of information and social sciences (INION) of USSR from 1991 to 1994. Chief of the research laboratory at the Institute of national problems of education at the Ministry of Education of Russian Federation. Field of scientific interests: Christian churches in the modern world, Eastern policies of the Vatican. Article on the topic of the lecture: *The Church and the State After the Fall of the Soviet System: Problems and Solutions*. Published at the Annual Theological Conference almanac by Saint Tikhon's Orthodox University, issue #25, 2015.

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<sup>61</sup> Ratzinger J. *Wendezeit für Europa. Diagnosen und Prognosen zur Lage von Kirche und Welt*. Freiburg 1991, p. 105.

<sup>62</sup> Dahrendorf R. Reflections on the Revolution in Europe. In: *A letter intended to have been sent to a gentleman in Warsaw*. New York: Random House, 1990.

Michał Gierycz

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## ON THE 'NEW PARADIGM OF CATHOLICISM' AND ITS IMPACT ON THE POLITICAL THEORY AND SOCIO-POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### Abstract

The starting point for this analysis is based on two phenomena. The first one is Pope Francis' commitment to political issues, which is considerably stronger than that of any other post-conciliar popes. The second one is the statement made by the card. P. Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State, claiming, in the context of moral theology, that Pope Francis is carrying forward a 'new paradigm of Catholicism'. The aim of this paper is to find the answer to the question about the potential consequences of 'a new paradigm' for the Catholic political theory and socio-political engagement of the Church. In the course of analysis the author shows that the potential 'new paradigm' would be destructive for the entire, carefully elaborated, post-conciliar concept of metapolitical commitment of the Church.

**Keywords:** *Amoris Laetitia*, Catholic Church, moral theology, new paradigm, political theory.

The starting point for this analysis is based on two phenomena.<sup>1</sup> The first one is Pope Francis' commitment to political issues, which is consid-

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<sup>1</sup> The text is based on my article published in Polish in a book dedicated for prof. Aniela Dylus ("Festschrift") "*Nowy paradygmat katolicyzmu? O potencjalnych konsekwencjach "paradygmatycznej zmiany" dla katolickiej teorii polityki*", in: B. Rydliński, S. Sowiński, R. Zenderowski [red.], *Wolność. Wieczne wyzwanie*, Warszawa 2018.

erably stronger than that of any other post-conciliar popes. From his speeches on the impermissibility of life sentence,<sup>2</sup> his support for concrete solutions for combating climate change,<sup>3</sup> detailed political guidelines regarding migration policy,<sup>4</sup> to the condemnation of the possession of nuclear weapons<sup>5</sup> or the expectations regarding the adoption of the *ius soli*

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Francis, *Address of Pope Francis to the Delegates of the International Association of Penal Law*, 23.10.2014, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/october/documents/papa-francesco\\_20141023\\_associazione-internazionale-diritto-penale.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/october/documents/papa-francesco_20141023_associazione-internazionale-diritto-penale.html) [19.02.2018], where we can read: "A life sentence is just a death penalty in disguise." On the total and absolute rejection of the death penalty by Francis, leading him in this regard to contradict the teachings of the Catechism and of the previous Popes, cf. Francis, *Address Of His Holiness Pope Francis To Participants In The Meeting Promoted By The Pontifical Council For Promoting The New Evangelization*, Watykan, 11 October 2017

<sup>3</sup> For example, in his letter to the participants of the Climate Conference in Bonn, the Pope described the Paris Agreement as "historic" and recognized it as "a clear path for transition toward an economic development model of low or zero carbon consumption." Cf. [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2017/documents/papa-francesco\\_20171107\\_messaggio-cambiamenti-climatici.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2017/documents/papa-francesco_20171107_messaggio-cambiamenti-climatici.html) [15.09.2018]

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Migrants & Refugees Section of Integral Human Development Dicastery, *Responding to refugees and migrants: twenty action points for the global compacts*, <https://migrants-refugees.va/20-action-points> [21.02.2018]. As the preamble of this document states, "the Points have been approved by the Holy Father," who personally directs the Migrants & Refugees Section, and they include, inter alia, the call to adopt resettlement policies for refugees or, if already present in the legal framework, increase the number of refugees resettled on a scale that would enable the annual resettlement needs identified by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to be met (point 2e) or to provide family reunification visas or, if already available, expand the number of such visas issued, particularly for the reunification of all family members (including grandparents, siblings and grandchildren) (point 2f).

<sup>5</sup> Francis, *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the International Symposium "Prospects for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons and for Integral Disarmament"*, Vatican, 10.11.2017, <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2017-11/pope-to-disarmament-conference--world-without-weapons-not-imposs.html> [15.09.2018]. In his address, the Pope stated, inter alia, that "progress [...] can achieve the utopia of a world free of deadly instruments of aggression".

principle as the cornerstone of citizenship policy,<sup>6</sup> Pope Francis has expressed unprecedentedly specific expectations towards public authorities.<sup>7</sup> The second one is the statement made by the Vatican Secretary of State in January AD 2018. Commenting on the tensions that arose in the Church following the publication of the Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, Cardinal Pietro Parolin stated that Pope Francis is carrying forward a new paradigm in the Church “with wisdom, with prudence, and also with patience”.<sup>8</sup> It seems that this widely commented statement may be important for understanding a new type of commitment of the hierarchical Church in the political affairs.

The aim of this paper is to find the answer to the question about the potential consequences of ‘a new paradigm’ for the Catholic political theory and socio-political engagement of the Church. To accomplish this task, the text has been divided into three parts. In the first part, I try to grasp possible essence of ‘paradigm shift’, in the light of the existing explanations of Pope’s collaborator card. Blaise Cupich. In the second one, I outline the Catholic political theory and the Church’s role towards the state that results from this theory. In the third part that sums up the paper,

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Francis, *Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees. Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018, which is celebrated on 14 January 2018*, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco\\_20170815\\_world-migrants-day-2018.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20170815_world-migrants-day-2018.html) [15.09.2018], where we can read that the “right to a nationality should be recognised and duly certified for all children at birth.” In addition, as reported by the media, a proposed Italian law, granting Italian citizenship to children born in Italy of immigrant parents and who have completed at least five years in the Italian school system, has enjoyed an apparent support both of the local Church and of the Holy See, including Pope Francis himself. *Kard. Parolin o migracji, uchodźcach i polskiej choince*, <http://niedziela.pl/artykul/32920/Kard-Parolin-o-migracji-uchodzcach-i> [19.02.2018]

<sup>7</sup> It is worth mentioning that this is sometimes welcomed with approval by lobby groups. For example, the Polish Climate Coalition publicly expressed its satisfaction with the Pope’s address during his visit to the United Nations Headquarters, describing it as “extremely moving, political and social” <http://gramwzielone.pl/trendy/18271/papiez-franciszek-na-forum-onz-o-zmianach-klimatu> [03.03.2018]

<sup>8</sup> *Cardinal Parolin: Amoris Laetitia is a ‘paradigm shift’*, <http://www.catholicera.co.uk/news/2018/01/11/cardinal-parolin-amoris-laetitia-is-a-paradigm-shift/> [13.02.2018]



I bring together the conclusions of the two previous parts and try to determine theoretical consequences of 'a new paradigm of Catholicism' for the Catholic political theory. Obviously, all findings presented here are preliminary, since today there is no sufficient ground to ultimately declare that Pope Francis' collaborators' interpretation of his Pontificate, which sees him as a promoter of a paradigm shift, is adequate. As it is known, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in his letter from 2018, speaks instead about "interior continuity between the two pontificates, even with all the differences in style and temperament".<sup>9</sup>

### Can the Pope Make 'a Paradigm Shift'?

One should start with an observation that the thesis of 'a paradigm shift' causes considerable consternation in the Church. Some serious commentators even suppose that Cardinal Parolin misunderstood the terms he used.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, such a supposition would not only unjustifiably question intellectual capacities of the second person in the Church (after the Pope), but also ignore the fact that his remark was not an isolated statement of one hierarch. The need of a 'paradigm shift' in the Church's pastoral and doctrinal teaching was raised by Cld. Walter Casper in his famous speech at the consistory in 2014.<sup>11</sup> Recently, the issue of 'a new paradigm of Catholicism' in the Pope's teaching was subject of the entire lecture given by another close collaborator of the Holy Father, Cardinal Blase Cupich.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.catholicherald.com/News/National\\_\\_\\_International/Pope\\_Francis/Benedict\\_XVI\\_says\\_criticism\\_against\\_Pope\\_Francis\\_is\\_foolish\\_prejudice/](https://www.catholicherald.com/News/National___International/Pope_Francis/Benedict_XVI_says_criticism_against_Pope_Francis_is_foolish_prejudice/)

<sup>10</sup> The issue has been addressed, inter alia, by G. Weigel in his article *The Catholic Church Doesn't Do "Paradigm Shifts"*, <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2018/01/the-catholic-church-doesnt-do-paradigm-shifts>

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Cdl. W. Kasper, *Il Vangelo della famiglia*, Queriniana, Brescia 2014, p. 41

<sup>12</sup> Cardinal B. Cupich, *Pope Francis' Revolution of Mercy: Amoris Laetitia as a New Paradigm of Catholicity*, Full text of the speech given today Friday 9 February by Cardinal Cupich at the Von Hügel Institute, St. Edmund College, Cambridge, England, <http://www.lastampa.it/2018/02/09/vaticaninsider/eng/documents/pope-francis-revolution-of-mercy-amoris-laetitia-as-a-new-paradigm-of-catholicity-skMox0lKtoX5szfKH6QgrL/pagina.html> [14.02.2018]

It is worth showing the cause of the consternation in some circles of the Church regarding the Kuhnian phrase used by the Secretary of State to characterize the novelty of the Pope's teaching. On the one hand, it may result from Cardinal Parolin's delegitimation - in a way 'at its very heart' - of the criticism of the Pope's exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. One needs to realize that the exhortation published by Pope Francis in 2016 has led to a huge division within the Church, because of, among other things, the lack of clarity of the mentioned document regarding the possibility for the divorced and remarried to receive Holy Communion,<sup>13</sup> which the Catholic Church's tradition unequivocally rejects.<sup>14</sup> As a result of *Amoris Laetitia*, pastoral solutions contrary to the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church have been adopted by e. g. the bishops of Germany and Malta.<sup>15</sup> Many theologians and shepherds of the Church (including four cardinals of the *dubia*<sup>16</sup>) asked the Pope to clarify *Amoris*

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<sup>13</sup> Although the number of doctrinally doubtful issues was longer. Cf. *Correctio Filialis de haeresibus propagatis*, <http://www.correctiofilialis.org> [13.02.2018]

<sup>14</sup> Cf. e.g. John Paul II, *Familiaris consortio*, no. 84: "However, the Church reaffirms her practice, which is based upon Sacred Scripture, of not admitting to Eucharistic Communion divorced persons who have remarried. They are unable to be admitted thereto from the fact that their state and condition of life objectively contradict that union of love between Christ and the Church which is signified and effected by the Eucharist."

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna, Bishop Mario Grech *Criteria for the Application of Chapter VIII of Amoris Laetitia*, January 2017, <http://ms.maltadiocese.org/WEBSITE/2017/PRESS%20RELEASES/Norms%20for%20the%20Application%20of%20Chapter%20VIII%20of%20AL.pdf> [27.02.2017]

<sup>16</sup> Four cardinals (Italian Carlo Caffarra, American Raymond Burke and Germans Walter Brandmüller and Joachim Meisner) — sent in 2016 five questions, called *dubia* (Latin for "doubts") to the Holy Father and Cardinal Gerhard Müller, then prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. *Dubia* "are formal questions brought before the Pope and the CDF aimed at eliciting a "Yes" or "No" response, "without theological argumentation." The practice is a long-standing way of addressing the Apostolic See, geared towards achieving clarity on Church teaching. The cardinals said the aim was to clarify "contrasting interpretations" of Paragraphs 300-305 in Chapter 8 of *Amoris Laetitia*, which are its most controversial passages relating to admission of remarried divorcees to the sacraments, and the Church's moral teaching". E. Pentin, *Four Cardinals Formally Ask Pope for Clarity on 'Amoris Laetitia'*, <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/four-cardinals-formally-ask-pope-for-clarity-on-amoris-laetitia> [12.04.2019]

*Laetitia*,<sup>17</sup> in writing or orally, which the Pope did not do. On the contrary, in Autumn 2017, he conferred the status of authentic Magisterium on the ambiguous guidelines of the bishops of the Buenos Aires region issued after the publication of *Amoris Laetitia*. This decision, bringing real joy to some cardinals (*inter alia* cld. Walter Kasper<sup>18</sup>), made others ask for clarity on papal teaching again.<sup>19</sup> The Kazakhstani bishops issued the 'Profession' that *de facto* constitutes correction of the Pope's teaching contained in *Amoris Laetitia*.<sup>20</sup>

Whereas in the light of Cardinal Parolin's statement on a 'new paradigm', all the requests for clarification of the teaching, addressed to the Pope after the publication of *Amoris Laetitia*, should be regarded - as he said - as 'difficulties' resulting from - however unpleasant it may sound - intellectually embarrassing misunderstanding. Since the calls for precision and disambiguation of the papal teaching stemmed from a different paradigm than the paradigm of Pope Francis, it is obvious that they could not have been answered. It is like demanding the explanation of the complexity of quantum physics in terms of Newtonian physics. Not even Einstein could do that. This seems to be the message of the Secretary of State to the concerned theologians and bishops, where he magnanimously emphasizes that their 'difficulties' in adopting the new paradigm are 'understandable'.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, apart from the consternation resulting from disavowing critical voices, there are more profound reasons for serious doubts

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/breaking-four-cardinals-release-letter-asking-to-meet-pope-about-confusion> [15.09.2018];

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/cardinal-kasper-the-controversy-surrounding-amoris-laetitia-has-come-to-an-end-41887> [15.09.2018]

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/01/26/pope-francis-needs-clarify-amoris-laetitia-says-dutch-cardinal/> [13.02.2018]

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Profession of the immutable truths about sacramental marriage* was then signed by seven other bishops and cardinals from all over the world. It is explicitly stated in the text that: "It is not licit (non licet) to justify, approve, or legitimize either directly or indirectly divorce and a non-conjugal stable sexual relationship through the sacramental discipline of the admission of so-called "divorced and remarried" to Holy Communion, in this case a discipline alien to the entire Tradition of the Catholic and Apostolic faith".

<sup>21</sup> *Cardinal Parolin*

regarding a possible ‘paradigm shift’ in the Church. George Weigel outlined them in a synthetic way. As he notes, the notion of a paradigm shift, universally used in science since Kuhn’s ground-breaking work, signals “a dramatic, sudden, and unexpected break in human understanding—and thus something of a new beginning”.<sup>22</sup> Undoubtedly, Catholicism has experienced such moments, for example, when Christians understood that the salvation promised to the People of Israel had been given to the Gentiles as well. Nevertheless, as G. Weigel notes, all the moments that can be recognized as paradigm breaks are matters of divine revelation and

“as the Church has long believed and taught, revelation ended with the death of the last apostle. So the evolution of the Church’s understanding of the gospel over the centuries is not a matter of ‘paradigm shifts’ ... or radical breaks and new beginnings; it’s a question of what theologians call the development of doctrine. And as Blessed John Henry Newman taught us, authentic doctrinal development is organic and in continuity with ‘the faith once . . . delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3)’<sup>23</sup>.

Thus “the Catholic Church doesn’t do rupture: that was tried 500 years ago, with catastrophic results for Christian unity and the cause of Christ”.<sup>24</sup> If today someone does something similar to a ‘paradigm shift’, it is not so much the Pope - according to Weigel - as some local churches, like Germany or Malta, which with their liberal reception of *Amoris Laetitia* introduce fragmentation into the Church alien to Catholicism, and make the Catholic Church resemble the Anglican Communion.<sup>25</sup>

It is hard, or probably even impossible, to refute Weigel’s theological arguments. As Cardinal Gerhard Müller, former prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, explicitly states “there can be no paradigm shifts in the Catholic faith. Whoever speaks of a Copernican turn in moral theology, which turns a direct violation of God’s commandments

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<sup>22</sup> G. Weigel, *The Catholic Church*

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

into a praiseworthy decision of conscience, quite evidently speaks against the Catholic faith".<sup>26</sup> With regard to Blessed Cardinal Newman, it should therefore be said that a 'paradigm shift' would be not so much the development of doctrine as its 'corruption'.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, G. Weigel's conclusions with regard to the reality do not seem so simple and obvious as the author would like them to be. It should be noted that one of the local churches whose reception of *Amoris Laetitia* is, according to Weigel, problematic because it is marked with a 'paradigm shift' is the Church in the region of Buenos Aires. It is there that the bishops stated that "if it comes to be recognized that, in a specific case [of a non-sacramental union], there are limitations that mitigate responsibility and culpability (cf. 301-302), especially when a person believes they would incur a subsequent wrong by harming the children of the new union, *Amoris Laetitia* offers the possibility of access to the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist (cf. footnotes 336 and 351)".<sup>28</sup> This stands in apparent contradiction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which states that: "The sexual act must take place exclusively within marriage. Outside of marriage it always constitutes a grave sin and excludes one from sacramental communion."<sup>29</sup> However, Pope Francis's position in regard to the Argentinian proposal was affirmative. In a private letter to the bishops of this region, which in 2017 was recognized by the Pope as part of the authentic magisterium of the universal Church and was published together with the guidelines of the bishops from Buenos Aires in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, he evaluates the Argentinian criteria in an unequivocal way: "The document is very good and completely explains the meaning of

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<sup>26</sup> G. L. Mueller, *Development or corruption? Can there be "paradigm shifts" in the interpretation of the deposit of faith?* <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2018/02/development-or-corruption> [21.02.2018]

<sup>27</sup> Cf. J. H. Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, <http://www.newmanreader.org/works/development/index.html> [15.09.2018]

<sup>28</sup> Buenos Aires bishops' guidelines on *Amoris Laetitia* <https://cvcomment.org/2016/09/18/buenos-aires-bishops-guidelines-on-amoris-laetitia-full-text/> [15.09.2018]

<sup>29</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church 2390

chapter VIII of *Amoris Laetitia*. There are no other interpretations.”<sup>30</sup> Thus if we agree with Weigel that the problematic reception of AL in some countries is something of a ‘paradigm shift’, it is difficult - in the face of the Pope’s unequivocal declaration that supports such an interpretation - to deny Cardinal P. Parolin’s statement. However, this is what Weigel does, based on the abovementioned theological conclusions.

Then does Weigel contradict himself? No. It will be easier to understand his position if we distinguish two levels of analysis: normative (dogmatic) and empirical. As far as the normative point of view (orthodoxy) is concerned, a paradigm shift is unacceptable in the Church, says Weigel. As he notes, however, from the empirical perspective, something of a paradigm shift is happening before our eyes. Therefore, seeking the answer to the question posed in the title of this section, it should be stated that Weigel’s theses make us see the difference between what is permitted to do in the Church and what can happen in the Church.<sup>31</sup> In other words, while the deductive analysis excludes the possibility of a paradigm shift, the inductive analysis does not exclude such an eventuality, even if this may lead to serious theological problems or potentially violate the identity of the Church. In the second, inductive, perspective, there is no reason to question *a priori* the word choice of Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

### The Essence of a ‘New Paradigm of Catholicity’

What would the essence of a new paradigm consist of? The issue has recently been discussed in detail by Cardinal Blase Cupich. First of all, he

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<sup>30</sup> Francis, *Letter of Pope Francis to Mons. Sergio Alfredo Fenoy, Delegate of the Buenos Aires Pastoral Region*, [https://www.lifesitenews.com/images/pdfs/Letter\\_of\\_pope\\_to\\_Pastoral\\_Region\\_of\\_Buenos\\_Aires\\_September\\_5\\_2016.pdf](https://www.lifesitenews.com/images/pdfs/Letter_of_pope_to_Pastoral_Region_of_Buenos_Aires_September_5_2016.pdf) [15.09.2018]

<sup>31</sup> It seems that it is in this context that we should read the last bitter paragraph of Weigel’s text. He states that “something is broken in Catholicism today and it isn’t going to be healed by appeals to paradigm shifts. In the first Christian centuries, bishops frankly confronted and, when necessary, fraternally corrected each other. That practice is as essential today as it was in the days of Cyprian and Augustine—not to mention Peter and Paul.”

points to the fact that the issue concerns a 'new paradigm of Catholicity' and thus the redefinition of the Church. It means "a more holistic approach to being church, one that more fully unites what we know and practice in our tradition [...] In other words, there has to be a holistic connection between our knowledge and our practice, our ideas and our experience have to inform each other".<sup>32</sup> More specifically, according to the Cardinal, a new paradigm is expressed in the exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*: "On the one hand the Church embraces the family with the Gospel message. Yet, since the family is already itself a Gospel, the Gospel of the family, there is a reciprocity to this incarnational approach that recognizes the contribution that families make to the Church's understanding and proclamation of the Gospel."<sup>33</sup> Thus, the issue would be about the equivalence between the deductive method and the inductive one. While the first one, so far specific to theology, stems from the Revelation, the second one stems "from the reflection on the reality in order to understand in what state one is, what one needs and then to act accordingly".<sup>34</sup> Thus in the second perspective, the will of God is read from the experience of a specific family, which - as Cardinal Cupich notes - is "itself a Gospel".<sup>35</sup>

Such an approach to the understanding of a holistic Catholicism is new because even though the issue of experience has always played an important role in shaping the Church's teaching, its fundamental lines were determined by the Revelation. There was no two-way street that suggests the equivalence between the deductive method and the inductive

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<sup>32</sup> Cardinal B. Cupich, *Pope Francis' Revolution of Mercy: Amoris Laetitia as a New Paradigm of Catholicity*, Full text of the speech given today Friday 9 February by Cardinal Cupich at the Von Hügel Institute, St. Edmund College, Cambridge, England, <http://www.lastampa.it/2018/02/09/vaticaninsider/eng/documents/pope-francis-revolution-of-mercy-amoris-laetitia-as-a-new-paradigm-of-catholicity-skMox0lKtoX5szfKH6QgrL/pagina.html> [15.02.2018]

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> E. Palladino, *Na nowo odczytać Humanae vitae*, <http://kosicol.wiara.pl/doc/4260669.Na-nowo-odczytac-Humanae-vitae> [15.02.2018]

<sup>35</sup> From the theological perspective, the Cardinal's statement may raise questions as to whether the Church's belief in the end of Revelation with the death of the last Apostle is in accordance with the 'new paradigm'.

one. What is more, so far such a two-way street has been thought inadvisable in the Church, since only the first of the abovementioned ways makes it possible to form an orthodox alliance between tradition and the present, in accordance with Catholicism. As Jean Guitton noted, the first method consists of:

“Focusing first and above all on the tradition (which is, in the final analysis, the history of truth’s identity) so as to grasp it correctly and to understand it well [...], and then to consider the thinking of the world, [...] to discern what there is in this thinking of the world that is in conformity with the tradition, and what is contrary to its spirit, so as to affirm the first and reject the second as tainted. The second method consists in focusing first and above all upon the thinking of the present, borrowing its language, being nurtured by its principles, and becoming steeped in its spirit. Then you turn to the tradition to reject everything that seems to be contrary to the contemporary thinking and you adapt what remains.”<sup>36</sup>

As Yves Congar, O.P., noted, depending on whether we devote our energies to the new external element or to the reality of the Church, we will obtain either “a mechanical updating in danger of becoming both a ‘novelty’ and a schismatic reform, on the one hand, or a genuine ‘renewal’ (a true ‘development’) that is a reform in and of the Church, on the other hand - a reform without schism”.<sup>37</sup> In other words, it has been recognized so far in the Church that the inductive method, typical of social sciences, puts the Church in the face of a serious “temptation to adapt theology to the needs of sociology”.<sup>38</sup> Since giving in to this temptation brings not so

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<sup>36</sup> J. Guitton, *La pensee modern at la catholicisme*, III, *La pensee de M. Loisy*, Aix 1936, p. 57, as cited in: Y. Congar OP, *True and False Reform in the Church*, [https://books.google.pl/books?id=uAZrDQAAQBAJ&pg=PT4&chl=pl&source=gbs\\_selected\\_pages&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.pl/books?id=uAZrDQAAQBAJ&pg=PT4&chl=pl&source=gbs_selected_pages&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false) [16.09.2018]

<sup>37</sup> Y. Congar OP, *True and False Reform in the Church*, [https://books.google.pl/books?id=uAZrDQAAQBAJ&pg=PT4&chl=pl&source=gbs\\_selected\\_pages&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.pl/books?id=uAZrDQAAQBAJ&pg=PT4&chl=pl&source=gbs_selected_pages&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false) [16.09.2018]

<sup>38</sup> P. Mazurkiewicz, *Dwie wieże i minaret. Szkice z katolickiej nauki społecznej*, Wyd. Naukowe UKSW, Warsaw, 2017, p.18



much development but rather transformation, “its progressive transformation thanks to accretions from outside its given nature; that is something totally different from development”,<sup>39</sup> the superiority of the deductive (theological) method was assumed. Thus changing this attitude and recognizing the equivalence between the deductive and the inductive method would in fact constitute a paradigm shift.

According to Cardinal Cupich, the incarnational two-way street translates into a series of specific, and connected with one another, directives that form a ‘new paradigm of Catholicity’. First of all, if we inductively establish diverse forms of people’s coexistence within families, and we deductively determine that “God has chosen the family as a privileged place to reveal how God acts”, then - Cardinal Cupich emphasizes - it has “enormous consequences. If we are serious about fully appreciating that the concrete lives of families and couples are part of salvation history[...], then at the least it will mean moving away from presenting an abstract and idealized presentation of marriage,”<sup>40</sup> which the cardinal seems to identify with a normative standard of the Church.<sup>41</sup> For the two-way street of deduction and induction makes us recognize that “whenever there is a family striving to live together and to love one another, the Spirit is already present,”<sup>42</sup> regardless of the form that family takes: whether this bond is sacramental, natural, second, monogamous, polygamous etc.<sup>43</sup> The cardinal does not directly refer to families based on the same-sex unions, but, logically, there is no reason why they should be discriminated within the inductively oriented paradigm, which, so to say, avoids shallow focus on sacramental marriage. As a matter of fact, this means an anthropological change: in the place of a family and marriage in

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<sup>39</sup> Y. Congar, *True and False Reform in the Church*, [https://books.google.pl/books?id=uAZrDQAAQBAJ&pg=PT4&chl=pl&source=gbs\\_selected\\_pages&cad=3#v=onepage&q&cf=false](https://books.google.pl/books?id=uAZrDQAAQBAJ&pg=PT4&chl=pl&source=gbs_selected_pages&cad=3#v=onepage&q&cf=false) [16.09.2018]

<sup>40</sup> Cardinal B. Cupich, *Pope’s Francis Revolution*

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Ibid.

the singular (the permanent union of one man and one woman as the foundation of the family), the new paradigm seems to impose the inclusion of families and marriages in the plural (different forms of couples and families, not necessarily based on marriage).

The second directive of a new paradigm is a pastoral change. Cardinal Cupich has no doubts that one must reject

“an authoritarian or paternalistic way of dealing with people that lays down the law, that pretends to have all the answers, or easy answers to complex problems, that suggests that general rules will seamlessly bring immediate clarity or that the teachings of our tradition can preemptively be applied to the particular challenges confronting couples and families”.<sup>44</sup>

In the place of the deductive (and presented by the cardinal as a negative ideal type of) logic, one must introduce an inductive logic, in which a key role is played by an accompaniment that involves “the sensitivity of a spiritual director or a close friend who can listen to the experiences of another humbly, not pretending to have all the answers, and always ready to help discern the movements of the Spirit in that particular moment”.<sup>45</sup> Such an accompaniment, also presented as an ideal type but this time as a positive one, is, according to the cardinal, not so much an act of forming married couples, but rather “an act of forming Church teaching”<sup>46</sup>, in accordance with inductive rules. This represents a real shift in the ministerial approach.

At the same time, the new vision of ministry involves a new vision of conscience. This is a third directive. As Cardinal Cupich explains, this is about the new hermeneutic of *Gaudium et Spes*, and thus about taking seriously the fact that conscience is the sanctuary where a man is alone with God. According to the cardinal, this means that the decisions of conscience of married couples represent “God’s personal guidance for the particularities of their lives”. Since - according to the second directive -

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<sup>44</sup> Cardinal B. Cupich, *Pope’s Francis Revolution*

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

the role of pastors is not to lay down the law or to suggest general rules resulting from our tradition as guidelines for conscience, the voice of conscience receives here an autonomous status. As the cardinal points out, it "could very well affirm the necessity of living at some distance from the Church's understanding of the ideal [of marriage], while nevertheless calling a person "to new stages of growth".<sup>47</sup> Taking into account the complexity of various situations, pastors should accompany families in this process of discernment. As the cardinal stresses (and it is difficult to disagree with him), it is hard to overstate the significance of this hermeneutical shift.<sup>48</sup>

The three abovementioned directives lead to the last two, connected with understanding the Church's teaching. The fourth one indicates that there is "the need for the Church to incorporate the insights of the faithful not just generally, but specifically into teachings about marriage and family", since - according to the inductive logic - "there can be no better teacher for the Church than the faithful who actively walk this path of personal development".<sup>49</sup> Consequently, the fifth one must recognize that the pastoral approach may differ in various parts of the world. After all, the paths and possibilities of development are different in different countries, as well as the situations of life and family forms. The cardinal notes that "the pope stresses the importance of local variation in our global Church", admitting that "different cultural realities call for different pastoral conclusions".<sup>50</sup> This directive, being - as it seems - a logical consequence of the new paradigm affirmed and accurately presented by the cardinal, constitutes at the same time a problem in his approach. As he notes, "this is not to suggest that the existence of widely varying teachings among regions (or dioceses) is a positive element in Church life. This is still a dilemma that needs further attention and study".<sup>51</sup> It seems that the cardinal makes here some other assumptions, probably connected with the

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<sup>47</sup> Cardinal B. Cupich, *Pope's Francis Revolution*

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

previous paradigm, whose validity he would like to maintain also within the new paradigm. However, the problem is that the new paradigm does not allow these assumptions to be maintained.

### Catholic Political Theory – the Post-Conciliar Position

In order to understand the importance of the above described potential paradigm shift for the Catholic political theory, one should recall its foundations.<sup>52</sup> A specific feature of this theory, which evidently makes it different from other great religious traditions, is the attitude to law and to the legitimation of power. While “in history, systems of law have almost always been based on religion: decisions regarding what was to be lawful among men were taken with reference to the divinity”,<sup>53</sup> in Christianity there has been no need for a religious legitimation in order to recognize the lawfulness of a regulation or even to recognize the Divine provenance of power. The political community and power itself have been regarded by Catholics as coming from God, representing the order that stems from creation and is founded on human nature. As one can read in *Gaudium et spes*, “the political community and public authority are founded on human nature and hence belong to the order designed by God, even though the choice of a political regime and the appointment of rulers are left to the free will of citizens”.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> I describe it in more detail in the text: M. Gierycz, *Kościół, teoria i kryzys polityki*, in: J. Grosfeld [ed.], *50 lat później. Posoborowe dylematy współczesnego Kościoła*, the Institute of Political Science of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, the Centre for the Thought of John Paul II, Warsaw 2014, pp. 113-130

<sup>53</sup> Benedict XVI, *The Listening Heart. Reflections on the Foundations of Law*, Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI in the Bundestag, Berlin 22.09.2011, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2011/september/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi-spe\\_20110922\\_reichstag-berlin.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2011/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi-spe_20110922_reichstag-berlin.html) [25.09.2018]

<sup>54</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et Spes*, no. 74, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html) [25.09.2018]

The reservation regarding the freedom to choose a political regime in the teaching of *Vaticanum II* shows consequences of breaking with religious legitimation of power. First of all, it excludes the possibility of existence of a 'Christian' political system that reflects the Divine order.<sup>55</sup> Secondly, it determines the scope of legitimate ambitions of power. Placing their hope in a true Messiah, Catholics do not expect from politics the realization of Paradise in this world, and therefore the solution to the problem of evil and injustice. The attempts to satisfy the longing for a perfect world through politics - although historically they were undertaken within *Christianitas* as well - within the framework of the Catholic political theory are regarded with suspicion as acts of idolatry. The post-conciliar teaching of the Church is very clear with regard to this point. In *Centesimus annus* one reads that "no political society — which possesses its own autonomy and laws — can ever be confused with the Kingdom of God".<sup>56</sup> Since contrary to the latter, the life of temporal societies "implies of imperfection and impermanence". It is worth emphasizing that: Catholics "precisely because they see the limits of the State, which is not God and cannot be presented by God, [...] recognize the purpose of its ordinances and its moral value".<sup>57</sup> Referring to the good traditions of the Roman Empire, the state is regarded as the safeguard of peace and order (*Conservator*). And Messianic hopes are placed only in Jesus Christ (*Salvator*).<sup>58</sup> The role of the State is, therefore, limited but very important. Moreover, its realization is possible even for a pagan state,

<sup>55</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Centesimus annus, Encyclical Letter to His Venerable Brother Bishops in the Episcopate, the Priests and Deacons, Families of Men and Women Religious, All the Christian Faithful and to All Man and Woman of Good Will on the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum*, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_01051991\\_centesimus-annus.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimus-annus.html) [25.09.2018] "No political society [...] can ever be confused with the Kingdom of God."

<sup>56</sup> John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, no 25

<sup>57</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Europe: Today and Tomorrow*, <https://books.google.pl/books?id=b-0YQKJ1mFAC&printsec=frontcover&dq=europe+today+and&hl=pl&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjfw6mUtOHeAhUJqYsKHWSwDIAQ6AEIKTAA#v=onepage&q=europe%20today%20and&cf=false> [25.09.2018]

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46

if it guarantees fundamental rights of an individual and of the whole human society.<sup>59</sup>

Catholics assume that law and order can be provided by each state, irrespective of the knowledge of the Revealed law, since they believe that - because of the rational nature of man - each person is capable of discerning good from evil and of choosing good. As John Paul II notes in *Veritatis Splendor*, although “only God can answer the question about the good, because he is the Good, [...] God has already given an answer to this question: he did so by creating man and ordering him with wisdom and love to his final end, through the law which is inscribed in his heart (cf. Rom 2:15), the ‘natural law’,<sup>60</sup> which enables us to discern good from evil”<sup>61</sup>.

Therefore, the basis for Christian approach to politics is an anthropological premise: the belief that man, created in God’s image and likeness, by his nature and through his reason, has a share in God’s wisdom. Due to this participation, which does not entail faith in God, he is able to know objective good, since he discovers in himself “a natural inclination to its proper act and end”; discovers attitudes and actions compatible with and contrary to his ontological condition. Thus, he discovers in himself interior law, which is ‘natural’ for him, written in human condition and - as St. Paul emphasized - characteristic of the Gentiles as well (cf. Rom 2:14-15).

Discovering the specificity of natural law, which closely combines human and divine dimension, provides a basis for secular politics that would guarantee “fundamental rights of an individual and of the whole

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<sup>59</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Europe*

<sup>60</sup> John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Veritatis splendor*, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_06081993\\_veritatis-splendor.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html) [25.09.2018]

<sup>61</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae. Treatise on Law*, [q. 94,2], [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1225-1274,\\_Thomas\\_Aquinas,\\_Summa-Theologiae\\_%5B1%5D,\\_EN.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1225-1274,_Thomas_Aquinas,_Summa-Theologiae_%5B1%5D,_EN.pdf)

human society".<sup>62</sup> The natural law, articulating "the objective norms governing right action,<sup>63</sup> [...] expresses the dignity of the human person and lays the foundation for his fundamental rights and duties".<sup>64</sup> This is possible because 'direct obviousness of their content' (typical of the principles of the natural law) makes it possible that "every normally developed man can easily grasp not only the sense of basic terms but also their logical connection".<sup>65</sup> Thus, the natural law does not constitute the 'ideal' difficult to achieve but a moral standard of action possible to reach for everyone.

In the political context, the natural law thus understood may constitute law and social order realizing the principle of justice, and therefore, understand politics as acting for justice and peace. Obviously, such a realization will always be imperfect. Because of its positive dynamics (towards the good of man and his development), the natural law does not definitively determine the upper limit of the realization of the discovered good. This creates much room for political pluralism, different economic visions etc. Nevertheless, and this is of great political importance, the natural law clearly determines the bottom limit. The limit whose violation means doing evil that results from going against one's nature.<sup>66</sup> Including this in the area of politics means recognizing that there exist inviolable anthropological limits in exercising political power and law. There are political acts that are intrinsically evil (*intrinsece malum*), which "infect human civilization [...] contaminate those who inflict them more than those who suffer injustice,"<sup>67</sup> which no authority can do in no circumstances. Among such acts one can certainly include acts that are contrary to the first

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<sup>62</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Europe*

<sup>63</sup> Benedict XVI, *Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Westminster Hall - City of Westminster*, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2010/september/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20100917\\_societa-civile.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2010/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20100917_societa-civile.html) [05.03.2018]

<sup>64</sup> John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*, no 51

<sup>65</sup> Fr. T. Slipko, *Etyka ogólna*, WAM, p. 271

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 52

<sup>67</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, no. 27; cf. John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*, no. 79-81

principles, which Saint Thomas called *inclinationes naturales*, as protection of human life or of marriage and family. The adoption of law that undermines the value of life of every human being (such as e.g. abortion, euthanasia, the creation of human-animal hybrids), as well as laws that negate the anthropological significance of the complementarity of the sexes (such as e.g. redefinition of marriage and family according to the LGBTIQ demands), would belong, in this perspective, to the field of *intrinsece malum*.

### The Role of the Church in Politics – the Post-Conciliar Position

It seems that referring to the natural law in a way makes the religion useless in the political sphere. However, Christian tradition has not lost – what Cicero so bluntly stated in his work *On the Commonwealth* – the awareness of human freedom in the violation or even cancelation in oneself of the sense of natural law. Although, as Aquinas noted,

“the natural law, in the abstract, can nowise be blotted out from men’s hearts, [...] it is blotted out in the case of a particular action, in so far as reason is hindered from applying the general principle to a particular point of practice, on account of concupiscence or some other passion, [...] either by evil persuasions [... or] even unnatural vices”.<sup>68</sup>

In this place, we discover the particular significance of the Church in the Catholic political theory.

Although Catholics are interested in the autonomy of two orders: secular and religious, at the same time they are aware that the teaching of the Scripture “throws light on the order of human society, [...] in this way the requirements of a society worthy of man are better perceived, deviations are corrected, the courage to work for what is good is reinforced”<sup>69</sup> and the utopian political projects are blocked.<sup>70</sup> Thus the Church enters

<sup>68</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, [q. 94,6]

<sup>69</sup> John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, no. 25

<sup>70</sup> The issue is broadly discussed by Benedict XVI in his Encyclical Letter *Spe salvi*.



the relationship with politics not so much on a political, party level (this is regarded as the autonomous sphere of 'secular things') but ethical: guarding the deposit of "transcendent truth, in obedience to which man achieves his full identity".<sup>71</sup> This means, let us add, on the one hand, a critical role of the religion, and on the other, a formative one.

On the one hand, the Church sees itself as a community with a purifying role towards the political reason in its moral search, clarifying – when needed – the leading moral ideas of the political order. As Benedict XVI noted in the Westminster Hall, the role of religion "is not so much to supply these norms, as if they could not be known by non-believers – still less to propose concrete political solutions, which would lie altogether outside the competence of religion – but rather to help purify and shed light upon the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles".<sup>72</sup> Understanding the teaching authority of the Church as the interpreter of the natural moral law,<sup>73</sup> the Church not only relativizes the claims of the political world to omnipotence,<sup>74</sup> but also safeguards the objective norms that determine right action, influencing the political life on the level of ethical principles. This means that the Church's role is mainly critical. As it has been shown above, while the natural law does not determine the upper limit of the realization of moral principles, it clearly determines the bottom limit. This was clearly seen in the teaching of John Paul II, which, on the one hand, was focused on general ethical principles of the social and political order (vide *Centesimus annus*), and on the other hand, it was dedicated to indicating clearly inviolable limits of freedom in making political decisions (vide *Evangelium vitae*). Searching for the most adequate ways of realizing the common good in the context of a specific

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<sup>71</sup> John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, no. 44

<sup>72</sup> Benedict XVI, *Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI, Westminster Hall - City of Westminster...*

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Paul VI, *Encyclical Letter Humanae vitae on the Regulation of Birth* (hereinafter referred to as *Humanae vitae*), [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html) [25.09.2018]

<sup>74</sup> G. Weigel, *The Final Revolution*, Oxford University Press, New York 1992, p.197

political community was left to the lay people.<sup>75</sup> It was even believed that the hierarchy of the Church should not be involved.

On the other hand, as Benedict XVI emphasized during his journey to Lebanon, the task of the Church was “to illumine and purify consciences and to make it clear that every person is an image of God [...] and we must treat the other as an image of God”.<sup>76</sup> It is about preparing the soil for a decent man, directed towards the search for the common good, the political system. In its simplest sense, the Church does it by forming people to choose good. Because of ‘dual citizenship’ of every Christian, religion, raising righteous people, raises righteous citizens of the state.<sup>77</sup> Consequently, the Church, existing ‘next to’ the political community, sees herself “as a leaven and as a kind of soul for human society”.<sup>78</sup>

### A New Paradigm and the Catholic Political Theory

In short, the Catholic political theory, well established in the teaching of the Vatican Council and in the post-conciliar teaching, understood as the area of imperfect but good enough realization of the principle of justice, constituted the Pope and – more broadly – the hierarchy of the

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<sup>75</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation* *Christifideles Laici of His Holiness John Paul II on the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and the World to Bishops, to Priests and Deacons, to Women and Men Religious and to All the Lay Faithful*, no. 42, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_30121988\\_christifideles-laici.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici.html) [26.09.2018]

<sup>76</sup> Benedict XVI, *Interview of the Holy Father Benedict XVII with the Journalists during the Flight to Lebanon*, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2012/september/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20120914\\_incontro-giornalisti.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2012/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20120914_incontro-giornalisti.html) [28.09.2018]

<sup>77</sup> George Weigel makes a valuable remark in this context regarding democracy: “Democratic politics is impossible, over the long haul, without democratic civility. And democratic civility is impossible without a virtuous people, confident of their own ability to choose wisely, and committed to protecting individual liberty amidst genuine pluralism while concurrently promoting the common good” (G. Weigel, *The Final Revolution*, Oxford University Press, New York 1992, p.196)

<sup>78</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, no. 40.

Church as metapolitical actors. Their task was to proclaim moral truth and, consequently, to form citizens' conscience. They also had a duty to object to those political ideas that would destroy God's image in man. The basis of this commitment was the belief in universal and undisputed, because stemming from human nature, moral law whose "faithful observance is necessary for men's eternal salvation".<sup>79</sup> The existence of the law of moral truth, stemming from human nature, whose authoritative teacher is the Church, opened up the path for its special metapolitical position in the political community. A clear definition of the tasks of the Church as a defender of transcendent human dignity allowed the Church, on the one hand, to maintain the distance towards current politics, and, on the other hand, to play an important and non-substitutable role, especially when political authorities started to make claims to omnipotence.<sup>80</sup> This specific place of the Church, seen also in some constitutional systems, has sometimes been described as "the non-political political".<sup>81</sup>

Putting together the post-conciliar approach to politics and the role of the Church with the 'new paradigm' reveals irremovable, as it seems, contradictions. In a nutshell, the new paradigm constitutes – as it has been presented in detail above – the departure from the logic of 'adapting life' to objective principles resulting from the natural law and Revelation. Instead, it proposes a dialectical logic of discernment, in which God's moral and sacramental requirements are of a relative nature and are interpreted subjectively. Since their discernment is based on the primacy of individual conscience and experience of the faithful, who become 'a teacher for the Church', it leads to 'different pastoral conclusions', and thus, consequently, to diversification of the teaching, which no longer allows for universalizing statements regarding good and evil, grace and sin, solely on the basis of the matter of a given act.

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<sup>79</sup> Paul VI, *Humanae vitae*, no. 4

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Ernst Wolfgang Boeckenfoerde, *Teoria polityki a teologia polityczna. Uwagi na temat ich wzajemnego stosunku*, *Teologia polityczna*, no. 3, pp.309-313

<sup>81</sup> Cf. P. Mazurkiewicz, *Europa jako kinderniespodzianka*, OMP, Kraków 2017, pp.233-254

The question thus arises: if based on the moral teaching of the Church “it can no longer simply be said that all those in any ‘irregular’ situation [and thus living as husband and wife without being married - *MG*] are living in a state of mortal sin”,<sup>82</sup> as the Catechism of the Catholic Church<sup>83</sup> - based apparently on the old paradigm - states, can it be still claimed that there exist ‘intrinsically evil acts (*intrinsece malum*)’? If conscience can - as Cardinal Cupich states - “very well affirm the necessity of living at some distance” from marriage, despite living as husband and wife, and thus discover that - in a concrete situation of a given couple - actions contrary to God’s commandment constitute, in fact, God’s requirement, “must then not from pure logic euthanasia, suicide, or assistance to it, lies, thefts, [...] murder, under some circumstances and after proper ‘discernment,’ be good and praiseworthy”?<sup>84</sup> The adoption of the new paradigm, undermining the logic of absolute values, makes it necessary to redefine the post-conciliar Catholic political theory, including the political role of the Catholic Church. Her role towards the state was to protect these absolute, stemming from the natural law, values. However, if there are no such values; if the natural law no longer - as blessed Paul VI claimed - “declares the will of God”,<sup>85</sup> which from now on should be discovered only in individual conscience, then what mandate does the Church have to claim to uphold the principles of the natural law as the basis of public law? One can ask, why would she safeguard such an abstract ideal at all?

The necessity to redefine the Catholic political theory seems to result from the inductive logic of the new paradigm as well. If indeed “there can be no better teacher for the Church than the faithful who actively walk

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<sup>82</sup> Francis, *Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia of the Holy Father Francis to Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Consecrated Persons, Christian Married Couples and All the Lay Faithful on Love in the Family*, no. 301

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church 2390

<sup>84</sup> J. Seifert, *Does pure Logic threaten to destroy the entire moral Doctrine of the Catholic Church?*, “Aemaet. Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie” bd 6, no. 2 (2017), p. 7

<sup>85</sup> Paul VI, *Humanae vitae*, no. 4

this path"<sup>86</sup>, why - with good reasons - couldn't the Church engage in improving this world, according to the guidelines of the faithful? For example, why wouldn't she propose or support concrete, best in her opinion, solutions to the problems of global warming, migration or disarmament? The incarnational two-way street does not pose any obstacles to, so to say, more politically distinctive commitment of the Church in world affairs. In the light of the new paradigm, the Church losing her metapolitical mandate, regains it in a way on the political level, which could explain basically unprecedented expectations of the Papacy towards political authority, as well as the other, recently broadly commented, acts of the Secretariat of State<sup>87</sup> or statements made by Vatican bishops.<sup>88</sup>

\* \* \*

I would like to leave to the theologians the conclusion whether a 'new paradigm' is possible in the Church.<sup>89</sup> The aim of this paper, in the face of a growing public debate, was only to reflect on the consequences of a potential 'paradigm shift' for the Catholic political theory and its socio-political engagement. It should be emphasized that this would be destructive for the entire, carefully elaborated, post-conciliar concept of

<sup>86</sup> Paul VI, *Humanae vitae*, no. 4.

<sup>87</sup> Like seeking an agreement with the Government of the People's Republic of China over the heads of the loyal to the Pope and repressed "underground" Church. Cf. *Hong Kong Catholics hold prayer vigil to oppose Vatican deal with Beijing*, <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/02/13/hong-kong-catholics-hold-prayer-vigil-to-oppose-vatican-deal-with-beijing/> [21.02.2018] or *After papal meeting, Cardinal Zen says Vatican 'selling out' Church in China*, <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/01/29/after-papal-meeting-cardinal-zen-says-vatican-selling-out-church-in-china/> [21.02.2018]

<sup>88</sup> Like e.g. the statement by Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, who said that China is the best implementer of Catholic social doctrine, <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/02/06/china-is-the-best-implementer-of-catholic-social-doctrine-says-vatican-bishop/> [21.02.2018]

<sup>89</sup> A lot of light is shed on this issue by the abovementioned article by Cardinal Gerhard Mueller, *Development or corruption?...* that makes reference, inter alia, to the principles of development of Christian doctrine, explained according to the thought of Blessed Cardinal John Henry Newman.

metapolitical commitment of the Church. Certainly, it could bring some benefits, which would result from the fact that abandoning the protection of the absolute values would undoubtedly make the Church more integrated with the spiritual and intellectual climate of the world today. As Gianni Vattimo rightly points out, “today it is difficult to find a philosopher who claims that there exist absolute morality, the objective truth or natural laws”.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, the adoption of the ‘new paradigm’ would ease the significant and sometimes painful tension between the Church and the world. Similarly, this would happen if the Church recognized that, with regard to the concern for common good, she has to offer concrete and universally important political objectives. Standing shoulder to shoulder with other political and social organizations to fight for a better world (e.g. a world without nuclear weapons or without carbon-based economies), the Church would undoubtedly be (at least for some time) a visible and important player on the social and political scene. However, there remains the problematic question about the consequences of this strategy for the Church’s mission of evangelization and salvation, entrusted to her by Jesus Christ.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> G. Vattimo, Kościół popelnia samobójstwo, Europa. *Tygodnik idei*, 14-15.03.2009, p. 13

<sup>91</sup> Since, as one reads in *Dominus Iesus*, it is within this mission that the Church “must be primarily committed to proclaiming to all people the truth definitively revealed by the Lord, and to announcing the necessity of conversion to Jesus Christ and of adherence to the Church” Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration Dominus Iesus on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church*, no. 22, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20000806\\_dominus-iesus\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html) [30.09.2018]

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**Michał Gierycz, PhD, habil.**, political scientist, Head of Division of Cultural Foundations of Politics at the Institute of Political Science, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. Research interests: relations between religion and politics, European Union, morality policy, political anthropology. Selected publications: *Europejski spór o człowieka. Studium z antropologii politycznej* (Warszawa 2017), *"United in Diversity": The Church's Experience and the European Union's Identity Motto* (Bolzano 2008).

Robert Parkin

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## HOW ŚWIEBODZIN GOT ITS STATUE OF JESUS: REFLECTIONS ON SACRED SPACES AND RELIGIOUS TOURISM<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

In 2010 Świebodzin, a small town in western Poland, acquired a statue of Jesus Christ large enough to rival in size the much more famous statue of Christ in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. However, not being associated with any miracle, it does not attract large numbers of visitors, many of those coming to see it apparently being tourists rather than pilgrims, though clearly there is a degree of overlap between these two categories. The statue was the personal project of a local priest, now deceased, whose activities in building it are described. The paper situates the statue in the contexts of both local identity in this part of Poland and the wider community formed by the Catholic Church in the country, whose hierarchy has sometimes shown itself sceptical of this project. It is argued that the statue and the circumstances of its creation and existence raise questions about just what we mean by such concepts as sacred space and pilgrimage.

**Keywords:** Roman Catholic Church, pilgrimage, statue of Jesus Christ, sacral tourism, national identity

### Introduction

Świebodzin is a small town of about 25,000 people in Western Poland, situated roughly in the centre of the province of Ziemia Lubuska,

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<sup>1</sup> Text of a paper given at the conference on *Socio-Political and Religious Ideas and Movements in the 20th-21st Centuries*, held in Riga, Latvia, on 4-5 October 2018. I am most grateful to the organizers, especially Dr.hist. Inese Runce, for the invitation to take part.

though it is not its capital. Located near the intersection of two newly built trunk roads going North–South and East–West, it has also become known in the last few years for its gigantic statue of Jesus Christ. This was erected between 2008 and 2010 and is bigger, it is claimed, than the much older and more famous statue of Christ the Redeemer at Corcovado in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, or the newer but less well-known Cristo de la Concordia in Cochabamba, Bolivia.<sup>2</sup> This article is concerned to find reasons for this statue being built right here at this time, in a small town the outside world has hardly heard of, even in Poland. It is tempting to dismiss it, as many of the local population do, as the vanity project of a particular local priest, but others in the town support his activities as having given the world a worthy monument to ‘Christ’s mercy’ (the significance of these words will become apparent later). At all events, it is time the facts and reasons were interrogated from a more academic perspective than the journalism that reported on the building of the statue at the time, most of which, far from being ‘investigative’, simply regurgitates official positions and salacious rumours. At the same time, the existence of giant statues of sacred figures, found throughout the Christian world, as well as in other religions (with the exception of Islam), raises questions of what we mean by sacred spaces. Such spaces often seem ancillary to formal sites of worship and veneration, rather than being intrinsically sacred in themselves. Moreover, their interest to those who visit them is frequently touristic at least as much as religious, despite this generally being at variance with the motives of those who sponsored them and brought them into existence. This is certainly an issue worth discussing in the case of the Świebodzin statue.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The claim is disputed in both Brazil and Bolivia: one critical question is whether the mound on which the Świebodzin statue stands should be counted in its height or not, another whether its golden crown should be counted. The Świebodzin claim appears to depend on including one or the other in the measurement. However, there are other large-scale statues of Christ around the world, and as with tall skyscrapers, something of a competition over their height has emerged.

<sup>3</sup> I have discussed this case much more briefly in a previous paper comparing it with the religious site of Šiluva in Lithuania (Parkin 2019).

## Polish Catholicism and local and national identities

The wider context of the statue's creation is the continued strength of Catholicism in Poland and its connection with Polish national identity. Although statistics report declining church attendance in Poland, the country is still seen as an exception even in Catholic Europe for its high levels of attendance. Historically Poland is the major success story of the Counter-Reformation, where, in the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church managed to snuff out incipient Protestantism; it has been closely associated with Catholicism ever since. Clearly one should not exaggerate the uniformity of belief in the country. Writing about the place of women in the Church in Poland, for instance, Agnieszka Kościańska (2009) cautions against treating the Polish Church as a homogenous institution in which the clergy and their followers see and do things in exactly the same ways. Despite its dominance, she points out, the Church is itself divided along the lines of gender, class and educational level, and it has to share space with other religions ranging from Protestantism to Buddhism, as well as a residual secularism dating from the socialist period. Moreover, its lay followers do not invariably observe the Church's prescriptions regarding such matters as divorce or drunkenness, nor are they necessarily well acquainted with the ins and outs of Catholic theology.

It has nonetheless become true to say that, for many Poles, to be truly Polish is to be Catholic.<sup>4</sup> Such associations between religion and ethnicity or nationalism are found elsewhere, of course, so Poland is not unique in this respect, but it also has some unique features in the Catholic world. First, although it cooperated with the socialist regime early on in, for example, polonizing the new territories in the west taken over from Germany after WWII, the Catholic Church ultimately became an important

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<sup>4</sup> Conversely, to suggest, as is often done in political discourses, that an opponent is not fully Polish is often a veiled reference to that person's supposedly Jewish origins. Although there are Polish Protestants, the idea is practically an oxymoron for many Catholics. Atheism or agnosticism are recognized as relics of socialism, but increasingly as positions to be condemned by the Church and its supporters.

centre of passive and not so passive resistance to the Soviet-influenced socialist system. This was especially the case after the election of the Polish pope, John Paul (Jan-Paweł) II, in 1978 – a second unique feature of the country's recent religious history. Indeed, this combination proved especially powerful, as it linked a charismatic pope who was himself Polish with what was probably the strongest movement of opposition to official socialism<sup>5</sup> anywhere in eastern Europe in the 1945-89 period, beyond even the Solidarity movement, namely the Catholic Church in Poland. Thirdly, at the present time a major focus of discourse about the Catholic Polish nation has been Radio Maryja and its affiliates, which, as Kościńska also points out (*ibid.*), condemn moral liberalism, economic neo-liberalism and, one might add, multiculturalism as lethal threats to the family and nation, as well as confronting liberal tendencies within the Church itself.

Issues of identity in western Poland specifically also form part of the background to this topic, with at least one expression in recent church architecture, as we shall see. First, as just briefly indicated, the whole area of western Poland, not just Lubuskie, was taken from Germany in 1945 as compensation for Poland's loss of territory to the Soviet Union, territory which is now mostly in Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, and which stretches from Vilnius (Lithuania) in the north to Lviv (Ukraine) in the south. This land is known as the *kresy*, roughly 'borderland'. In line with this, a large part of the Polish population in the *kresy* was compulsorily resettled westwards, often to Warsaw or Silesia, but also to other provinces still further west formed from the new territories, including Ziemia Lubuska, a border province opposite the German city of Frankfurt an der Oder. At the same time, the remaining Germans in these territories who had not fled the advance of the Red Army were either expelled or sought

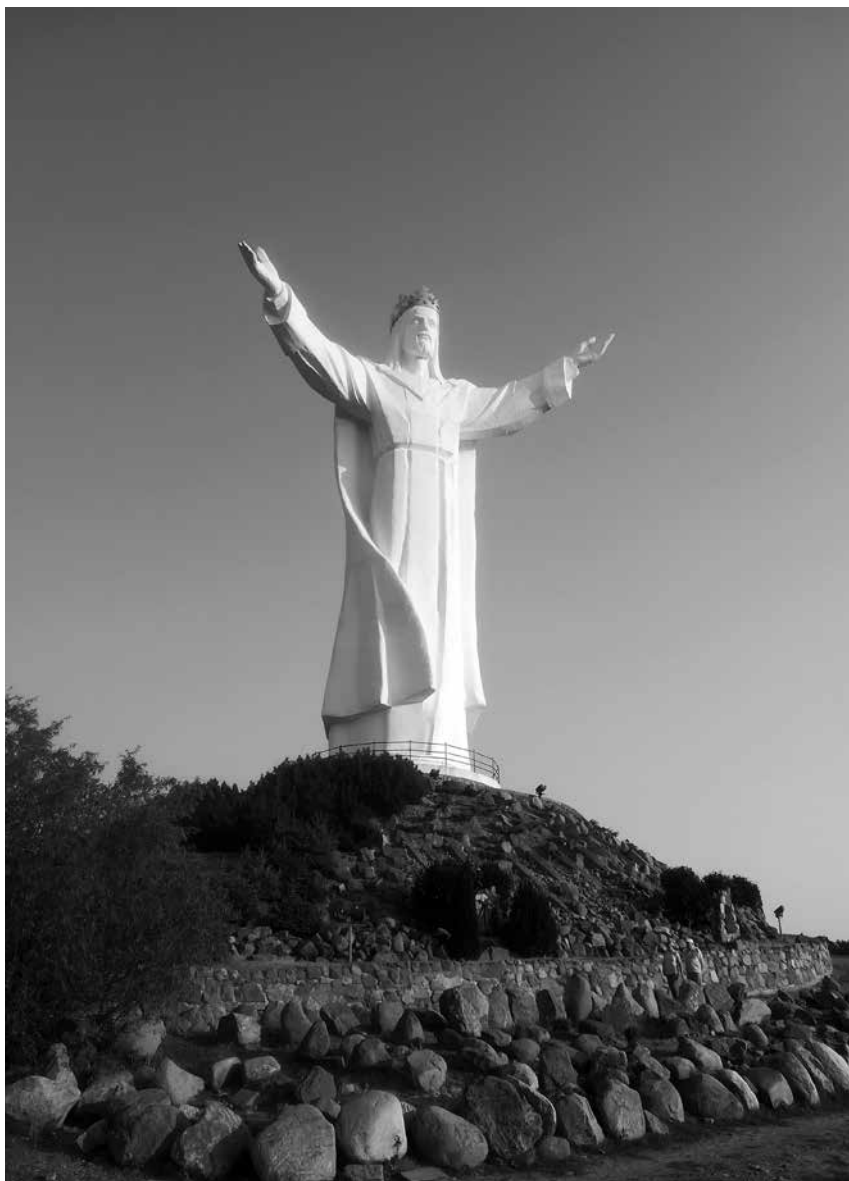
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<sup>5</sup> It is as well to be cautious in assuming that all those who opposed official, Soviet-aligned socialism in Poland were non- or anti-socialists; some were certainly attracted by western-style freedoms and consumerism, but others believed in a more democratic and non-aligned socialism. This was true of other opposition movements in eastern Europe in the Cold War, not just in Poland (Swain and Swain 2003).

acceptance as Poles through the new socialist government's so-called *weryfikacja* process (i.e. verifying the Polish national status of persons suspected of belonging to other nationalities, especially the national enemies, German or Ukrainian). In other words, there was virtually a complete change in the population of the new territories, raising interesting issues of identity and giving these territories an 'eastern' cultural flavour, despite their western location.

Today a large part of the population of Ziemia Lubuska, or Lubuskie *województwo*, has been born there, though descended from original migrants from the *kresy*, fewer and fewer of whom are still alive. Nonetheless there is not much evidence of a specifically Lubuskan identity emerging – that is, one that associates these descendants with the area in which they are actually living (Parkin 2013a, 2013b). The German history of this part of Poland means little or nothing to its current population, despite the use of old photographs and artefacts from the German period as decoration in some local shops and restaurants. Instead there is Polish national culture, and there is the *kresy*. For instance, one of the central events of a church-sponsored festival (or 'picnic') held in Świebodzin in the summer of 2014, right by the Jesus statue, was a concert of songs, most of which came from the *kresy*. The choir and the accompanying band were mainly made up of elderly women from there or descendants of the original migrants. Another indication of this association is a monument to the sufferings of the forced migrations of Poles in the period in and after WWII and their loss of the *kresy* in the local cemetery in Świebodzin. Modelled on a similar monument in Vilnius, Lithuania, in being based around three crosses, it also has maps showing an enlarged Poland that includes the *kresy* in bright red. The interior of the monument, within the space formed by the three crosses, is dedicated to those who lost their lives to Ukrainian separatists (who were aligned with the Nazis and considered much worse than them in respect of the atrocities they committed) in the closing years of World War II. This area of western Poland can therefore claim two identities for itself if history is taken fully into account, one German,





Statue of Jesus at Świebodzin, Poland (author)



Santuarium at Świebodzin, Poland (author)

the other involving the *kręsy*. However, the former is now another focus of opposition for Polish nationalism, increasingly so at the time of writing (2018), following the election in 2015 of a much more assertively nationalist, anti-German, pro-Catholic and Eurosceptic government.

### Świebodzin's Jesus statue and the path of Divine Mercy

The now (in)famous statue, which can be seen for miles around, sits on a hillock or mound on what was at one time said to have been a site of public execution, but which has now been built up artificially to accommodate the statue. The mound lies outside the town to the southeast, right opposite a small retail park dominated by the local branch of *Tesco's*, the British-based supermarket chain, one of several local businesses that are said to have contributed funding for the statue.<sup>6</sup> Some explicit symbolism entered into the construction of the statue and its immediate surroundings. The statue itself is 33 metres tall, one metre for every year of Jesus' life. The gilded crown on his head is three metres high, symbolizing the three years of his ministry. Around the mound on which the statue sits are five circuits symbolizing his role as a saviour on five continents. Other, less significant dimensions include the 24 metres from fingertip to fingertip and its weight of over four hundred tonnes (information in publicity material). The statue's supporters are quite adamant that it is different from, and not at all inspired by, the competitor statue in Rio: first, it is 33 metres high, not 30; secondly, the statue's arms point downwards in welcome, not up and outwards (actually its arms are in a very similar position to those of the Rio statue); thirdly, and most significantly, Christ is depicted as a King, not the Redeemer, as in the case of the Rio statue. It was actually designed by architects in Poznań who had also built a new church in the same parish, another recent venture described later.

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<sup>6</sup> Given the approximately two thousand years of Christianity, this has given rise to a local joke that it is the oldest *Tesco's* in the world (Gancewski 2013: 52). Since the store and the statue stare at each other across an open space, one very definitely gets a sense of God confronting Mammon.

It is possible to walk up to and around the top of the mound that forms the base of the statue, which offers a panoramic view of the surrounding area, including the southern suburbs of the town, but one cannot climb or enter the statue itself.<sup>7</sup> The statue has a number of other features associated with it, such as the images of the fourteen stations of the cross that form a circuit around it (and which also feature in many local churches). Further away from the statue, marking out the boundary of its grounds, are about twenty other pictorial scenes from the life and death of Christ. There is also a toilet, a café and a souvenir shop, all consisting at present of portacabins or portable containers, plus a pilgrimage hostel which is now open for business, though still not quite finished at the time of writing. Down the hill from the statue is a large car and bus park, as well as a new roundabout, named after the priest who built the statue and connecting the site to the main road leading to the town centre. It is also possible to drive right up to the statue, but parking there is limited. Attempts have been made to landscape the surrounding area, a lot of which nonetheless still consists of rough ground.

Near the entrance to the site itself is a device consisting of electronic candles, which light up when money is inserted into them. Close by is a notice asking every visitor to donate a *złotówka* (about 20p at the time of writing) to support development of the site. Few visitors seem to do so, despite a further notice listing the works that still need doing. Nearby is an open-air pew, at which one may pray. Again, comparatively few people do so, and those who do rarely seem to climb up to the statue as well, in some cases because of an obvious infirmity. The steps and pathways are generally quite rough and uneven, though not a problem for the fit. Indeed, there is an unfinished air about the whole site, a feeling that it has been done at a very basic level and on the cheap. Inevitably the statue itself has become weathered in the years since its erection, but more alarmingly it rapidly developed a deep gash right around the base where

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<sup>7</sup> A lift inside the statue was in the plans at one stage, but was later abandoned as too expensive and impracticable. There is an internal service shaft with a vertical ladder for maintenance purposes, but that is not open to the public.

it meets the rocky mound on which it sits, tending to confirm longstanding popular predictions that one day it will fall over (by the summer of 2016 this gash had been filled in with cement, preparatory to the visit of a youth festival). One also feels that it still has to catch up with modern forms of publicity. The associated website is virtually devoid of information, even in Polish, and on the English, German and Russian pages there is nothing but an image of the statue. More faith is placed in the printed leaflets and brochures that can be bought from the site shop.

Whatever it else it might be, in practice the statue is a free tourist attraction, and many visitors appear to treat it as such. In the main they are Polish, though there are occasional German visitors, even whole bus loads, and one day I witnessed a group of mostly middle-aged German bikers; religious tourists from further afield have also been spotted. What one mostly does is climb up to the statue, walk around its base taking in a pleasant but not particularly striking view of the town and surrounding area, take photos or selfies, possibly use the toilets and buy something from or at least examine the souvenir shop, and walk or drive away again – about all one can get out of a ten- or fifteen-minute visit, assuming one is not particularly interested in the religious messages, the angels, the fourteen stations of the cross, etc., or has a particular reason to offer prayers there.

The statue was the initiative of a local priest, Sylwester Zawadzki, who died on 14 April 2014 at the age of 81.<sup>8</sup> Born in the village of Dębica, after briefly attending a college for mechanics he entered the lower seminary of the monastery of Paradyż, at Gościkowo, near Świebodzin, before entering the higher seminary for priests at Gorzów, the joint regional capital of Lubuskie, thereafter serving in a number of parishes before coming permanently to Świebodzin in 1981.

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<sup>8</sup> As Zawadzki, whom I never met, is deceased, I have no hesitation in naming him and discussing his activities. In any case, it would be quite impossible to write about the statue and anonymise him, such is his identification with it. He is not to be confused with a Minister of Justice of the same name in the socialist period, who died in 1999. I am grateful to close family members and associates for information about Fr. Zawadzki, his life and career. Data in publicity material has also been drawn on, in addition to some very few published sources, especially Gancewski 2013.

According to one story, he claimed that Christ had appeared to him in a dream and asked him to build the statue, though this story was rejected in interview by a close family member; the dream story may, in fact, have originated in a throwaway comment he made to a journalist on the Polish newspaper *Gazeta Wyborca*. In the alternative version, certain priests in the eastern Polish town of Tarnów had the idea of erecting a statue there, but the bishop turned it down as too expensive and impractical; the idea coming to Zawadzki's ears, he took it up for Świebodzin. In fact, Zawadzki had already acquired a reputation for building and restoring local churches (see the list in Gancewski 2013: 54; also below). His activities earned him the local soubriquet of the Builder Priest (though he had no professional training as such), as well as honorary citizenship of Świebodzin (*ibid.*: 52; a similar honour to being given 'the freedom of the city' in Britain). His first effort was his rebuilding of the church at Radnica, a village about thirty kilometres west of Świebodzin, when he was the parish priest there (1973-81). The rebuilt church there resembles the local German-period churches found throughout this area structurally, though hardly stylistically. It was built during the socialist period, when materials were hard to come by, and is most kindly described as functional rather than aesthetically pleasing. However, Zawadzki's ambitions extended beyond this, as he had evidently long had the idea of founding a new parish where there was no church; concurrently, perhaps, the local bishop noticed this and suggested the need for a second parish in Świebodzin to cater for the new post-war housing estates to the south of the town. Zawadzki accordingly built a large new church or Sanctuary to the Divine Mercy in the middle of these estates, not far from the later statue (which is also in the new parish; Gancewski 2013: 55), even though there are already two large churches in the town.<sup>9</sup> Among the church's

<sup>9</sup> The main one is dedicated to St Michael the Archangel, the other, much more sparsely decorated, to the Virgin Mary. At the time of the construction of the new church, however, there was not thought to be enough room in the existing churches for all those who wanted to worship there. A number of other, ancillary buildings built by Zawadzki were similarly justified with reference to a lack of space, including accommodation for priests and nuns.

features are its two towers, one to the north in a western, Gothic, German-like style, the other, to the south, intended to recall the towers and domes of the Uniate and Greek Catholic churches of the lost territories of the *kresy* in the east (*ibid.*). Its architect therefore deliberately designed it to unite the two historical identities the region can claim for itself that I outlined above.

Inside the Sanctuarium is a shrine to John Paul II, who is still prominently featured in Polish churches, almost becoming a cult in his own right.<sup>10</sup> The name of the Sanctuarium of Divine Mercy refers to the devotional path embodying the idea of Christ's mercy preached by Pope John Paul II in his second encyclical, having been pioneered by certain of his predecessors and thus established within the Catholic liturgy; it has its own dedicated celebration on the first Sunday after Easter, known as Divine Mercy Sunday. This devotional path originated in the visions of Jesus that came to St Faustina (originally Sister Faustyna Kowalska), who also has a shrine in the church, though it is not marked as such (the church is said to house one of her fingers). She was born near Łódź in central Poland in 1905 and in 2000 was canonized by Pope John Paul II for her piety and her visions of Jesus. Later in her life she lived in Vilnius, then a largely Polish city, where, responding to further visions of Jesus, and in accordance with his instructions, she commissioned local artists to record those visions.<sup>11</sup> She died in 1938 and is buried in the specially built

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<sup>10</sup> Since his death a statue of him has been erected in Częstochowa, the major pilgrimage site further east in Poland.

<sup>11</sup> Versions of the most famous of these pictures, created by Eugeniusz Kazimierowski, now form a standard portrait of Christ in Polish churches. In Poland they are often accompanied by the words *Jezu ufam tobie* ('Jesus, I trust in you'), a reference to trust in Jesus' mercy as one of the three main pillars of this devotional path. In these images Jesus himself is generally shown with his right hand raised and his left hand resting on his breast, from which emerge two spreading rays, one red, the other white, representing blood and water respectively (coincidentally or not, red and white are also Poland's national colours). The whole image is said to correspond to how Christ appeared to Faustina in her visions. Another statue of Christ, in the city of El Salvador on Mindanao, Philippines, where this devotional path is also popular, displays the same image in sculptural form. This is not true of the Świebodzin statue, nor of any others I know of.

Sanctuary of Divine Mercy at Łagiewniki near Kraków. Because the chief message of these visions was the importance of Christ's mercy, she is also known as an Apostle (sometimes the Secretary) of Divine Mercy. There is little about Faustina or the devotional path of Divine Mercy at the statue site itself, compared to the Sanctuarium, other than the booklets by and about her for sale in the souvenir shop. However, although some pilgrims do pray at the statue, the main site of organized worship is the Sanctuarium, with which it is connected. This raises the possibility that at least some of those who appear to do little more than visit the statue have already done or will go on to do their devotions in the Sanctuarium. Moreover, the notion of Christ the King that the statue embodies is itself an aspect of the Divine Mercy path, in which Jesus is seen as the King of Divine Mercy. Certainly both the Sanctuarium and the statue should be situated unambiguously in the new theological environment created by John Paul II's second encyclical.

### The Builder Priest

The foregoing reflects in part the content of most journalism about the statue and official publications, none of which is particularly contentious. Digging deeper, however, it is not difficult to uncover stories, rumours and gossip concerning the building of both church and statue, but especially the latter. First of all, building it is said to have broken building regulations: permission was initially given for a small statue about three metres high, not one of 33 metres, and indeed the smaller size was initially envisaged in Zawadzki's own planning. However, at some point the plans grew more ambitious, leading to the authorities suspending building in 2008. Close associates and family of Zawadzki tell a different story. At one point Zawadzki was hospitalized because of exhaustion, which is said to have undermined his resolve, until he had a vision while in hospital of an unidentified person in white, who greeted him, touched him, and gave him the strength to continue. As if in confirmation of this, after leaving hospital he was summoned to the office of the *starosta*, the local mayor, who, in the presence of some other officials, unexpectedly handed him the



document giving him final permission to build the enlarged statue. In his joy, Zawadzki is said to have kissed the document and each of the officials in turn before racing off in his car and running a red light in his excitement. The whole account has the flavour of a miracle, in opposition to the scepticism of Zawadzki's detractors regarding the alleged manipulation of the proper regulations.

Second, many contractors who worked on the project were allegedly 'thanked for their donations' to the great cause whenever they tried to present a bill for payment. People began to get wise to this and insist on payment up front, but for the more trusting it is said to have meant personal debts and even bankruptcy. Some money was also allegedly diverted from other community projects to which townspeople had donated in the past, like a swimming pool; certainly the access roads, parking areas and roundabout mentioned earlier were paid for out of public funds. However, there were also voluntary and deliberate donations, not least from Poles in North America (there is a plaque at the statue recording Canadian donations), not only contributing to the statue itself, but also the acquisition of the site where it stands from the state land agency. Donors' addresses were sought out using personal networks, not always successfully.

Third, in attempting to restrict costs, corners are said to have been cut in both the planning and the construction, which led to the statue having to be reinforced at certain stages subsequently. On one occasion part of it is said to have keeled over and crushed a workman's foot, generating jokes about angry divine intervention.<sup>12</sup> According to an isolated report,<sup>13</sup> at one point there were fears that the action of the sun on the construction material would cause a build-up of gases within the statue, causing it to explode. This caused the authorities to suspend the project and have the statue torn down. If there is anything to this story, the implication must be that Zawadzki managed to resolve this issue as well. There were also problems in erecting it from the main pieces (it was too large to be cast as

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<sup>12</sup> 'Świebodzin Jesus to top Rio's Redeemer statue', *The World Post* 29.10.2010; also *Zeit online*, 5.5.2016.

<sup>13</sup> *Berlin Kurier* 29.7.2010.

a whole). Local cranes proved insufficiently robust, so a larger one had to be brought in from outside to lift the head and torso (themselves separate units) on to the base. One attempt to put the bits together had to be abandoned when strong winds blew up. However, one close family member avers that the main problems were with officialdom rather than the construction itself (see also Gancewski 2013: 52). In truth, these are precisely the sorts of practical problems one might expect with such a large project.

Fourth, cheap labour was recruited as much as possible, including, it is said, illegal immigrants from the Ukraine and local prisoners on day release,<sup>14</sup> though the latter practice was stopped when one prisoner absconded. Again, however, some labour was more unambiguously voluntary. Thus I was told that workers building a nearby motorway would spend their free time building the access road to the statue, being rewarded in kind by Zawadzki sending one of his close aides to *Tesco's* to buy them sausages and wine. Others, including his driver, who helped carry his coffin, as well as those who worked on landscaping the statue, were happy to contribute their work or resources for nothing more than expenses and the occasional supper, if that. In all these cases, opinions for and against Zawadzki and his activities pose scepticism and cynicism against belief in him, amounting to defensiveness, with a sense of the miraculous never far away.

Most extraordinary of all is the fact (*sic*: no mere story this) that, in response to Zawadzki's last wish, his heart was removed from his body and interred at the base of the statue. In Zawadzki's own thinking, it is said, his heart had been in the project metaphorically, so it ought to be there literally. A close family member confirmed that Zawadzki had planned this some two years before his death, and the wish was found in his will subsequently. Together with a local priest, this family member arranged for the operation to be conducted by a specialist from Poznań in what was evidently quite a complicated process. On its removal from the body, the heart, said by more than one informant to have been 'as big as a fist', was placed in formaldehyde, encased in a heat-resistant glass urn,

<sup>14</sup> 'World's biggest statue of Christ symbolizes church's power in Poland', *The Guardian* 5.4.2011.

placed in a second such urn, and then welded into a metal pipe by a local welder before being placed in a small stone coffin. It was then deposited with due ceremony at the base of the mound on which the statue sits, covered with a large plaque clearly identifying it (there are signposts to its location). The ceremony was attended by 'only' three priests and a bishop, in contrast to the main funeral, attended by 'six bishops, 130 priests' and thousands of lay supporters. However, the heart's removal from Zawadzki's body was technically illegal, and its deposition at the statue was also considered inappropriate on legal grounds, though reports differ as to whether anyone was actually charged over the affair. Today people occasionally leave candles and flowers at this little shrine to Zawadzki, though not, it would appear, in very considerable numbers. Zawadzki's main grave is in the town cemetery, near the *kresy* monument mentioned earlier, though whether that in itself is significant is unclear; however, he is said to have chosen the site himself, while a close family member rebuilt it because he (the priest) was dissatisfied with its initial appearance (it was evidently built in its essentials, without a name, in his lifetime; see Gancewski 2013: 53). It is easily identifiable because, unlike any other graves in this very large cemetery, it has a small statue of Christ on top of it in the 'divine mercy' posture (see above, note 9), an obvious reference to the crowning achievement of Zawadzki's life's work. And, unlike the heart's resting place, which is virtually self-maintaining, it is clearly looked after by ordinary parishioners.

Zawadzki was obviously a very dominant personality, if not a particularly exemplary priest, if rumours of his breaches of the vow of celibacy, his love of the bottle, his being driven around in his own Mercedes and the like are to be given credence. However, such rumours and worse tend to attach themselves to the priesthood generally, in Poland as elsewhere, and are not particularly unusual; at least in his case there is no suggestion of activities that would have been illegal and not just unpriestly.<sup>15</sup> He is

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<sup>15</sup> In particular – to refer to a contemporary concern within the Catholic Church – no one ever accused him to me of paedophilia, unlike other alleged cases in fairly recent local history.

admitted to have been antisemitic even by some of his closest associates (often approvingly), who also, however, mention his practical, decisive nature and his ability to remove obstacles: someone with 'balls', as one woman described him. He had been a strong supporter of the anti-regime Solidarity movement in the socialist period (there is a pro-Solidarity plaque in the outer grounds of the statue). More importantly here, he was obviously able to get things done, often without having to pay for them,<sup>16</sup> and he had a clear vision of both creating and improving local religious sites.<sup>17</sup> His involvement with the statue raised his profile considerably, to the extent that eventually he was moved to refuse interviews, such was the attention he drew to himself, at the expense of his own vision of what he was doing. One question that will take some time to answer is whether that vision will be continued with the same intensity by his successors (the site is now owned by the Catholic Church). Thus the pilgrimage centre on the site still needs to be finished completely, though it is now open, and the statue itself was refreshed with paint for a visit by an international youth organization in 2016.

It is hardly surprising that Zawadzki's activities and achievements divide local opinion. This was true even within the Church itself: other priests are accused of jealousy of his high profile, and while the regional Church hierarchy gave its approval of the project and cooperated with it in the sense of being involved in its consecration, it has not adopted the site as a major sacred space, as it has the more developed and more famous

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<sup>16</sup> This is not to accuse him of corruption, theft or any other financial illegality; he simply took advantage of the prestige of the Catholic Church to treat work on the statue as a religious benefit to those involved, thus, as already noted, turning others' efforts into 'donations'.

<sup>17</sup> In addition to his activities in Świebodzin and building the new church in Radnica, he also restored churches in other villages in the area, namely Lubinicko (where the image of Christ the King also appears) and Raków (see again Gancewski 2013: 54). This is in addition to his activities in building accommodation and other ancillary structures. He also raised money by renovating a house for profit and saved money by making bricks in his own brickworks, and he is said to have possessed a timber yard and a cement factory. Altogether he was responsible for restoring or constructing fourteen buildings in his career.

site of Częstochowa, for example.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the Church's attitude evidently fluctuated over the years: the bishop of Gorzów at the time the suggestion for a statue was first raised, while not refusing permission for it, was basically indifferent, whereas his successor was evidently much more supportive and ended up consecrating it after it was built. Generally, it would appear, it was less popular with the Polish Catholic hierarchy than the new church Zawadzki had built previously in the same parish. However, among the laity the differences of opinion about Zawadzki tend to coincide with different attitudes to the Catholic Church generally, for and against, where 'against' generally relates to atheism or at least agnosticism, though this is not completely predictable or determinative. Another dichotomy that can be mapped on to it, but again only in part, is that between supporters and opponents of the new, more assertively nationalist and pro-Catholic PiS government elected in 2015. However, local supporters of Zawadzki can also be found in the PO camp, the main opposition to PiS.<sup>19</sup> Many in the town's population regard the statue, if not the new church, as rather tacky, as a waste of money that could have been used for more worthy, everyday purposes. Associated with this is the argument that, whereas restoring church buildings or even building new ones makes sense in such a religious country, erecting an enormous statue of Christ is simply self-indulgent. Others, however, especially regular churchgoers, approve of it and deplore the fuss made over Zawadzki's manner of working, the removal of his heart, etc., as trivial and unnecessary, often going further to deny all validity to the rumours surrounding him. There is certainly an irony in the fact that the statue was placed in this part of Poland, which is generally reckoned to be less devout than regions further east, though even here church

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<sup>18</sup> According to one report, the Church tried to halt the project when it began to grow in size ('One almighty statue: Poles build 167ft Jesus Christ to rival Rio's', *Daily Mail Online* 7.11.2010). Suspicions on the part of the Church authorities of priests who go off and do their own thing are nothing new; cf. McKevitt 1991 on the cult, and controversy, that arose around Padre Pio in Italy.

<sup>19</sup> PiS: Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice Party); PO: Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform Party, formerly led by Donald Tusk, currently head of the EU Council (till 2019)).

attendance is strong. One final argument in its favour, which may have played with the initially sceptical secular local authorities, is the hope that the statue would attract visitors to the town and boost its economy. There are no means of deciding firmly whether it has, and given the rather modest numbers of visitors it seems unlikely to have had that much impact.

### Christ the King and the Polish nation

How are we to explain the phenomenon of the statue, apart from referring to Zawadzki's own aims and personality? First, in so far as the Church supported it at all, it can be seen as a small example of the attempts being made by the Catholic Church in Poland to maintain its position in a time of a moderate decline in church attendance and indeed to advance its cause in general, along with the activities of, for example, the strongly Catholic and conservative Radio Maryja and associated media, as well as Poles' continued devotion to John Paul II's memory as the Polish pope, and now the Church's political alignment with the PiS government.

Secondly, the statue and new church can both be associated with recent suggestions that Christ should be declared the King of Poland and the Virgin Mary the Queen of Poland. On 21 November 2000, again on Zawadzki's initiative (publicity material), Świebodzin submitted itself symbolically to the protection of Christ the King, a move that was challenged as unconstitutional (Poland being a republic) before the Constitutional Tribunal. The consecration of the statue, which was to symbolize this submission in concrete form, took place exactly ten years later. Indeed, one other sacred item placed next to the pew by the statue is the enthronement prayer, and as already noted the statue wears a crown to symbolize Christ as king.<sup>20</sup> Generally these suggestions seem to have come

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<sup>20</sup> The crown is a 'royal' one and not the crown of thorns usually associated with Christ's suffering, as in images of the Sacred Heart. Placing the realm under divine protection has precedents in Polish history: for example, in 1656 King Jan Kazimierz placed his kingdom under the Virgin's protection after repelling a Swedish invasion.

from enthusiastic individuals rather than the Church hierarchy, with whom the submission of Świebodzin to Christ the King was unpopular.

Does the Świebodzin statue really represent an attempt to create a new sacred space? Neither it nor the associated church is associated with any miracle, and until they are, the statue itself will probably remain an attraction which is visited more than honoured. As already noted, it is the connected Sanctuarius that is the main site of organized worship in the immediate area. Moreover, the statue itself has come to be associated with miracles subsequent to its construction: thus during the mass held at the ceremony depositing Zawadzki's heart, an umbra is said to have developed to protect the assembly from getting wet. One other reported miracle is that Zawadzki supposedly died at three in the afternoon – said to be the time of Christ's death as well.

More generally, the statue can be seen as an attempt to demonstrate not so much the Church's existing power as its aspirations for the future. Treating Christ and the Virgin as crowned monarchs is not just a symbolic gesture: it links them both with notions of sovereignty and therefore with the Polish nation and state.

### Religious objects

Obviously any statue of Christ, as a material thing, will be considered a religious object. What does that mean in concrete terms? Are religious objects just representations, or do they contain divinity themselves, or even are divine? Colonialists freely held the latter assumption about the religious images ('fetishes') of the colonized in the period of the nineteenth-century colonial empires, as Ellen makes clear (1988), a position that anthropologists soon abandoned as misleading, thus inadvertently inventing the anthropology of symbolism. As Luehrmann points out (2010: 57 ff.), a similar tension lay behind the iconoclast controversy of the eighth- and ninth-century Byzantine Empire, between 'the worship of images as divine beings [and] showing them honour and veneration as representations of a divine or saintly prototype' (ibid.: 57). More recently,

Hanganu (2010: 45 ff.; also Herzfeld 1990: 109, 116.) has drawn attention to the differences between Orthodox and Catholic Christianity in these respects. In the Orthodox Church, while icons are not divine and are not properly subjects of adoration, which is owed to God alone, they should be venerated and potentially have efficacy in answering the needs of worshippers, seemingly regardless of their aesthetic qualities. For Herzfeld, icons are ‘both containers and refractions<sup>21</sup> of the divine essence’, metonyms of the prototype (Christ, the Virgin, a saint) for which they stand and ‘receptacles of [the latter’s] grace’, which is what makes them efficacious (ibid.: 111). Moreover, in their being venerated, according to the Nicaean creed, the believer’s veneration passes through them to their prototypes or referents (Hanganu ibid.: 45). In the Catholic Church, by contrast, images are purely representational and an aid to religious instruction, at least in Aquinian theology, if not always in the actual minds of ordinary worshippers, who may well regard them as more instrumental (Hanganu ibid.). Likewise in Orthodox cases, Kenna found that her Greek informants’ ‘behaviour toward icons contradict[s] the injunction that icons are to be treated not as powerful in their own right but only as “channels of grace”’ (1985: 346). For Orthodox theology, the original and archetypal icon is the mandylion, the image of Jesus’ face in a piece of cloth he had wiped his face with to give to the King of Edessa, who had asked to see him (a miracle, in other words; Luehrmann 2010: 61). In the Catholic world, the most famous example is the Turin Shroud, though, as the name indicates, this is associated with Christ’s death on the cross.

Another aspect of possible relevance here is the local dimension. Herzfeld (ibid.: 113 ff.; also Kenna 1985: 366-8) has pointed out the tension between the formality of iconic images, which allow little artistic licence, and the claims of local villagers that their icon, even if of the same prototype as those of other localities, is unique, different from all others. Regarding the Świebodzin statue, this is reflected in the claims made

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<sup>21</sup> A notion Herzfeld traces back to Evans-Pritchard’s treatment of Kwoth or Spirit among the Nuer, via John Campbell (Herzfeld ibid.: 110). In this context, at least, ‘version’ might be a more accessible word.



about its uniqueness, especially in relation to its rival in Rio, mentioned earlier.

Verisimilitude is another issue. No one knows what any figures of significance in Christianity looked like in life, and images of them are highly stylized. This applies to the Świebodzin statue as much as any other such image.

### Religious tourism, pilgrimage and sacred spaces

As already noted, the statue seems to attract more touristic than genuinely religious interest from its relatively modest but nonetheless regular numbers of visitors, though that might be a distorted view because of the availability of a more formal site of worship in the associated Sanctuary. Nonetheless this raises the issue of the statue's current and potential status as a site of pilgrimage. As has been pointed out by others (e.g. Morinis 1992), pilgrimage is not easily defined and has many aspects that overlap with other phenomena, like, indeed, tourism. One writer to have opposed this view is Erik Cohen (1992), who suggests that, at least analytically, there is a clear conceptual distinction between the two, even though in modern conditions there may be an overlap in practice. In brief, he suggests, while pilgrims journey to the centre of their ideological and cultural universe, tourists are seeking precisely what is different from their own universe and have to do so by moving to what, from their perspective, is a periphery, or somewhere entirely outside their universe.<sup>22</sup>

A better known theory is that of Victor and Edith Turner (1976), for whom pilgrimage, as a liminal experience, is an instance of *communitas* in which, to quote a later sympathiser with this theory (Naletova 2010: 241), 'pilgrims are challenged to accept ascetic and collective conditions of living and become exposed to social realities to which they are not accustomed', having overcome which, they are able to return to the structure of *societas* revitalized. In her own work on Russia Orthodox pilgrims to the

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<sup>22</sup> This apparently follows a suggestion made in a personal communication to Cohen by Nelson Graburn, a noted authority on tourism; see Cohen 1992, p. 60, note 4.

convent at Diveevo (or Diviyeevo), near Nizhni Novgorod, Russia, Naletova accepts the Turners' view of the essentially integrative nature of pilgrimage, but not their further implication that there is an inherent emotionality in pilgrimage. In her case, quietism seems more significant in the form of *kenosis* or 'personal self-emptying', whereby "pilgrims follow the example of Christ, who 'poured Himself out' to the world and 'made himself nothing'" in sacrificing himself for all humanity (ibid.). However, the possibility that quietism might itself involve emotion is not probed here.

One aspect of pilgrimage that many commentators appear to agree on, including the Turners (Morinis 1992: 8-9), is that, even when they embark on sacred journeys together and are united in the wider assumptions surrounding pilgrimage, pilgrims' reasons for going on pilgrimage are personal to themselves, ranging from the fulfilment of a vow to thank a divine figure for granting a benefit (recovery from illness, e.g.) to something very close to tourism, if religiously informed tourism, which need not imply contestation as such.<sup>23</sup> Some studies (e.g. Kormina 2010, Agadjanian and Rousselet 2010) go further to show that pilgrims are really acting independently of the church hierarchy of priests and other religious specialists, whom they may avoid in their ordinary lives by not attending church regularly – a manifestation of democracy in religion, in other words, which many studies of religion in the modern world are faced with (numerous studies of Pentecostalism, for example), but also reflecting the imperative to go on pilgrimage in search of God, not the priesthood (Agadjanian and Rousselet *ibid.*: 316). It is perhaps at the latter end of the spectrum that one is tempted to see pilgrimage as tourism, and even as tourism to one's culture rather than to a religious site – a desire to see rather than believe, as Agadjanian and Rousselet put it (*ibid.*: 317). On the other hand, other examples show priests aiding pilgrims directly with everything from verbal spiritual guidance (e.g. Naletova 2010) to taking communion (as at Šiluva

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<sup>23</sup> Morinis (1992, p.10, ff.) lists and discusses six modes of pilgrimage: devotional, instrumental (e.g. healing), normative (as part of a ritual), obligatory (e.g. *hajj* as one of the five pillars of Islam), wandering (e.g. Hindu renouncers) and initiatory.

in Lithuania; personal field observations) to exorcism (e.g. Nauescu 2010), and specific mystical figures associated with the pilgrimage site may also be the target of a journey that is at once physical and spiritual (cf. McKeivitt 1991 on the Padre Pio phenomenon; also Thomas 1999 on pilgrimages to sites associated with the preaching of the Quaker George Fox in the north of England).

Nonetheless studies like Kormina's do tend to undermine the other main assumption of the Turners' basically functionalist approach, namely that the experience of *communitas* on a pilgrimage is integrative in that it brings pilgrims together with both one another and the church hierarchy. One major rejection of the Turners' argument is Eade and Sallnow's claim (1991) that pilgrimage may well actually involve contestation over its ends, practices and associated meanings. Possibly both views are correct, but differ according to different cases, or alternatively one might hazard the suggestion that the Turners' view reflects ideals as much as ethnographic realities, Eade and Sallnow's only the latter. However, one can also envisage a middle way, already described above, in which pilgrims go on pilgrimages very much as individuals with their own personal reasons for doing so, but without the intention to challenge the Church's authority, the relevance of the ritual paraphernalia or the symbolic messages that frequently surround such events, or the motives of other pilgrims. This does not rule out the potential for contestation or conflict, but nor does it leave us with an image of pilgrims being in thrall to the Church or other religious authority without being able to exercise their own agency in thought and action. In doing so, however, they will mostly, I argue, keep their views to themselves.

Ultimately, though, it is the relationship between pilgrimage and tourism that is most significant in the present case, as one can trace the dichotomy between these two phenomena in the visitors to the Świebodzin statue, at least in part. Again, even redefined as pilgrims, those with a clear religious interest are obviously in the minority. And even these pilgrims arrive singly or in families or other very small groups, not in any organized mass even once they are at the site – there is no priest there to greet them –

and their visits are also ad hoc, as with tourists, rather than in connection with an established anniversary or event. Apart from a visit in connection with an international youth movement in 2016 and a basically secular, though still church-sponsored picnic put on in August 2015,<sup>24</sup> visits by large, organized groups in connection with specific events in the church calendar seem rare or non-existent. This tends to support those theorists who see a set of essentially disparate personal reasons as underlying pilgrimages, though not necessarily contestation in Eade and Sallnow's sense. If there is such contestation in the case of the Świebodzin statue, it is between supporters and opponents of Zawadzki and by extension the Catholic Church, and to an extent between Świebodzin and Rio, not among the minority of visitors who most clearly qualify as pilgrims as such.

Nonetheless, despite Erik Cohen's firm dichotomy between tourism and pilgrimage (above), even he appears to accept that today's mobile religious activities and visits to sacred sites have adopted many of the practices of modern tourism, being served and supplied by modern forms of transport (cf. the use of buses described by Kormina 2010), accommodation, meals and souvenirs. As already noted, Świebodzin is yet to become a major site of such tourism, especially compared with Częstochowa or Góra Świętej Anny (St Anne's Hill in Silesia), also in Poland, or sites like Šiluva, the Hill of Crosses or Tytuvėnai in neighbouring Lithuania, let alone more famous sites like Knock, Lourdes, Fátima or Međugorje.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, it might never become so. As already noted, there is no specific miracle associated with the site, unless one counts Zawadzki's own dream of Jesus, which, despite his local reputation, does not seem to have been enough. Even if one does invoke his dream, there is nothing linking it to the topographical sites of either the church or the statue, which were

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<sup>24</sup> The picnic featured performances by secular musical groups, booths offering food, displays by the local fire brigade, local organizations like the fire brigade publicizing themselves etc., but nothing that could be called a religious event. One concession to the fact that it was taking place on land associated with the statue was the lack of alcohol, in accordance with the Catholic Church in Poland having declared August a dry month.

<sup>25</sup> Occasional pilgrimages were made to the last-named site in particular by Zawadzki and some of his parishioners.

chosen subsequently. Moreover, it was only a dream, not a vision of the sort that brings forth a divine message of hope and salvation to humankind that might be exploited by the Church hierarchy and celebrated ever after: there is no anniversary date for such a commemoration in the Świebodzin case.<sup>26</sup> In addition, Zawadzki's own reputation is largely local, and most of the Świebodzin population have presumably either already visited the site or decided not to, and any case they can easily see it while shopping at Tesco's across the road. Compared with Šiluva in Lithuania, a small village where a large pilgrimage complex consisting of a basilica, chapel and seminary has grown up around the site of a vision of the Virgin in 1608 and is attended by thousands of pilgrims every September, including the president and the rest of the political class (personal field observations), the attention devoted to the Świebodzin statue is modest indeed. Finally, as already noted, while the local church hierarchy ultimately supported Zawadzki's initiatives in the sense of taking part in the consecration of both church and statue, they have not adopted the site of the latter as a sacred space of any great importance – nor was Zawadzki promoted within the Church for his efforts, but remained an ordinary parish priest until his death. In other words, while any statue of Jesus is bound to have a sacred aura for the believer, as a sacred space it might be argued that this particular site is deficient, as it lacks the necessary associations with divine interventions or other sacred events – miracles, in short – that would attract the interest of both the church hierarchy and believers in such miracles. Only time will tell whether the site will become anymore sacred *because* it has the statue. As we have seen, some minor events have been interpreted as miracles already.

In short, the Świebodzin statue raises the issue of what constitutes a sacred space and whether such spaces are any different from a simple site of commemoration. While the Sanctuarium, like any consecrated church, is sacred in the sense that one encounters, indeed seeks out, the divine

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<sup>26</sup> The second anniversary of Zawadzki's death, which fell in April 2016, only attracted the briefest of mentions in the course of a church service I attended in the Sanctuarium.

there, there is ambiguity over whether this applies to the statue, given its evident attraction for tourists. Of course, churches also attract tourists who are motivated more by an interest in history, a love of art, simple curiosity or being shepherded by a tour guide than by religious belief. Maybe the difference is merely in the respective balance between these various motivations. Nonetheless there is no doubt in the believer's mind what a church is really for, something we cannot be so certain about in the case of a statue.

Is the same true of other statues of Christ around the world? The circumstances in and reasons for which these other statues have been erected are very varied, as are those who sponsored them. Some of them, like the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio, have chapels nearby in which services can be held; that is not true of the Świebodzin statue, which merely has its one outside pew for private prayer. However, the Rio statue had an unambiguously religious motive for its construction in the belief of those behind it that Brazilians were becoming less religious. In many cases, including that of Rio, the inspiration for the statue seems to have come from a lay believer or organization rather than a priest, often as a way of honouring Christ, or indeed someone or something entirely different, rather than marking the site of a vision or other miracle. Sometimes, indeed, the religious message seems to be entirely absent or secondary, political reasons being to the fore. Thus the statue of Christ in Dili, East Timor, was given to the then Indonesian territory by President Suharto of Indonesia to mark twenty years of its incorporation into Indonesia, simultaneously acknowledging the territory's Christian heritage; the statue in the Andes was put up by laity in 1904 to celebrate Chile and Argentina having resolved a potentially dangerous border dispute two years earlier (Bowman 1915: 76); the statue in Lima, Peru, was motivated by the desire of some Brazilian businessmen to celebrate Alan Garcia's presidency; a bishop of Ibiza constructed a statue to thank those on the island who had hidden him in the Spanish Civil War; the statue in Lisbon was put up to keep Portugal out of World War II; that in Madeira marks the place where the bodies of non-Catholics were disposed of; and in a

number of other cases, local businessmen have been prompted to sponsor a statue by community spirit rather than religious feeling.<sup>27</sup> In only one case I know of, apart from the Świebodzin example, was the sponsor motivated by a dream, and that was a businessman in Imo State, Nigeria.<sup>28</sup> A general question therefore poses itself, namely which comes first in creating a sacred space – a miracle or vision, or a statue or similar structure?

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<sup>27</sup> Information in this paragraph from Wikipedia, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>28</sup> "Africa's largest statue of Jesus unveiled in Imo, the man behind it", *The News* (Nigeria), 1.1.2016, accessed 26.4.2016.

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**Robert Parkin, PhD**, Emeritus Fellow, School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford; Dr Phil in Social Anthropology, University of Oxford 1984. Research interests: anthropology of Europe and South Asia; religion, kinship, ethnicity and nationalism; history of French anthropology.

## RECIPROCITY BETWEEN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS OF LITHUANIAN DIASPORA AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN THE POST-SECULAR ENGLISH SOCIETY<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

This article investigates the reciprocity between religious movements of Lithuanian diaspora and religious institutions in the post-secular English society. The research focuses on two Christian religious movements of Lithuanian immigrants (The Roman Catholic Church of St. Casimir, Lithuanian Church Parish and the Lithuanian Christian Church) in London, which came to the UK after the accession of the new EU Member States in 2004.

This paper has two related tasks: (1) to examine the role of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Casimir and the Lithuanian Christian Church in socialization and global integration processes in the life of Lithuanian diaspora; (2) to describe the perception of religious identity of the new wave Lithuanian diaspora in England. To reach this goal a survey of fifty respondents was undertaken, using stratified random sampling.

The main source of this work derives from ethnographic material gathered in the UK and Lithuania in 2017 according to the project *Cultural and Religious Identity of Lithuanians in England* (Reg. No. SA-1) co-funded by the Council for the Protection of Ethnic Culture. The ethnographic material was gathered using classical fieldwork methods (observation, the questionnaire form, discussions, structured and semi-structured interviews), as well as the analysis of Lithuanian diaspora's religious activity in two Christian communities' websites. The research surveyed fifty persons from different social groups.

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<sup>1</sup> The research has received funding from the Council for the Protection of Ethnic Culture under the project *Cultural and Religious Identity of Lithuanians in England*. Grant agreement number (No. SA-1) in 2017.

The results of the survey have shown that the Lithuanian Catholic parish of St. Casimir and the Lithuanian Christian Church perform the function of rallying Lithuanian emigrants in London as a space which forms Lithuanian cultural, religious and national values. Both Churches meet the religious and spiritual needs of their members, as well as help immigrants in a new social environment and support them when solving practical problems.

The Churches play an important role as information-sharing communities which enhance the socioeconomic opportunities of immigrants and their children.<sup>2</sup> Such a model of Churches and religious organizations helps with successful socialization as well as adaptation and global integration processes of immigrants and their children in a new English society. Thereby, the social, cultural, and socioeconomic roles of the churches are undeniable.

To sum it up, the issue of identity solved by the new wave of Lithuanian emigrants in England is problematic and controversial enough: a person is stuck between a few choices and is made to raise existential questions rethinking his or her situation in a new multicultural and multireligious environment. An emigrant, considering the issue of their identity, finds himself or herself in an intermediate, liminal position as they do not feel they belong to the country neither at home nor abroad. Thus the cultural and religious identity of an emigrant might be defined as a conscious cultural or religious choice identifying himself or herself with existentially vital issues.

Special importance is attached to communal celebration of religious and national festivals: rituals help countrymen living in diaspora to share common experience which helps to bond community members emotionally. Lithuanian diaspora living in London celebrate religious festivals in the environment familiar to them in terms of culture and religion, in the circle of their kin, friends and parish members, where a person feels most secure. Celebrations play an important role since socialization and inculturation enable the emigrants to pass on the traditions and reveal the significance of their content. Besides, such celebrations help the community members to renew and review the meaning of their national and religious identity. Celebrating Lithuanian and religious holidays encourages the community to stay together, share ideas and survive.

On the one hand, Christian churches and various religious institutions are one of the most important sources of support for the practical problems such as helping others in need, including new immigrants and the poor. On the other hand, churches, parishes or temples play an important role in preserving the community

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<sup>2</sup> Hirschman C. The role of religion in the origins and adaptations of immigrant groups in the United States// *IMR*. 2004, No. 38, p. 1210

and ensuring continuity in the lives of immigrants. Here new believers find comfort and security through participation in various religious activities. It proves the importance of reciprocal relations between different religious congregations.

**Keywords:** Lithuanian diaspora in England, Roman Catholic Church, Lithuanian Christian Church

## Introduction

In order to understand the current religious processes, it is necessary to examine the reciprocity between religious movements and religious institutions. The main aim of this research is to analyse the reciprocity of religious movements of the new wave Lithuanian immigrants and the role of religious institutions in the post-secular English society. The research focuses on Christian movements of Lithuanian immigrants (The Roman Catholic Church of St. Casimir, Lithuanian Church Parish and The Lithuanian Christian Church) in London, which came to the UK after the accession of the new EU Member States in 2004.

Since the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, over a million mobile central eastern Europeans have found employment in Britain.<sup>3</sup> “During the 22 years of independence about 30% of population left Lithuania and that mainly concerned youth and qualified specialists. The shortage of jobs, low salary, disappointing opportunities of self realisation and career, ineffective science and education system” were the main reasons of emigration from Lithuania.<sup>4</sup>

This paper has two related tasks: (1) to examine the role of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Casimir and the Lithuanian Christian Church in socialization and global integration processes in the Lithuania diaspora

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<sup>3</sup> Ciupijus Z. Mobile Central Eastern Europeans in Britain: Successful European Union Citizens and Disadvantaged Labour Migrants? // *Work, Employment & Society*. 2011, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 540. DOI:10.1177/0950017011407962.

<sup>4</sup> Rakauskienė O., G., Ranceva O. Strengths of Emigration from Lithuania: Demographic, Social and Economic Consequences // *Intellectual Economics*. 2012, Vol. 6, No. 2 (14), p. 246

life; (2) to describe the perception of religious identity of the new wave Lithuanian diaspora in England. To reach this goal, a survey of fifty respondents was undertaken, using stratified random sampling.

Religion could be seen as an integral part of an individual's life and development. Especially religion plays a prominent social role in the immigrants' lives. Religious identity describes how a person or group understands, experiences, shapes, and is shaped by the psychological, social, political, and devotional facets of religious belonging or affiliation.<sup>5</sup>

Studies of religious identity suggest that various factors (ethnic, gender, and generation differences) leave an impact on the religious identity. The first and second generation immigrants may tend to have particularly higher religious identity levels in comparison to the third generation people.<sup>6</sup> In efforts to adjust to the stressful changes associated with the immigration process, finding a community of emotional, social, and financial support, an environment typically provided by a place of worship, may be highly sought after by immigrants.<sup>7</sup> Some scholars emphasize the tension between the first generation's need for a church with services in the mother tongue and the second generation's preference for a 'less ethnic church' with services in English.<sup>8</sup> The latest longitudinal studies show that the religious identity among immigrants is significantly associated with higher self-esteem, greater positive affect, the presence of meaning in life, and reduced depressive symptoms (for females). Moreover, participation in religious activities is positively associated with positive affect and the presence of meaning.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Jackson R. L., Hogg M. A. (eds.) *Religious identity // Encyclopedia of Identity*. 2010, Vol. 2. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., pp.631-636, p. 631

<sup>6</sup> Harker K. Immigrant generation, assimilation, and adolescent psychological well-being // *Social Forces*. 2001. Vol. 79(3), pp. 969-1004

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<sup>9</sup> Davis R. F., Kiang L. Religious Identity, Religious Participation, and Psychological Well-Being in Asian American Adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. 2016, Vol. 45 (3), pp. 532-546

This study pays special attention to the reciprocity of religious movements of Lithuanian diaspora and Christian religious institutions. I focused on two Christian communities (The Roman Catholic Church of St. Casimir and the Lithuanian Christian Church) in the post-secular English society as well as on the religious identity of their members. The main source of this work derives from ethnographic material gathered in the UK and Lithuania in 2017 according to the project *Cultural and Religious Identity of Lithuanians in England* (Reg. No. SA-1) co-funded by the Council for the Protection of Ethnic Culture. The ethnographic material was gathered using classical fieldwork methods (observation, the questionnaire form, discussions, structured and semi-structured interviews), as well as the analysis of Lithuanian diaspora's religious activity in two Christian communities' websites. The research surveyed fifty persons from different social groups.

The article is divided into two main bodies, related to the religious movements of diaspora in the Lithuanian Roman Catholic parish of St. Casimir and the Lithuanian Christian Church.

### The Lithuanian Roman Catholic Parish of St. Casimir

Churches, parishes and other religious institutions play an important role in creating immigrant communities and maintaining communal solidarity. The foundation of an immigrant church often provides ethnic communities a refuge in the environment of hostility and discrimination of the local society as well as opportunities for economic mobility and social recognition.<sup>10</sup> With international migration taking place, people flock together forming groups based on their nationality – their members very often conceive religion as the principal sign of their identity and the incentive for continuing gatherings which unite on the basis of communal solidarity.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Hirschman C. The role of religion in the origins and adaptations of immigrant groups in the United States // *IMR*. 2004, 38, p. 1206

<sup>11</sup> Van Der Veer P. Religion // *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. Second edition. Barnard A. and Spencer J. (eds.). London-New York: Routledge, 2012, pp. 608-613

The history of Lithuanian diaspora shows that establishing a national parish, also, rallying Lithuanian community is a salient element of their identity. The Lithuanian Catholic parish of St. Casimir, officially established in London in 1912, has played a crucial role in nourishing Lithuanian cultural and religious identity on the verge of 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> century England.

What concerns the present-day Lithuanian Catholic parish of St. Casimir, I am interested in its current role regarding Christian religious movements in London and forming the cultural, likewise, religious identity of Lithuanian community in England. It is best disclosed by the members of the parish telling their life stories and sharing experiences. Based on the interviews, I can create a possible view of the reciprocity between the religious movements of Lithuanian diaspora and the Roman Catholic Church in the post-secular English society. One family shared their experience of religious and cultural life in the Lithuanian Catholic parish of St. Casimir:

“We have been quite active parish members of St. Casimir’s church in London for many – perhaps some 15 years. When priest Petras was transferred here, he organized events and established Lithuanian parish schools for children. In 2003 we’ve brought here our son so that he learned reading and writing in Lithuanian, got to know traditions and stayed among his contemporaries. He used to go to school while we went to church. Then his First Holy Communion, the Sacrament of Confirmation etc. followed. The priest knew us as a family and asked assistance with fiancées. We weren’t real connoisseurs of the field, but agreed to help him. We started volunteering in 2010. We’ve worked as parish volunteers for six-seven years leading courses for the newly-weds.”<sup>12</sup>

There is another story of a woman who came to England more than 10 years ago – she talks about the changes of religious identity while staying in the parish:

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<sup>12</sup> RAA (Archive of R. Račiūnaitė-Paužulienė), ALT (Identity of Lithuanians in England), file III, pp. 5–6. An interview was done by the author in London in 2017.

“When I came to England my religious identity changed radically. When in Lithuania, I belonged to the category of believers who go to church twice a year – at Christmas and Easter. When I came here, I found the church on my own. It was an urgent need. I don’t know – I felt some kind of attraction. There was a small circle of Lithuanians. When I came here, it seemed to me that any Lithuanian word I heard or a person I met somehow belonged to my sphere of life and he or she was to be treated as a brother. Now I don’t think like that. I found the parish on my own, this was how the folk group started.”<sup>13</sup>

In sum, international migration can be a traumatizing experience. “Immigrants become strangers in a new land with the loss of familiar sounds, sights, and smells. The expectations of customary behavior, hearing one’s native language, and support from family and friends can no longer be taken for granted”.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, one of the first acts of new immigrants is to found their own church, parish or religious organization.

A number of emigrants who find themselves in an alien environment are inevitably confronted with the problem of preserving their national, cultural and religious identity. It can only be preserved staying in one’s own well-known environment with dominating permanent cultural, national and religious values. This Lithuanian Catholic parish has proved to be that familiar environment, which encouraged the woman to search for her religious identity.

Most members of the Lithuanian Catholic parish of St. Casimir in London are young or middle-aged, either recently married or planning to get married. The parish is their place of gathering and spiritual cohesion where they are assisted when getting ready for the Sacraments of Baptism and Marriage. Besides being a place of prayer and pastoral care, the church of St. Casimir in London is a centre of Lithuanian culture and tradition fostering. The attendance of the church is about 5000 people per year, on

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<sup>13</sup> RAA ALT. File IV, p. 91. An interview was done by the author in London in 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Hirschman C. The role of religion in the origins and adaptations of immigrant groups in the United States, p.1210.



Sundays three Masses are attended by 500 believers on average.<sup>15</sup> Every year some 100 children attend the classes before they take the Sacrament of the First Holy Communion, about 20-30 adolescents get ready for the Sacrament of Confirmation and some 250 couples take a marriage preparation course.

Parishioners are involved into active pastoral care: there are 18 different groups of prayer, preparation for sacraments and catechesis: (1) pre-marital course, (2) the marriage course for couples married for 10-15 years, (3) courses for parents who raise adolescents, (4) the First Communion group for children, (5) the First Communion group for teenagers, (6) the Sacrament of Confirmation group for teenagers, (7) adult catechumenate, (8) a group of catechumenate for adults getting ready for one or more sacraments (Baptism and Confirmation, First Communion and Confirmation or just Confirmation), (9) a group of families getting ready to baptise their children, (10) a group of Mothers in prayer, (11) a Rosary group, (12) a prayer group for men, (13) a group of deepening faith, (14) a group of Holy Scripture, (15) a group of Alcoholics Anonymous, (16) a group of Drug Addicts Anonymous, (17) that of Gamblers Anonymous, (18) a group of adult children of alcoholics.<sup>16</sup> When conducting the survey in the parish there was a possibility to observe the activity of the groups and attend their regular weekly meetings. Some of them provide social help for people with different types of addictions.

One family shared their experience of religious and cultural life in the parish of St. Casimir:

“We are Catholics. Almost every Sunday we go to church [...]. We take active part in the life of the parish. Justas is a member of the church finance committee. We are also engaged in volunteering... When there's a need for some music to be played, we always

<sup>15</sup> Čepaitė Z. 2012. Lietuvių bažnyčia Londone švenčia šimtmetį. // *Užsienio lietuvių katalikų sielovada*. <http://www.lietuviai.ca/sielovada/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1374> (žiūrėta 2017-08-20)

<sup>16</sup> RAA ALT. File IV, p. 49-50. An interview was done by the author in London in 2017.

contribute with our help. We organize various feasts. We used to organize concerts on Mother's Day, also, the Autumn (harvest) feast. Children would prepare a show programme – it used to be a small concert. We would hold an exhibition of fruit and vegetables with displays made by children. Our women would make various delicatessen. The idea was realized in the course of other good activities – that's what's most important.

The parish holds family feasts. Beautiful Mass is celebrated followed by various games, tasks for both children and adults. Then we have a shared food party in the parlour. Every task is related to Church matters: children have to think and find the answers to interesting tasks, solve riddles. [...] Every year on March 4, St. Casimir's day, we celebrate the Parish feast with beautiful Mass attended by bishops and followed by a feast with traditional meals. Different tables are presented: *Aukštaičiai* (Highlanders), *Žemaičiai* (Samogitians), *Suvalkiečiai* (Suduvites), *Dzūkai* (South Highlanders)<sup>17</sup> and, also, Hybrids with their cultural programme and songs. The 5th table is that of Hybrids because they don't know who they are. By Hybrids we mean foreigners, spouses – if he or she is English, they join the latter table. [...] The tables have become a tradition. We've been celebrating the parish feast for some 5-7 years."<sup>18</sup>

Thus Lithuanian Catholic parish of St. Casimir in London with people actively engaged in its activities and fostering old and new traditions has become a space where cultural, religious and national Lithuanian Catholic values are formed. Catholics attending the parish church and the energetic rector of the church, who represents the institution of the Catholic Church and sustains the community in its continuous renewal, have a close reciprocal interaction.

The parish is a space where new religious groups and movements emerge, e.g., the group 'Mothers in prayer' or men's prayer group for men, which started in 2017. Various events of broader Christian community,

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<sup>17</sup> *Aukštaičiai* (Highlanders), *Žemaičiai* (Samogitians), *Suvalkiečiai* (Suduvites), *Dzūkai* (South Highlanders) are four main ethnographic groups of Lithuania.

<sup>18</sup> RAA ALT. File, IV, p. 91. An interview was done by the author in London in 2017.

retreats and *ALFA* course, which introduce the basics of the Christian faith, as well as family and youth camps, together with ecumenical service contribute to the renewal of parish members' Christian faith. Every year parishioners join other Catholic parish members for pilgrimages to various places in England and Europe. Once a year parishioners of St. Casimir take part in service at Westminster Catholic cathedral together with Catholics from the whole world living in London; every four years (on February 29 - the Leap day) they meet the representatives of the Baltic countries at ecumenical events and services in St. James's church in London.

In sum, the majority of new immigrants have become more religious after arrival in new country "in order to maintain cultural continuity following the trauma of international migration [...] Many immigrants join or found religious organizations as an expression of their historical identity as well as their commitment to building a local community in their new country. [...] Although religious faith provides continuity with experiences prior to immigration, the commitment, observance, and participation are generally higher"<sup>19</sup> in the new environment after immigration than it was one's native country.

### The Lithuanian Christian Church (LCC) in London

Besides traditional religions, such as Roman Catholics, new religious movements spring up in England. New immigrants bring new forms of Christianity, which account for the content and the languages of services in different churches. "Although these new forms of religious practice may appear to be 'foreign', they represent the characteristic path of adaptation of newcomers"<sup>20</sup> to the English society. One of the new religious movements in London is the Lithuanian Christian Church (LCC), which is related to the community of Pentecostals.

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<sup>19</sup> Hirschman C. The role of religion in the origins and adaptations of immigrant groups in the United States, pp. 1207-1208

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 1207

The Lithuanian Christian Church was founded in 1988 in London as a small group of six people in the living room of Lithuanian family and pastors Darius and Vilma Ditkevičiai home. This small group of Lithuanian speaking people began to experience a desire for prayer and the word of God. They used to meet in their homes for a communal prayer and Bible studies. At first, they attended a small local Baptist church, and later began to attend Kensington Temple, where they would regularly invite their Lithuanian friends to come, too.

People used to come for prayer, healing and deliverance, and within three months, the number of group members increased from six to fifty, and could no longer fit into their homes. Seeing the need for a bigger meeting place and feeling the inner inspiration to found a Lithuanian Christian Church in London, they started looking for a new building.

Ten years later a church in Becton was founded whose number of members amounts to more than 300. Brian Richardson (the leader of KTLCC's satellite churches) helped them to find their first building in Bethnal Green and to become a part of the KTLCC network.<sup>21</sup>

The Lithuanian Christian Church, a charismatic community of evangelical Christians, belongs to 'Kensington Temple' Church in London, subject to interntional Elim Pentecostal movement, which unites 600 churches in the United Kingdom. As the Lithuanian Christian Church declares in the website, the mission of this community is "to know Christ and to follow him both individually and collectively as a church". The vision of this Church is "to win the world and Lithuanians living int the UK and Lithuania, for Christ".<sup>22</sup> The Lithuanian Christian Church declares that they love and respect all people, accept everybody irrespective of race, nationality, social or cultural status; they strive "to win people over for Christ and consolidate Lithuanians and other nationali-

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<sup>21</sup> Lithuanian Christian Church. *About us. Our story*. Read on March 20, 2019, in electronic format: <https://www.lithuanianchurch.org/en/mes/musu-istorija/>

<sup>22</sup> Lithuanian Christian Church. *About us. Mission+vizion*. Read on March 20, 2019, in electronic format: <https://www.lithuanianchurch.org/en/mes/misija-vizija/>

ties living in England and Lithuania in faith”.<sup>23</sup> Pastors of the Church raise three children and firmly believe in the value of family, thus the majority of the church’s sermons and courses are orientated towards relationships and family. The pastors see the global Church as well as the Lithuanian Christian Church itself, as a big unified family, where everyone is equally valued and loved.<sup>24</sup>

The Lithuanian Christian Church has rallied children’s choir ‘Mokšliukas’, mixed choir ‘Gausa’, dance group ‘Srovė’. The community is active enough: it organizes Lithuanian festivities, various events for young people, children and adults – thus they contribute to maintaining their Lithuanian identity. Besides that the community is engaged in charity work: it supports the Centre for Addictive diseases in Kėdainiai, also, it assists the Christian radio station in Lithuania and helps the families of Daugai townlet.<sup>25</sup> The Church rallies believers not only for the communal prayer, but for leisure, cultural activities, weekend outings. Community members are encouraged to study the Word of God, to pay tithe and act in accordance with one’s faith, to abstain from alcohol and other strong drinks.

The Church community funds several projects outside of the church itself, aiming to help restore and care as many people as possible. There are some current projects such as ‘ALFA’ Men’s Rehabilitation Center, Lithuanian Philology and Arts School ‘Mokšliukas’, Nursery ‘Mokšliukas’, Choir ‘Gausa’. The goal of ‘ALFA’ organisation is to help Lithuanian speaking men, who are addicted to drugs and alcohol, find freedom, live new sober lives and delve deeper into themselves which becomes

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<sup>23</sup> Lithuanian Christian Church. *About us*. Read on August 5, 2018, in electronic format: <https://www.lithuanianchurch.org/apie-mus/kas-mes-esame/>

<sup>24</sup> Lithuanian Christian Church. *About us. Pastors*. Read on March 18, 2019, in electronic format: <https://www.lithuanianchurch.org/en/mes/pastoriai/>

<sup>25</sup> Čepaitė Z. Lietuvių krikščionių bažnyčia Londone švenčia dešimtmetį// *Anglija.lt* 2008-12-08. Read on April 12, 2018, in electronic format: [https://www.anglija.lt/straipsniai/mano\\_anglija/lietuviu\\_krikscioniu\\_baznycia\\_londone\\_svencia\\_desimtmeti.html-2](https://www.anglija.lt/straipsniai/mano_anglija/lietuviu_krikscioniu_baznycia_londone_svencia_desimtmeti.html-2)

possible after finding the causes of their addictions.<sup>26</sup> The Lithuanian Philology and Arts School ‘Mokšliukas’, founded in 2004, is divided into two sections (language and music). The school helps bring out the individual character and gifts of each child. Here children are taught to play their chosen instrument, learn about the Lithuanian language, history and heritage of Lithuania. The nursery ‘Mokšliukas’ aims to create a safe, warm and joyful environment where children can grow and learn through activities and play. ‘Mokšliukas’s’ goal is to develop each child’s spiritual and individual gifts and talents, their needs and personalities with a hope that they will grow up to become honest and ethical people, surrounded by the love of those around them, and the faithful love of God.<sup>27</sup> The choir ‘Gausa’, established in 2008, is a mixture of people with many different occupations. Very few of them have musical background, but they all come together due to their love of music.

Much like members of other new religious communities, the Lithuanian Christian Church takes special care of new community members, help newcomers to find work, solve spiritual problems, such as despair, alcoholism, depression and divorce. Here is a testimony of a young man talking about his way to the community and his healing process:

“I came to London in 2008. At that time life seemed to slide under my feet. I was simply looking for God. It might be true – I’ve been searching for Him all the time, however, it was very intense when I came here because I didn’t know really what to do with my life. My leaving for England, as is the case of many Lithuanians, had to do with financial problems. They were too pressing – I had no clue how to solve them as they were too hard for me to bear. I used to go to church every day – it didn’t matter whether the Church was Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox or some other. I used to go there every day because I thought it was a place where God could hear me. It happened that my housekeeper threw me out of her house. I found myself on the street and don’t know how I would have

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<sup>26</sup> Lithuanian Christian Church. *About us. Projects*. Read on March 10, 2019, in electronic format: <https://www.lithuanianchurch.org/en/mes/projektai/>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

ended up if not for my friend who used to attend the community – she often helped me – when I came to London, too.

I came there having gambled away all my money – I had just 7 pounds in my pocket. She helped me to find a flat and paid my monthly rent. After they threw me out of there, I reached the bottom – I swore to God I would no longer abuse alcohol, drugs, would quit smoking – no more misdemeanors. I swore that to God. The same girlfriend helped me again and I was admitted to live with Christians from a Lithuanian Church and it was there that I got to know more about God. In that home young people used to have a Bible course. They invited me to church one Sunday, then another Sunday and I heard the Good News that God died for my sins. It liberated me from my feeling of guilt, from sin: the last months before I came to believe were a real nightmare. Then peace and self-confidence set in. I started reading the Holy Scripture and my life started changing. [...]

My going to church was a way of searching. I could say I found God – although it would be more correct to say that Jesus found me. A process of learning started. Before that I had never held a Bible in my hands. I thought it was a book read by priests, monks and nuns only, and an ordinary mortal being is not allowed to touch it. One Sunday at church when I was saying the prayer of repentance, I was given the New Testament as a present, and I understood that it would answer all my questions. I started reading the book, however, I didn't understand much. Then I started attending the Bible study course, also, a prayer course, with each class focusing on a certain Bible topic, I also joined the music group. Actually, I had to change my habits – I had to get rid of my addictions: for 5 years I abused drugs, for 12 years I drank alcohol the amount of which constantly increased. I've been living a sober life for 10,5 years already and I don't want to remember about it – I have no more inclination. Before that I didn't know how to stifle my inner anxiety, however, when I heard that god has forgiven all my sins... They were some kind of waste which tortured and weighed down on me. I heard the News and asked Jesus to forgive me – and He seems to have washed and completely cleansed me. I set out on a new journey, I started thirsting to learn more about

God, immersed myself in studies willing to learn who He is: I had a very abstract notion about Him. Thus I simply started studying the Bible and up to now I am in close contact with the community in London, I visit them quite often, we keep in touch, I have a bunch of good friends and we keep associating with each other.”<sup>28</sup>

Religious communities, such as Lithuanian Christian Church, motivate people to trust and help one another, to share common Christian values, even in the absence of long personal relationships. The believers of this community live in groups, at least in London, every day they have gatherings of different groups (children, teenagers, families with small children, elderly people, women and men, residents of the same area). On Sunday they gather for a communal prayer in the community church in Beckton’s residential area.<sup>29</sup>

Since 2005 Kensington Temple churches have started applying the cell model P12. The community structure has been worked out and its teaching has been developed: it aims not only to encourage people believe in Christ, but to become his disciples. In 2005 the Church council was elected whose function is to manage the finances, take responsibility for development of different projects and other administrative matters. The council consists of nine members who have served the church for more than a few years. The council deals with administrative issues while pastor Vilma is responsible for the right teaching.

At present there are a few hundred people who attend the church regularly. Besides the main Sunday meetings, smaller gatherings are held at home – they are called home groups or cells. Those willing to better know their faith attend classes of faith basics while those willing to know God’s will and experience liberation attend a course *Living in Liberty* and *Reviving weekends*. At the beginning of 2010 they started the first Lithu-

<sup>28</sup> RAA ALT. File V, p. 1-2. An interview was done by the author in Kaunas in 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Gudavičiūtė D. Lietuvių emigrantai Londone puola į šiltą krikščionių bažnyčios glėbį // *Lietuvos rytas*. 2008-07-05. Read on April 12, 2018, in electronic format: <https://lietuvsodiena.lrytas.lt/aktualijos/2008/07/05/news/lietuviu-emigrantai-londone-puola-i-silta-krikscioniu-baznycios-glebi-5895545/>



anian school of Bible in London. The premises of the Church serve as a meeting place for a club of young people. On Sundays the believers may go to the library-bookstore and acquire items of Christian literature in Lithuanian, English and Russian, also, have access to audio-video material. It has become a tradition to go on a few day outing once every summer. In 2018 a hundred of Lithuanian men celebrated the centenary of Lithuania's independence organizing a trip to Scottish mountains.

Just as religion played an important role in maintaining community and ensuring the continuity in the lives of early 20<sup>th</sup> century European immigrants, many new immigrants find comfort, security, and fellowship through participation in religious activities.<sup>30</sup>

According to the model of the Church described above, the majority of immigrants seek to maintain or renew their religious faith in a new country. Faced with challenges and changes in their lives, most immigrants seek to recreate their faith or to establish a new Church following the religious traditions of their motherland, not to forget the native language.

## Conclusion

The results of the survey have shown that the Lithuanian Catholic parish of St. Casimir and the Lithuanian Christian Church perform the function of rallying Lithuanian emigrants in London as a space which forms Lithuanian cultural, religious and national values. Both Churches meet the religious and spiritual needs of their members, as well as help immigrants in a new social environment and support them when solving practical problems.

The Churches play an important role as information-sharing communities, which enhance the socioeconomic opportunities of immigrants and their children.<sup>31</sup> Such model of Churches and religious organizations helps with successful socialization as well as adaptation and global

<sup>30</sup> Hirschman C. The role of religion in the origins and adaptations of immigrant groups in the United States, p. 1227

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 1210

integration processes of immigrants and their children in a new English society. Thereby, the social, cultural, and socioeconomic roles of the churches are undeniable.

To sum it up, the issue of identity solved by the new wave of Lithuanian emigrants in England is problematic and controversial enough: a person is stuck between a few choices and is made to raise existential questions rethinking his or her situation in a new multicultural and multi-religious environment. An emigrant, considering the issue of their identity, finds himself or herself in an intermediate, liminal position as they do not feel they belong to the country neither at home nor abroad. Thus, the cultural and religious identity of an emigrant might be defined as a conscious cultural or religious choice identifying himself or herself with existentially vital issues.

Special importance is attached to communal celebration of religious and national festivals: rituals help countrymen living in diaspora to share common experience, which helps to bond community members emotionally. Lithuanian diaspora living in London celebrate religious festivals in the environment familiar to them in terms of culture and religion, in the circle of their kin, friends and parish members, where a person feels most secure. Celebrations play an important role since socialization and inculturation enable the emigrants to pass on the traditions. Besides, such celebrations help the community members to renew and review the meaning of their national and religious identity. Celebrating Lithuanian and religious holidays encourages the community to stay together, maintain common ideas and survive.

On the one hand, Christian churches and various religious institutions are one of the most important sources of support for the practical problems such as helping others in need, including new immigrants and the poor. On the other hand, churches, parishes or temples play an important role in preserving the community and ensuring continuity in the lives of immigrants. Here new believers find comfort and security through participation in various religious activities. It proves the importance of reciprocal relations between different religious congregations.

**Rasa Račiūnaitė-Paužuolienė, PhD in Ethnology**, Assoc. Prof. at the Department of Cultural Studies, Vytautas Magnus University. Internships: at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford University (UK) in 2012, 2001, at the Institute of Folklore and Ethnology in Bulgarian Academy of Science in 2017, 2010. Field research works: in Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Belarus, Bulgaria, the UK. Rasa has above 70 scientific publications and 2 monographs; expert of international research data base 'Lituanistika' in Research Council of Lithuania and at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic; a member of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (RAI) and EASA. Scientific research interests: religious anthropology, gender studies, urban anthropology, visual anthropology.

Anna Alieva

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## THE RELIGIOSITY OF AN INTER-PARISH CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX BROTHERHOOD IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA AND METHODS OF STUDYING IT

### **Abstract**

The paper is an attempt to describe the phenomenon of religiosity from within, in the process of its formation, by referring to the Orthodox Christian tradition. Orthodox religiosity is presented by way of describing the Inter-Parish Brotherhoods – informal religious communities in contemporary Russian Orthodox Church. The research focuses on the Transfiguration Brotherhood – a contemporary Orthodox inter-parish brotherhood, because it is a subject that influences both the religiosity of its members and the society around them. The Brotherhood unites a few dozen communities in some 40 cities in 8 different countries and comprises about 2,000 people; in that sense, it is representative of different regions, populated areas, gender, age and professional groups of Russian society. The author uses the case study strategy that allows certain flexibility to adjust to the object of study and to collect the most authentic and researcher-impartial material. The author discusses the advantages of this strategy and suggests ways to overcome its disadvantages. A detailed study of the inter-parish brotherhood gives the author a chance to attempt a holistic description of religiosity from the time of its formation to further development into maturity and strength.

**Keywords:** religiosity, inter-parish Christian Orthodox brotherhood, Russian Orthodox Church, methods of study, case study, original insider.

Any attentive observer attempting to study religiosity will notice that behind what seems to be similar numbers and data there tend to be differences in the internal logic of how the situation develops depending on

time, culture, the state of society and religious institutions. We have focused our attention on the religious situation in contemporary Russia, more specifically, Orthodoxy. According to researchers, about 80% of the population in Russia associate themselves with Orthodoxy,<sup>1</sup> yet only about 40% of these state that they believe in God,<sup>2</sup> and as far as practicing Orthodox believers are concerned, the data varies very significantly since it has proved to be impossible to determine the norm in Orthodoxy or indeed to identify the boundary, beyond which it is no longer possible to consider a person to be Orthodox. A more in-depth study of the issue has revealed that a sociologist or a specialist in Religious Studies has really nowhere to turn to in order to learn about the Orthodox 'norm', since there seems to be no academic community, no experts on the subject, and the Church itself does not constitute such a community of experts since people who speak on her behalf can express very different, indeed, contrary views with regard to this norm.<sup>3</sup> Researchers in Religious Studies and Sociology of Religion have been debating the subject, but they do not have a point of reference, since external criteria in this case – unlike Islam or other religions of the law – are not enough, so one ends up referring to the criteria used within the Church, which tend to be hazy and ambiguous.

With this paper, I am attempting to make a modest contribution to the understanding of the possible ways in which religiosity is formed as

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance: Dynamics of religious views and practices of the population of Russia in 1998–2012. (Selected data from the surveys of the Levada Center 2002–2012.) // *History. Issue number 7 (23) 2013*, p. 218 (*in Russian*)

<sup>2</sup> Simonov V.V. Notes on the religious situation in modern Russia (according to materials from the Levada Center survey) // *History. Issue. Nr. 7 (23). 2013*, p. 178 (*in Russian*)

<sup>3</sup> Furman D., Kaariinen K. Religiousness in Russia in the 90s of the XX - the beginning of the XXI century. Moscow: Publishing house OGNI TD, 2006, p. 90; Dubin B. To live in Russia at the turn of the century. Sociological essays and development. Moscow: Progress-Tradition, 2007, p. 408; Chesnokova V. In a close way: the process of churching the population of Russia at the end of the 20th century. Moscow: Academic Project, 2005, p.297 [6]; Sinelina, Yu. The dynamics of the religiosity of the Russians (1989–2012). Read on April 4, 2019, in electronic format: <https://religious.life/2014/09/sinelina-dinamika-religioznosti-rossiyan-1989-2012/> (*in Russian*)

a shared space of religious meanings and practices among the Orthodox in contemporary Russia. I am planning to do so by studying Orthodox communities who are actively involved in the process of religious socialization.

To get a better idea of the contemporary situation in Russia in terms of passing on religious traditions and daily practices, it is important to take a brief look at the history of the issue in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Russian Orthodox Church was in a somewhat difficult state. A poll of diocesan bishops regarding the need for reform<sup>4</sup> eventually led to the resignation of the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod Konstantin Pobedonostsev who had consistently opposed reforms and the convocation of the Local Council of the Russian Church. The reason for the resignation was that the bishops were predominantly in favour of reforms. When in 1916 compulsory confession was abolished in the Russian Army, it turned out that those who continued with the practice of confessions constituted less than 10% of the total number of servicemen. In society at large, religiosity was supported by the cultural and family tradition, and partially by the state that required its citizens to maintain a minimum of religious involvement (taking communion once a year) and this had to be confirmed by a written document. While religious feasts were celebrated at the official level, yet by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century they had little connection with the daily life of people, which can be clearly seen in the memoirs of the time. One characteristic circumstance supporting this is the fact that theatres continued to be open even during Lent. The Church's influence in society was not very significant. Perhaps, this was one of the reasons why the process of secularization in Russia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century took such a cruel and destructive turn.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Diocesan hierarch reviews on church reform. Part I, II. (*Materials on the history of the Church*. Book 34). Moscow: Church History Society. 2004 (*in Russian*)

<sup>5</sup> Uzlaner D. Soviet model of secularization // *Sociological studies*. 2010, Nr.6, pp. 62-69; Shishkov A. Some Aspects of Desecularization in Post-Soviet Russia // *State. Religion. Church*. 2012, Nr. 2 (30), pp. 165-177 (*in Russian*)

The Bolsheviks who seized power in 1917 fought both religion as such,<sup>6</sup> and any specific forms of it including the Orthodox Church. And the fight was both ideological and physical. Secularization in Russia was accompanied by the destruction of churches, physical extermination of the clergy and lay believers, prohibition of preaching and religious meetings outside the church buildings, complete ban on the publication of religious and even philosophical literature in specific areas linked to religion. This was coupled with systematic actions aimed at destroying the church structure,<sup>7</sup> squeezing the religious community out into a social and cultural ghetto,<sup>8</sup> limiting access for cultured and well-educated individuals to ordination and even to being admitted into seminaries and religious academies.<sup>9</sup> Undoubtedly, all this had its impact on the development of religious traditions, which took a different course developing mainly outside the church itself. Which, in its turn, then influenced the process of restoring spiritual and religious life in post-Soviet Russia.

At the micro-level, this forced secularization was backed up by psychological, administrative, and legal pressure that every person felt knowing that they could be imprisoned, sent to a concentration camp, or even executed. In later years (after Stalin's death) this pressure changed

<sup>6</sup> Belyakova N. "I urge deans to abide strictly by the law." Participation of the population in the sacraments of the Orthodox Church in the late USSR: between church and state restrictions // Reference to the work on the anti-religious policy of the Soviet government // *History. Issue*. 2013, No 7 (23), pp.106-120; Russian Orthodox Church and the communist state. 1917-1941. Documents and photo materials. Moscow: BBI. 1996 – 352; Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet era (1917-1991). Compiled by Gerd Strickker. Moscow: Propylaea, 1995 – 501 (*in Russian*)

<sup>7</sup> Shkarovsky M. Josephism: the current in the Russian Orthodox Church. St. Petersburg: Memorial Scientific Information Center, 1999 – 399, *Obnovlenncheskoe dvizhenit in the Russian Orthodox Church of the XX century*. St Petersburg: Nestor, 1999 – 100 (*in Russian*)

<sup>8</sup> Soskovets L.I. Councils for religious affairs as agents of state policy in relation to the church // *News of Tomsk Polytechnic University*. 2008. T. 312. Nr.6, p. 162-167 (*in Russian*)

<sup>9</sup> Marchenko Alexey, prot. The religious policy of the Soviet state during the reign of Nikita Khrushchev and its influence on the church life. Moscow: Krutickoe Patriarshsee podvorje, 2010 – Pp.257-261; Pospelovsky D. Russian Orthodox Church in the XX century. Moscow: BBI.1996, – Pp.299-300 (*in Russian*)

somewhat manifesting itself mainly in social deprivation, like denying believers and their children access to good education, good jobs, etc.

As a result of all these actions taken by the government, the mechanisms for passing on religious traditions that worked in the pre-revolutionary Russia were all but destroyed, both in relation to religious practices and the cult, and in terms of understanding and growing in one's faith. By the end of the Soviet era, this led to the fact that no more than 30% of the population identified themselves as believers,<sup>10</sup> of which a much smaller proportion actually practiced their religious beliefs.<sup>11</sup>

Since secularization was very much a forced process, the attitude to religion, including the Orthodox Church, changed significantly once the political regime had changed. The latent interest for the religious sphere, which had been suppressed for decades by the authorities, could now be expressed openly. This resulted in an upsurge of the number of people who associated themselves with faith and religion.<sup>12</sup>

The revival of the Russian Church began with the restoration of the official church structures or creating them anew: diocese, monasteries, seminaries, parishes, etc. Church buildings and other church property were quickly restored to the Church. Yet, after a quarter of a century it has become clear that this growth of official church structures and church property does not have a direct effect on people's faith, does not result in the growth of the number of believers or of the quality of their faith.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Chesnokova V. In a close way: - M.: Academic Project, 2005. p 8; Dubin B. To live in Russia at the turn of the century. Sociological essays and development. - Moscow: Progress-Tradition, 2007 – p.168-169; Mitrokhin N. The Russian Orthodox Church: Current State and Actual Problems. Moscow: Publishing House NLO. 2004, – p. 70 71 (*in Russian*)

<sup>11</sup> There is no statistics for that period but given that at this point in time, when there has been an upsurge in the number of practicing believers, their number does not exceed 3%, we can surmise that this figure would have been significantly less then.

<sup>12</sup> Dubin B.V. To live in Russia at the turn of the century. Sociological essays and development. M: Progress-Tradition. 2007, – Pp.168-169 (*in Russian*)

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, Report of Patriarch Kirill at the Diocesan Assembly of Moscow Read on April 10, 2019, in electronic format: <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/print/1061651.html> (*in Russian*)



While looking for the possible ways for the Orthodox tradition to be restored we end up wondering about the institutions and the potential actors in contemporary Russian society that are responsible for the process. In a normal case scenario, the main actor and agent of religious (in this case Orthodox) socialization – the transfer of religious practices to the following generations – would be the Orthodox Church itself. Yet, as we have seen above, it found itself in a situation of almost complete destruction. The second agent for religious socialization is the family, which, too, suffered great losses in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was not capable of performing this function. The state, which before the revolution had supported religious feasts, practices, and the religious order of life, now played the reverse role of destroying it. The day-to-day life of a peasant (peasantry constituted more than 80% of the Russian population before 1917) had also changed dramatically, while before 1917, it would have included icons, daily prayer at home (morning, evening, before and after meals), prayer in the church, and religious feasts (albeit containing various pagan elements). All things in people's daily life that served to introduce them to the world of religion had now ceased to exist. Religious traditions, which had been supported and legitimized by the state, were now persecuted and illegal. Religious feasts were intentionally replaced with secular holidays: the New Year substituted Christmas, the May Day substituted Easter, and Sundays were often made working days in the whole country, all of which gradually ousted religion from the everyday life. Religious feasts continued to be celebrated, but in a reduced way: as family gatherings, with meals but with no church worship; the practice of prayer, whether personal or collective (in the church), also stopped being part of everyday life. And once this practice is lost, it is very hard to bring it back. Yet, these daily practices *are* being restored and this experience is of interest to researchers, along with the study of the official church structures.

This experience was discovered in the study of an independent (i.e. not attached to any parish) Orthodox brotherhood as a manifestation of informal institutionalized religiosity in contemporary Russia. Independent (inter-parish) brotherhoods are traditional for the Orthodox (and for the

Russian) Church<sup>14</sup>, yet they are neither numerous, nor well-studied.<sup>15</sup> There is no official statistics about the number of Orthodox brotherhoods. The official website of the Russian Church – [www.patriarchia.ru](http://www.patriarchia.ru) – contains no information about brotherhoods whatsoever. There is a Wiki page on brotherhoods that mentions some, but even a quick look at the list at the end of the article confirms that it is by no means an exhaustive one. A researcher who is familiar with the environment can try to search for relevant information at the websites of diocese and parishes or take a look at social media (*Facebook* or *Vkontakte*); one could also try to find experts on the issue, but all of this essentially means that a full-scale research is required. Which is why an academic study of this religious phenomenon is deemed to be useful both for academic purposes and for the life of the Orthodox Church and Russian society at large.

For the purpose of this study, an independent (inter-parish) brotherhood is defined as a community of Christians (specifically Orthodox Christians in this case) who come together for a specific cause (ministry) that goes beyond the care of a specific church building/parish. Brotherhoods like this tend to be formed by Christians belonging to different parishes.

In this study, I have decided to focus on the description of an existing contemporary independent brotherhood in the Russian Orthodox Church – the Transfiguration Fellowship of Minor Orthodox Brother-

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<sup>14</sup> Brotherhoods in Russia have existed since the 15th century: in Lviv one was founded in 1439, in Vilensk in 1458, and further in the West of Russia they appeared as a lay grassroots initiative for educating and protecting Orthodoxy from Latin and Uniate influences, while most of the bishops became Uniates. Later, starting from the middle of the 19th century, there appeared the brotherhood of Father Alexander Gumilevsky (1861-1866), The Raising of the Cross Labour Brotherhood of N.N. Neplyuev (1893-1925), Alexandro-Nevisky Brotherhood (1918-1932) and many others.

<sup>15</sup> See for instance: Zhrebayatiev M. Modern communities of Christian denominations in Russia: comparative socio-sociological analysis: PhD thesis. Moscow, 1994, p.191; Agadzhanyan A. Reform and revival in two Moscow Orthodox subcultures: two ways to make Orthodoxy modern // *Parish and community in modern Orthodoxy*. Moscow: 'The whole world'. 2011, pp.255-276; Alieva A. Case study strategy in the study of a small Orthodox community. PhD paper. M., 2003, p.173 (*in Russian*)

hoods.<sup>16</sup> Since the work of the Brotherhood involves the churching (introduction to church life) of adults, its example can be used to study the possible ways of changing people's religiosity from zero to a deep involvement in ecclesial and religious life. In terms of religiosity per se, the case of the Transfiguration Brotherhood is a curious one, because in and around the Brotherhood (among people directly involved or indirectly affected by its life and work), we can find very different levels of religious involvement, as far as the way of life and the goals are concerned – from non-religious or mildly religious individuals and groups of people to those deeply religious and involved in the tradition and experience of the church life, working to pass on this tradition and experience to others.

For a detailed and comprehensive study of the Transfiguration Brotherhood, I opted for qualitative methodology, namely, for the case study strategy, enabling me to use both qualitative and quantitative research methods, which are effective in terms of flexible adaptation to the target object.

Usually, the most difficult aspect in studying a closed or semi-closed community is the possibility to find a contact, an intermediary, and to get access to the community. In my case, this difficulty was overcome immediately because the researcher is an 'organic insider',<sup>17</sup> i.e. a member of the Brotherhood. In my case, however, this implied equally complex ethical tasks of carrying out the research, like the question of whether to inform

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<sup>16</sup> The Transfiguration Brotherhood or the Transfiguration Fellowship of Minor Orthodox Brotherhoods is an informal movement within the Russian Orthodox Church that emerged in the early 1990s. Its spiritual father is Fr Georgy Kochetkov. At the moment, the Transfiguration Brotherhood has a membership of more than two thousand people in forty cities and eight countries. The Transfiguration Brotherhood carries out various church ministries: public education, catechesis, religious education, liturgical translations, study of church history, etc. (see more at [www.psemb.ru](http://www.psemb.ru)).

<sup>17</sup> Grigorieva L. Sociologist of religion: an organic insider in the status of a professional outsider. On the issue of professional competence and probabilistic engagement. // *Sociology of religion in the Late Modern society (in memory of Yu.Yu. Sinelina): materials of the Third International Scientific Conference*. National Research University 'BelGU', September 13, 2013 / resp. ed. S.D. Lebedev. Belgorod: Belgorod Publishing House, 2013, pp. 87-97 (in Russian)

the community that it is being studied or not. Also, with regard to methodology, I had to discern between my personal views and sympathy towards the community, on the one hand, and the research objectives, on the other. This complicated ethical situation helped to find an interesting solution that can be applied as a framework in any similar study, including cases when the researcher is not a member of the community. The scholar informed the community that it is under research and described the potential benefits of this study for the community. After this explanation, the community started helping the researcher to collect information about itself. The solution of the second task will be presented further when I speak of triangulation.

The next important issue to consider when studying a community is the need to establish contact with respondents with different levels of involvement in the community: with the seniors, with those responsible for specific activities, as well as with 'ordinary' community members, because they can provide the scope for the study of 'consciousness'; and 'perceptions' of the community life. It is also important not only to get acquainted with the members of the community, but also to establish good and trusting relationships with them. Firstly, it will provide access to certain areas, hidden from outsiders. Secondly, the researcher will be able to put forward initiatives, which might be useful in her/his investigation and which can be supported by the community members.

No less important is the issue of research methods. It is extremely difficult to investigate correctly and adequately a community without participant observation carried out by the researcher. Otherwise, as experience shows, important information, which ensures a holistic view, may not be available. In this type of studies, the participant observation is one of the key methods of obtaining information. Results of the participant observation constitute the basis for studying a community. At different stages of the research, the participant observation drifts from an unstructured type to a quite formalized one. In our case (of 'the organic insider'), self-description of the researcher's own experience was added to observation.

It is impossible to study religiosity in a community without interviewing its members. Interviews should be used, however, either based on having already collected enough serious information about the life of the community, or according to the principle and the topic common for both the interviewer and the respondent. If the respondent touches upon a religious topic, the researcher can develop it with further questions. If, however, the respondent does not do so, one must plan a series of interviews, including specially themed ones. These interviews demonstrate what place the community and religion actually take in the person's life, even if s/he is not deliberately asked about it, i.e. not stimulated to think about it. The interview method is typically used to obtain information about the inner world of the respondent: his thoughts, feelings, attitudes, about what happened in the past and occurs at present, in those moments when the researcher is not around. This is something that eludes monitoring, even participant observation. Thus, the interview method, being applied to studying an Orthodox community, helps to obtain an overall picture of the group's evolution based on particular memories and finding out thoughts of its various members about the group's past, present and future. In addition, this method helps to identify the attitudes of the community members to each other and to the community as a whole. Also, in my study there were two special interviews with people who know the community well from outside. It was necessary to obtain data from the outside, especially, information about the Brotherhood's external activity.

With regard to the methods, an organic insider has its advantages. I managed to collect a special database by suggesting to the community that it should record its own history by writing essays on a given topic. I also offered to be the one to keep an archive and thus received various invaluable sources of information. In the course of my research I tried to initiate organic creation of documents or to look for various written sources (essays on a given topic, existing regulations, lists of prayer for each other, etc.), to provide sources of information independent from the researcher in order to obtain a more objective picture.

As the researcher in this case was inside the community, I was familiar with the basic elements and basic interactions in the life of the community, which would have been invisible for an external researcher. They were worth paying attention to, and in the course of the work they were understood and contemplated in a new way.

The researcher needs to maintain a constant relationship with the community in the course of the research: its members (at least the seniors) need to be informed of the interim results of the study. Towards the end of my research, when the community was already ‘warmed up’ with my regular research actions – essays, interviews, audio recording of meetings – I could carry out a written survey. Also, the community members brought the necessary data to me of their own accord.

Like all qualitative methods and strategies, the case study method has one drawback, such as subjectivity. To improve the reliability of data gained from case studies, triangulation is used. This term was first used by D. Campbell who wrote that “data confirmed by two independent sources is more convincing than that taken from one source”.<sup>18</sup> Triangulation in case studies means using different ways to verify the objectivity and reliability of data.

There are several types of triangulation: triangulation of data sources; triangulation of methods; time, space, research, and theoretical triangulation.

Triangulation of data sources means that the researcher must use as many available sources as possible or strive to create new sources. With respect to the community, this means carrying out a survey of the largest possible number of members of the community, for example, by using the ‘informal conversation’ method or by asking to write an essay on a given topic, addressing people who are outsiders to the community, but know it well, as a data source.

In this paragraph, triangulation of data sources approaches methodological triangulation, because creating new data sources is creating or just

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<sup>18</sup> I. Masal'kov, M. Syomina (Kiblit'skaya). *Methodology and Research Design in the Case Study Style*. Moscow: Moscow State University. 2003, – p.183 (in Russian)

using different methods of data collection. Methodological triangulation implies using various methods to obtain information on the same aspect. For example, when studying an Orthodox community, in addition to interviewing, one uses the methods of observation, document analysis, initiating documentation, audio recording and videotaping of situations of interaction, thorough description of events.

Time triangulation means that a research applying the case study method lasts for quite a long time, allowing to trace the typicality of the processes occurring within the object, their duration and intensity, their significance for the object. Time triangulation enables the researcher to make measurements of the object's state at different periods of its functioning. Concerning the Orthodox community under discussion, triangulation allows detecting both the unchangeable and changeable characteristics of the community: its composition, its power, role and communicative structures, changes or invariance of behavioural patterns, values and norms. This method also helps to discover the existence of certain events and reactions to non-standard and rare events, which cannot be detected during a brief study.

To reduce subjectivity, the researcher must also constantly reflect and analyse his/her work with the object. Such introspection is required not only from an organic insider, but also from any outsider.

The Transfiguration Brotherhood cannot be regarded as a completely closed community, although many forms of its life are hidden from the public sphere. When studying the Brotherhood, a serious level of self-reflection on the common life, shared values, objectives and rules of interaction was identified, with the results of this self-reflection being published.<sup>19</sup> There are various themed meetings and seminars concerning both the Brotherhood as a whole and its parts. Proceedings of these

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<sup>19</sup> See for example: Zhrebysatiev MA Modern communities of Christian denominations in Russia: comparative socio-sociological analysis: dis.kand. philosophical sciences. Moscow, 1994 – 191; Agadzhanyan A.S. Reform and revival in two Moscow Orthodox subcultures: two ways to make Orthodoxy modern / Parish and community in modern Orthodoxy. M., “The whole world”. 2011, pp. 255-276 (*in Russian*)

meetings that including both the presentations and the ensuing discussion on various issues, are also published.<sup>20</sup>

I have used two strategies for the case studies – the biographical and the ethnographical. The biographical strategy contributed to clarifying the history of the community from its very emergence to the moment of research interest (usually it is the moment of the study). Applying this strategy involves interviewing people and studying various written sources, including those that appear through the initiative of the researcher. Ethnographical strategy was used for studying values, norms, patterns of behaviour in the community. Applying this strategy was primarily associated with the observation method, though, of course, interviews and written sources can also be used.

To make this review of my research complete, it is necessary to point out the problems<sup>21</sup> and failures of my investigation relating to my involvement in the life of the community. Firstly, it is my strong subjectivity and my interest in certain outcomes, which had to be overcome through asking for other sociologists' assistance and resorting to multiple triangulation. Secondly, it is the limitation in obtaining some data regarding personal relationships in the group, because I am an interested party in this case. The second problem was not fully overcome, but this was partly done without my conscious effort during 'sociometric interview'.

The result of the study was a comprehensive description of an inter-parish Orthodox brotherhood. In this article, we will focus on the process of reviving religiosity through the restoration of the everyday religious practices in the life of the members of the brotherhood.

<sup>20</sup> See for instance: Brotherhood in Orthodoxy. Collection of materials of the annual meeting of the Transfiguration Brotherhood. Moscow, Publishing House Put, 1993, p.116; "Received for nothing, give for free." Proceedings of the XIII Transfiguration Meeting of the Transfiguration Brotherhood, August 17-21, 2002". Moscow: KPF Transfiguration. 2011, p. 272; Life in communities and brotherhoods as an experience in the struggle for man and for the church. Materials of XV Sretensky Council of the Transfiguration Brotherhood, February 14-16, 2014. Moscow: KPF Transfiguration. 2014, p. 186 (*in Russian*)

<sup>21</sup> For instance, not all details of interaction and relationship could be transferred in a group to the researcher as he was a member of the group.



This process begins with the search for meaning or a desire to change one's life, which leads the person to meet others, as well as the transcendent. Members of the brotherhood try to organize thematic meetings, at which this search and the reflection about the purpose of the search are catalysed. And if at a meeting like that it turns out that the meanings and values offered by the Orthodox Christian community at least partially coincide with the search inquiries, then the next step becomes possible – the introduction to the religious (Orthodox) tradition (catechesis), which occurs by mutual voluntary consent of the seeker and the Orthodox Brotherhood in the person of its representatives. This process takes place according to a certain pattern, consisting of four directions of Christian spiritual and church life: personal prayer, prayer in the congregation, regular reading and studying of the Holy Scripture, correction of life according to the commandments of God. Moving forward has to do not only with the transfer of a certain amount of theological knowledge (catechism), but in fact is a continuation of the process of combining the experience of the church and the experience of the person in these four directions. During the catechesis, the person learns to perceive and apply religious experience, the experience of the church as his/her personal experience through reflection and practice. The guide for him becomes the person from the church who is responsible for this process of initiation. The main function of the leader is to be a personal example of everything that the person needs to see and learn during the process of entering the Orthodox Church (in a religious environment).

The church's teachings and ecclesiastical dogmas, to which the seeker is gradually introduced, are also revealed as answers to existential questions; what is a person, how man and the world came into being, where the evil comes from, how man can be saved from the evil. These comply with the 'simple behavioural practices': do not lie, do not steal (either from anyone or from the state), do not betray, do business in a certain way, be responsible for the quality of what you do, etc., because this embraces all the possible sides of human life.

This attitude to catechesis in the brotherhood is based on Christian anthropology, implying the high calling of man to freedom and creativity, as well as on Christian ecclesiology, which regards the Church as a community of believers living through the Holy Spirit.

After the completion of catechesis, the process of understanding and conjugating religious experience with life does not stop. Firstly, there is the option to receive theological education at St Philaret's Institute, whose work is supported by the Transfiguration Brotherhood, and secondly, there is the internal life of the brotherhood that creates a space of discussion and reflection on religious experience with the help of special thematic meetings, seminars, trips, etc. This initiative in self-organization gives rise to initiative in other areas of life: liturgical, theological, social. This includes social ministry – caring for the weak, the sick; catechesis, educational activities; caring for the preservation of culture, etc.

In terms of studying religiosity, the brotherhood creates a new world of the everyday life, which is the new vital world for the believers and which reinforces religious activity, comprehension of religious meanings, religious goal-setting, and religious practices in everyday life.

In Russian society, which is dominated by the “modern stage of development of religion,”<sup>22</sup> it is interesting to consider the processes and mechanisms of a holistic, consistent and fairly successful introduction to religious tradition, firstly, to understand one of the possible recruiting processes in the contemporary Orthodox Church (differing in purposefulness, integrity and sequence), secondly, for research of the processes of successful growth of religiosity of specific individuals and entire communities.<sup>23</sup> No less interesting can be the study of religiosity within a solid

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<sup>22</sup> Robert N. Bellah. The main stages of the evolution of religion in the history of society // *Religion and society. Readings on the history of religion*. Moscow: Aspect Press, 1996, pp. 665-676 (*in Russian*)

<sup>23</sup> The Transfiguration Brotherhood incorporates small groups – Orthodox communities, ranging from 12 to 25 people. Each community appears as a result of catechetical instruction of its future members and on their voluntary wish to continue further interaction with each other and participation in everyday church life as well as in various church, societal, charitable projects carried out by the Transfiguration Brotherhood.

religious environment; it can be used to gain an environment for expert estimates of religiosity in contemporary Russia.

From the perspective of studying religiosity, an Orthodox brotherhood is interesting because, unlike a parish, it provides much more space for religious activities of its members, not limiting them to the church building, which clearly determines the functions and tasks of religious activities. The Brotherhood gives people a chance to serve God and the Church, traditionally and creatively at the same time. In today's world, marked by its chaotic nature, bricolage and similar peculiarities of the directions of religiosity development, it is interesting to consider the processes and mechanisms of a holistic, consistent and successful introduction into religious tradition. Firstly, it is for understanding one of the possible recruiting processes (with its purposefulness, integrity and consistency) in the contemporary Orthodox Church, and secondly, for studying a successful growth of religiosity of individuals and communities. Exploring religiosity within a well-consolidated religious environment is of no less interest due to the opportunity of obtaining peer assessment of the phases of religiosity from experts in the religion, to which the community belongs.

**Anna Alieva, PhD in Sociology**, Senior Lecturer, St. Philaret's Christian Orthodox Institute. Research interests: sociology of religion, qualitative methods in social research, Christian movements, orthodox small groups, education, religious education, church history.

Margarita Shilkina

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## **NON-PARISH ORTHODOX BROTHERHOODS WITHIN THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AS A PATH FOR FREEING PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY**

### **Abstract**

This article is dedicated to analyzing various paths for freeing the Soviet man from the Communist ideology under the conditions of the political, economic, social and cultural changes that are occurring in Russia. The author shows that the societal reforms that began in the 1990s have not, in fact, even addressed their common object – the version of man which in Western academic circles was often referred to as “Homo Sovieticus” – i.e. the human person, along with his morals, psychology, habits, day-to-day traditions, intellectual qualities and will, all of which were formed within a totalitarian society. Having found himself in new conditions, the Soviet man showed an amazing ability to adapt, and tried to enter into his new social reality without changing *personally*. Moreover, 30 years after the changes began, we are witnessing a growing nostalgia for the Soviet past within a new generation who never lived in the USSR; nostalgia for the Soviet values and paradigms, morals and learning. This article suggests various possible paths toward the emancipation and rebirth of the man in Russia, along with his/her personality and individuality. One of these paths is considered in depth, namely the lengthy catechization of adults living consciously according to the Christian faith, flowing into (upon completion of catechesis) participation in the life of a non-parish Orthodox Christian brotherhood.

Based on several in-depth interviews, the author considers the changes in human consciousness that take place in people who have chosen this path, and proposes her own criteria for evaluating the rebirth of the human person. This article shows that the particular life available within non-parish Orthodox Christian brotherhoods in the Orthodox church in Russia, which are nevertheless uncon-

nected to the ROC's administrative structure of parishes and dioceses, enables people who have entered the church not only to become participants in church rituals, but also to find and enter into deep, interpersonal relationship and freely given and responsible service to God, church and neighbour. In other words, the brotherhood life enables people to embody their faith in life, relying upon and buttressed by the other members of the brotherhood. It is precisely in an environment of such fellowship and service that people are freed from the Communist ideology. The author pinpoints the main traits of the non-parish Orthodox brotherhood, members' fellowship and service to the church and society, which make it possible to achieve the goal of emancipation.

**Keywords:** Russian Orthodox Church, parish, brotherhood, non-parish brotherhoods, Communist ideology, Soviet man, personal rebirth, rebirth of the human person.

The goal of the current work is to describe the process of emancipation from Communist ideology that the former Communist Party and Komsomol workers undergo as a result of long-term catechesis and entry into the life of non-parish Orthodox Christian brotherhoods within the Orthodox church in Russia. It was important to establish how such brotherhood members evaluate the changes in their own views and central values after several years of membership, as well as how they view the role of the non-parish Orthodox brotherhoods in the internal changes that they have undergone personally.

Research into non-parish brotherhoods within the context of de-communication of Russian society seems to me to be particularly relevant at this very point in time, when the general crisis within the Orthodox Christian churches, as well as the close connection between a majority of the local churches and the governments of their corresponding nation states, have shown the churches to be incapable of responding to contemporary needs. Clerical ecclesiology, the loss of *sobornost* as the central principle of the church life, and administrative methods for managing the church, have made it impossible for people to find within the church the path and means of personal rebirth and transformation that they crave.

The institutional church is losing its authority within Russian society, though independent non-parish brotherhoods, on the contrary, are stirring up a good deal of interest, and often become centres, which bring together creative representatives of the natural sciences, culture, education and volunteer movements.

In both scholarly and church literature, we find that it is primarily Russian historians, theologians, and church historians, who have done research on brotherhoods.<sup>1</sup> Research into modern brotherhoods, however, is rare, with only the occasional exception.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, there are no works

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Gazhva, I.A., "The Religious and Educational Activities of Orthodox brotherhoods in Central Russia in the Second Half of the 19th c. and beginning of the 20th c." (based on materials from the Vladimir and Kostroma Regions). Dissertation abstract submitted for the degree of Research Doctorate in the field of History. Ivanovo, 2008. 19 pages (in Russian); Ignatovich N.D., "Problems Encountered when Studying the Phenomenon of 'Brotherhood' in Modern Historical Research", in *The Light of Christ Enlightens Everyone: Saint Philaret's Orthodox Christian Institute Almanac*. Issue 21. Moscow: Saint Philaret's Orthodox Christian Institute, 2017. 200 pages, pp.13-22 (in Russian); *The History of Church Brotherhoods in Russia*, in "Collected Documents", in *An Anthology on the History of the Russian Orthodox Church*. Moscow: Saint Philaret's Orthodox Christian Institute, 2018. 232 pages (in Russian); Lukashova, S.S., *Laypeople and the Church: Religious brotherhoods in the Metropolis of Kiev at the End of the 16th c.* Moscow: Institut Slavyanovedeniya. 2006. 319 pages (in Russian); Somin, N.V., *Apostle of Brotherly Love (the Life and Works of Nikolay Nikolayevich Nepluyev)*. 2004. (in Russian) // [Electronic resources] URL: [http://chri-soc.narod.ru/nepluev\\_b.html](http://chri-soc.narod.ru/nepluev_b.html) (published: 15.01.2018).

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Georgy Kochetkov, "The Presentation-Transfiguration Brotherhood as one among modern examples of the Embodiment of Community and Brotherhood Ecclesiology", in *Spiritual Movements among the People of God*, in the section entitled History and Contemporary Life: From the materials of the International Research Conference held in Moscow from 2-4 October, 2002). Moscow: St. Philaret's Orthodox Christian Institute, 2003. 374 pages (pp. 43-57) (in Russian); Shilkina, M.V., "Methodological bases for the Study of Orthodox Brotherhoods as a Form for Organizing Church Life: Experience from the 20th and 21st centuries", in conference materials from the conference on Sociology and Society: Social Inequality and Social Justice (Ekaterinburg, 19-21 October 2016). [Electronic resource] Materials from the 5th Russia-wide Conference / Ed. V.A. Mansurov – electronic data. Moscow: Russian Society of Sociologists. 2016. DVD ROM 106,096 p. (pp. 4910 – 4916) (in Russian); Shilkina, M.V., "Orthodox brotherhoods in the Russian Orthodox Church: Religious and Social Projects", in Monitoring of Societal Opinion: Economic and Social Changes 2018. № 2. pp. 225-242. DOI: 10.14515/monitoring.2018.2.13 (in Russian).

which attempt to analyse the role of Orthodox brotherhoods in helping people to acquire internal freedom, be reborn at the level of personality, and free themselves from the Soviet Communist ideology.

My research into non-parish Orthodox brotherhoods began just before the turn of the millennium and continues to the present day. Over the course of 20 years, I have been observing things from the inside. Using case study methodology, I have carefully studied the life of three communities and two small Orthodox brotherhoods – all themselves part of the larger structure of the Transfiguration Orthodox Brotherhood.<sup>3</sup> In addition, I have actively made use of surveys and in-depth interviews, which make it possible to ‘see’ the people who participated in the surveys in a more personal way.

I would like to begin my study with a short overview of the situation as a whole. The anthropological catastrophe,<sup>4</sup> which was the logical result of the godless and inhuman Soviet ‘experiment’, has only really become apparent over the last 20 years. Even the small degree of freedom that appeared in the country during the 1990s, caused many people to long for the Soviet past, rather than for repentance from it and a change of life. Mr. L.D. Gudkov, the Director of the Levada Centre, which is one of the largest research organizations in our country, in describing the results of the creation of ‘simple Soviet man’, says, “we have come to understand that Soviet man isn’t going anywhere...our Soviet past is alive and well in a broad swathe of people, and continues to have influence on our political reality and the development of our country”.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> At present, there are 34 minor brotherhoods and 70 communities within the Transfiguration Brotherhood.

<sup>4</sup> M. Mamardashvili describes as an anthropological catastrophe, the situation in which people do not have the desire or ability to make their own moral choices or perceive things in their own way, the ability to consciously live their lives by their own, personal (good) will, and see themselves as the primary cause of all their various situations in life. See, for instance, Mamardashvili, M., *Consciousness and Civilization*, 1984.

<sup>5</sup> We Have Come to Understand that Soviet Man isn’t Going Anywhere, in *Vedomosti*, 24.07.2017 // [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/characters/2017/07/24/725468-sovetskii-chelovek> (published: 15.03.2019)

According to various estimates, non-governmental volunteer movements attract around 1.5% of the Russian population. There are private farms, private schools with alternative systems of education, organizations dedicated to local history and culture, a growing interest in heritage and family, and finally, the brotherhood movement within the church, which has been growing since the 1990s, despite enormous pressures against it. All this means that rebirth of the personal principle within man and recovery from our serious wounds *is* possible, which immediately poses the question of what the path to recovery looks like.

At present, the rebirth of the human person and of the personal principle within him looks to be the most realistic, if not the only path, to societal recovery. There is little prospect in beginning with the reformation of societal or government institutions. This paper attempts to prove that repentance and rebirth of Soviet man is possible, and show upon what bases. What internal criteria make it possible to arrive at such a conclusion in the case of a specific person? Is it possible to affirm that there are particular paths upon which transformation even becomes typical – if not of all people, at least for many? We will look closely at long-term cathexis and entry into brotherhood life as one such possible path.

On the other hand, the historical longevity of the phenomenon of the ‘Soviet man’ poses another question; can there be such a deep wounding within a given person, that we might speak of a sort of ‘point of no return’, after which the results of the Soviet experiment are no longer rectifiable?

At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, we Russians, as a mass, turned out to be entirely unprepared for change. All the stormy movements of that time – all the forces ‘for’ and ‘against’ – failed to address the human person at the centre of the phenomena of historical change. No one seemed to be thinking about what was going on inside peoples’ souls, in their consciousness and in their feelings. What did people think about in the privacy of their own thoughts? What sort of person is it that can change so quickly and unexpectedly from being an obedient person-of-the-masses into a subject of personal history? And finally, what will happen in the country if the Soviet man turns out to be unable to



change as quickly and deeply as the corresponding changes within society require of him? No one thought to ask these questions.

The years during which the fall of the Soviet power occurred, i.e. the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, were no less dangerous morally and spiritually than the years which preceded them. Direct repression was swapped for a sophisticated workover of man's morality and psyche, at both the conscious and unconscious level. An internal mechanism was laid down, which was able to continue working quite independently of socio-political circumstance. The fruits of the Soviet ideological machine were division and duality, inability to critically self-assess or adequately assess the life of society or the state – for many, many people. A sort of man who was incapable of repentance and rebirth, whether at a personal or national level, was formed. He could live for long periods under various socio-political conditions, and adapt to them without changing internally. Under such conditions, of course, all external reforms are ineffective.

The main traits of the Soviet man as a mass phenomenon of the collective person formed by the totalitarian regime have been listed numerous times in various studies.<sup>6</sup> Here we will attempt to delineate several different types (lifestyles) of people in the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as several different types (lifestyles) maintained within Soviet society<sup>7</sup>; based on these types, we will then posit something of the traits of the personality of the type, in each case, forming a sort of personal portrait.

In performing this typification, I will make use of: analysis based on essays within the collection entitled *My Path to God and the Church*, which were written by adults in the 1990s and 2000s, as they were being catechized in preparation for entering the Transfiguration Orthodox non-parish Brotherhood (this data has being used with the authors' permission,

<sup>6</sup> Geller, M., *Cogs in the Machine. A History of the Formation of Soviet Man*. Moscow: MIIK, 1994. 336 pages (in Russian); Levada, Yu, "Soviet man" – from public lectures on "polit.ru" // [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://polit.ru/article/2004/04/15/levada/> (in Russian); Somov, V.A., "Soviet man as a Sociocultural type in Scientific Discourse", in *Current Problems in Contemporary History and Historiography* in the N.I. Lobachevsky Nizhny Novgorod University Journal (Vesnik). 2012. № 6 (3), pp. 117-122 (in Russian).

<sup>7</sup> We have in mind Soviet society in the form into which it developed from the late 1920s and later moved into the crisis of the early 1990s.

but without showing names; in-depth interviews with seven members of the Russian Orthodox Church, who before coming into the church were the Communist Party and Komsomol workers or worked directly in furthering Communist ideology (e.g. faculty member of the Department of Scientific Communism); and finally, upon my own experience of life in this environment. We will see that the phenomenon of the ‘Soviet man’ does not actually encompass the entire spectrum of anthropological ‘types’ from the Soviet period. In Russia in the 1990s, society encompassed the representatives of all these lifestyles, with their particularities and character traits.

**Table 1**

<b>Russian Orthodox Church</b>		<b>Soviet Society</b>	
<i>Type (lifestyle) within the Church</i>	<i>Typical character traits</i>	<i>Type (lifestyle) within society</i>	<i>Typical character traits</i>
1. New martyrs and confessors, members of orthodox brotherhoods, so called “non-rememberers” <sup>8</sup>	Faith in God, faithfulness to God and the Church, willingness to self-sacrifice, bravery, tenacity, mercy, responsibility	1. People who spiritually and politically stood against the system	Independence, critical thinking, willingness to self-sacrifice, tenacity, mercifulness, responsibility
2. So-called “obnovlentsy” (renovationists) and members of the ROC working with state security agencies to further anti-Church politics	Lack of faith in the Church, servility, fear, opportunism, readiness to bear false witness, lack of ideals, a split life, aggression	2. Active carriers of the Communist system: employees and volunteers of the Party, Soviets, Komsomol organizations, state security and law enforcement agencies	Cynicism, fear, individualism, willingness to use violence, inability to forgive, indifference to suffering, unprofessionalism, low work quality

<sup>8</sup> Those priests who refused to remember Metropolitan Sergij (Stragorodskiy) and other collaborators in their liturgical prayers (late 1920s, early 1930s).

<b>Russian Orthodox Church</b>		<b>Soviet Society</b>	
<i>Type (lifestyle) within the Church</i>	<i>Typical character traits</i>	<i>Type (lifestyle) within society</i>	<i>Typical character traits</i>
3. Those who kept their faith in the silence of their hearts, kept rituals, and attended church worship when possible	Division within the soul, fear, loneliness, refusal to show initiative and independence in favour of a life without trouble, lack of readiness to accept anything new in terms of teaching in the faith or church life	3. Those who adapted and survived	Fear, being sure that the security agencies are always in control of people’s personal lives and willingness to accept this, loneliness, refusal to think critically, willingness to compromise anything for quality of family life (housing, food, medicine, education)
4. Sincere believers from the church’s fundamentalist wing.	The mythologization of consciousness, exchanging ideology for living faith, readiness to sacrifice themselves and others for an idea, inability to discern the difference between falsehood/ substitution and authenticity in spiritual life	4. “Revolutionary Romantics”, who believed Communist propaganda and tried to put it into practice	The mythologization of consciousness, readiness to sacrifice themselves and others for an idea, lack of critical thinking, inability to discern the difference between falsehood/ substitution and authenticity in spiritual life

Of course, here we have pinpointed personal characteristics that are typical of one or another lifestyle, on the whole. Each individual person would have manifested all or some of them in his/her own particular way, completing them with his own personal additions and particularities. Moreover, not only character traits were often mixed – it was, in fact, quite rare to find a pure example of any of the lifestyle types we have listed above. More often than not, they were mixed. Of course, in Imperial Russia, as well as today in any given country, we can find people with similar character traits. What made Soviet Russia unique, was the degree to which these traits were expressed, and the widespread ('mass') nature of the phenomenon.

What possible exit strategies are there for people who wish to free themselves of such an inheritance? If a person does not want to change anything within himself (for reasons of fear, or because he/she does not see the problems inherent in his position and condition) and/or if he/she receives any attempt to invite thought on the subject, moreover consideration of repentance, as aggressive, then indeed no one and nothing can change him. But if a person is suffering because of his condition, his fears, the meaninglessness of his life, his loneliness, and division within his soul, and if he is experiencing a demand for authenticity, depth and beauty in life, then his personal rebirth is possible. Making use of that longing, a person can take the first steps on the path to finding people who can help him. Here are several potential paths, which help a person to return to his true self and wake up to his personal subjectivity, enabling emancipation and rebirth:

1. coming into the Church through a lengthy catechetical process followed by entry into a non-parish brotherhood;
2. regular participation in volunteer work;
3. a quality higher education and self-education including, in particular, a familiarity with Russian religious philosophy;
4. searching for one's roots, discovering the lives of our great grandmothers and great grandfathers back to at least the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The role of these various paths in the rebirth of man is different, but they can be complimentary to each other, finding completion in each other. In what follows, I consider specifically the path of entry into the Church via systematic catechesis followed by formal entry into the Church, a community and brotherhood, in the lives of seven people who have agreed to take part in my research as subjects of in-depth interview. During the 1990s, quite a few people in Tver came into the Church in this way, a good number of which had previously worked for the Party, the Komsomol or as academic Communist ideologues. Today they are all members of the Church: six of them are members of the Transfiguration brotherhood, but the depth of authentic church life is different for each person. In October 2017, each of these people underwent an in-depth interview, after which they gave written answers to the same questions set out in survey form. Let us first look at how the interview subjects viewed their own lives before deciding to approach God.

**Question: Was your work based on your internal conviction of its importance for society and for people in general?**

Four people answered affirmatively and three negatively, though in both cases the motivations for choosing this type of work were generally random. Only one respondent answered: “Yes, I really believed that I was serving my country; for me, Communism was both my faith and my conviction.” One person waited too long to get into graduate school, another was assigned to ideological work, another was invited to teach in the Department of History of the Communist Party and he agreed, and for some, “life just turned out that way”. None of the respondents had particularly tried to enter the Party or Komsomol work, though in each case, having ended up in that position, he or she worked conscientiously. The choice did not bother any of them.

**Did you feel a contradiction between your work and your search for God in your first years of life in the Church?**

Only one person said that he felt such a contradiction. Two responded that there was no contradiction, insofar as they had left Komsomol work

behind before coming into the church. But the fact is that practically all seven respondents answered that everyday faith or a longing for such faith, and/or some association with believers had been part of their lives since early childhood. But these factors did not in the least influence their thoughts, choice of values or life path.

It is significant how respondents evaluate their own condition during their period of Party or Komsomol work. To the question, **“from what were you emancipated upon entering the Church?”**, respondents gave the following answers:

B. I was freed from fear and loneliness;

K. I was freed from lack of trust, darkness and despondency;

M. I was freed from lying and various fears;

R. I was freed from lack of sobriety;

S. No answer;

Ts. I was freed from a deep lack of understanding of who I was, where my place is in this life, and from melancholy;

Sh. I was freed from dependence upon ideology, spiritual blindness and lack of sobriety. Also from harshness and rudeness in association with other people.

All the answers are very similar to each other. In them it is possible to see a **general picture of the Party or Komsomol worker of the 1980s**, whom was highly valued by the leadership, and to whom organizations in positions of authority related favourably. Note that the internal problems and the fractures within these people's personalities (from which they were freed) were not visible to anyone. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was not a single one of us who didn't undergo a real crisis of identity involving meaning of life questions, the search for answers to which brought us to God and to the Church.

The respondents were asked the following questions:

**When did you first start thinking about God? When did you come into the Church? In your own life, what do you mean vis-à-vis yourself when you say ‘I entered the Church’?**

**B.** I had known about God since childhood, and I knew people of faith (three out of four of my great grandfathers were priests), and I read a great deal of classic Russian literature. But at the same time, I thought that in the contemporary world it was only weak, poor, wretched and shadowy people who had God as part of their lives. Intelligent, strong, educated and happy people did not need Him. The change in my life happened when I met a smart, strong, educated and sincere faithful Christian who witnessed to me in such a living fashion, that I believed, opened up to the idea of faith, and was baptized (this person was not in a brotherhood). I began the process of catechesis without the slightest doubt after hearing Fr. Georgy Kochetkov say at an open meeting in Moscow, “Christianity isn’t a religion...” “Then what is it”, I thought to myself, “if not a religion?” Fr. Georgy’s answer followed, “it’s a way of life.” And then I knew...this approach was for me. I came into the Church on Christmas, in 1993. For me, entering the Church means starting to take part in the church worship, participation in the Holy Mysteries, consciousness of the Church as of the people of God and of my personal participation in this people of God.

**K.** I came into the Church at the end of the 1990s. What I mean when speak of coming into the Church is a realization of the true experience of authentic communion with people and with God, and internal acceptance of the church as the mystic union of the faithful with Christ at the head, rather than the church hierarchs.

**M.** In 1969, though I myself was an active member of the Komsomol and a student at teachers training college, I became the godmother of a handicapped baby who was the son of one of my college friends. She was convinced that this was a life and death matter. In 1989, I heard Fr. Nikolay Vasechko say that God is Love, and this was the determining factor for me. In 1992, in taking a sharp decision to change my life and having lost all my support structures, in an argument with my boss I unexpectedly (to myself, too!), made reference to God’s authority. I rapidly received an answer from our Heavenly Father, who prepared the way for me. Since 1992, this has been the main theme and ultimate sense of my search for the Truth.

**R.** I have been a believer since childhood, but at first my faith was blind. I first came to conscious faith through catechesis, which I completed in 1997. For me, coming into the Church was my study and acquisition of faith.

**S.** Since childhood I have lived amongst believers and witnessed examples of living by faith. Although I liked these things, they did not affect my life. I came into the Church after catechesis. The main thing is a conscious attitude toward faith, church worship and service to God, and prayer.

**Ts.** I have believed in God since childhood, but before this was subconscious. Real faith came during catechesis. It was significant for me that this faith was related to my life, and gave me satisfying answers to my hardest questions. I came into the Church in 1993.

**Sh.** God and the church, for me, were part of Russian history, and a part which I loved... I first heard people speaking seriously about Orthodoxy in the Department of Russian Religious Philosophy at the Lenin-grad Institute for Continuing Education, in 1990. Berdyaev amazed me, and after that class, I began to read more Berdyaev, and through him became convinced that Orthodoxy would save Russia. Half a year later, I met Fr. Georgy Kochetkov at Tver University. It was from him that I first heard about God. I was amazed at his confirmation that these things are possible to understand. Soon I joined a group for catechesis. I came into the Church at Christmas in 1994, when I first participated fully and consciously in liturgical worship and took communion.

In these answers, it is significant that the respondents associate their serious personal decision to approach God with the witness of a particular person, and 'entry into the church' with communion with God and man, coming into the assembly of faithful, the study of the faith, and a conscious correlation of faith and life.

Thus, it is possible to confirm that a lengthy process of catechesis is a life choice during the course of which not only God, but other people are found; this is not just a simple change of convictions and values. It is an



escape from the two, main, tortuous conditions that plagued Soviet man – fear and loneliness. Entry into brotherhood and community, which becomes possible after the completion of catechesis, provides access to an unexpected level of trust and freedom in community. For Komsomol workers who were accustomed to being at the centre of any given group and in contact with many people, the difference was particularly keenly sensed as interpersonal communication opened up.

But it turned out that this was but the first step on the path toward personal rebirth. Next, personal effort was required, in order to accept and multiply the gifts that were being received. And only those who put in the effort could count on being freed from the new problems and inadequacies which they suddenly found opening up in themselves. A person trained in the good news of the faith would recognize these as his own weakness and sin, and as his own responsibility, rather than the responsibility of other people. In other words, at this point he finds real repentance. Were he to remain on this path alone (as is most often the case with parish life), then he would either fall prey to despair, or leave the church altogether. Brotherhood and community, on the other hand, provided first the support of those who are similar in spirit, and second, did not allow a person to isolate himself in the battle with his own passions, given that they presupposed service to God, the Church, and other people; through this, life itself begins to change.

After this stage, repentance is inevitably broadened, and the question of repentance for historical sins is posed, and we find ourselves to be participants in this historical sin via our service – whether voluntary or involuntary – to the Communist idea. This was and is that main question for those people who come into the Church after working in the Party, the Komsomol, or other Soviet agencies: the assembly of Christ is incompatible and irreconcilable with any work in the service of Soviet idols, authorities, or the Soviet idea itself. Only he or she who took this step of recognition was seriously and deeply freed from his or her destructive actions. For the person who tries to combine Christ and Communist ideology, this becomes a path of no return.

The final question in the survey was: **What have you gained in coming into the Church?**

**B.** I have an entirely different sense of life and way of relating to people, support and joy in life, spiritual family, brothers and sisters, spiritual elders.

**K.** I have gained the joy of fellowship, trust and hope.

**M.** Love and freedom in Christ. Teachers of the truth, brothers and sisters in Christ.

**R.** I have attained sobriety.

**Sh.** I have acquired an experience of forgiveness, overcoming resentment – even if not immediately – mercifulness, internal peace and joy, experience of fellowship. Experience of responsibility for the result of affairs, which have been assigned to me, is hard to acquire, though I am trying hard.

Can we, then, speak of rebirth of the human person and his/her emancipation from the Soviet Communist ideology? In my opinion, we can. What might be the criteria upon which we could evaluate whether the human person is successfully reborn? In fact, this is a complex of criteria in which there are spiritual, moral and even psychosomatic (i.e., related to the will, intellect, emotional and bodily) dimensions. This complex is expressed in: (1) the ability for both personal and community (including historical) repentance; (2) moving past the boundaries of both individualism and collectivism – an ability to live in communion; (3) love for God and neighbour, which gives birth to the desire and ability to serve; (4) concern for the rebirth not only of oneself, but also for neighbour, nation and society.

And what are the characteristics of life in non-parish orthodox brotherhoods, which may enable such changes to take place within their members? It is possible to discern three groups of qualities, which fit the bill: first, particularities relating to the nature of entry into non-church brotherhood; second, the particular qualities of internal fellowship be-

tween brotherhood members; and thirdly, the particularities of participation in brotherhood service (in the brotherhood's activity within the church and society).

Particularities relating to the nature of entry into the brotherhood include: (1) the volunteer nature of entry; (2) preliminary, lengthy (year-long) catechesis of the prospective member, e.g. teaching in the faith, a decision to leave sinful habits behind, changing one's life to accord with the moral commandments of the gospel; (3) entry into brotherhood via entry into fellowship with a specific group of people (which may afterwards become a brotherhood community), e.g. the decision to enter the brotherhood is taken by the very group which has spent more than a year together in catechesis, and in which all of the members have become close. Nevertheless, each individual person is free to share in this decision or not.

The particular qualities of internal fellowship between the members of the brotherhood: (1) non-hierarchical (eldership in the brotherhood does not depend upon whether or not a person is in holy orders, though the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, of course, is only led by ordained priests); (2) centredness on the human person (taking everyone's opinion into consideration, understanding the unconditional value of every person); (3) responsibility of each member for all other members, mutual help in terms of spiritual, social and material issues, (4) relationship in love, trust, respect, insistence upon high standards, and responsibility.

The particularities of service within the brotherhood (service to church and society): (1) the norm for each member is participation in accordance with his or her capabilities, abilities, and education in one or several forms of service to church and/or society; (2) the ecclesial character of service, concern for the rebirth of the Russian orthodox church, work with its priests, parishes, spiritual and educational institutions; (3) the priority of service which relates to mission, catechesis, spiritual education, the birth of new church communities and brotherhoods, bringing up children and youth in the Church, services by which the church serves society – primarily rebirth of the nation's historical member and repentance for the

crimes of the Soviet regime; (4) striving for each member of the brotherhood to achieve a higher education in theology or, at least, a secondary practical education in theology.

All of these qualities and particularities of the life of a member of a non-parish church brotherhood can, when coupled with that member's personal efforts, truly free him from bowing down before the idol of Communist ideology, leading to his or her growth of independence and responsibility in both thought and action, and reinforcing faith and willingness to truly live by that faith.

In summarizing what has been said above about the significance of orthodox brotherhoods, here I will repeat something I once said in a paper I gave at a Russian Society of Sociologists Conference:

“Orthodox brotherhoods are being born from within, by the free initiative of their members, in the experience of faith, out of freedom in life and by conscience according to faith. They are not repeating church life but creative new church life, which isn't subject to hinderance even by national borders. Brotherhoods are personal, and entry into a brotherhood is done freely – free from any social or demographic pressure or demand. This draws intelligentsia and young people. The Transfiguration Brotherhood's missionary meetings during the course of the year draw together many hundreds of people from both large cities and very small towns. This phenomenon is a new one for the Russian church in terms of its scale, longevity and stable growth of service – despite multiple attempts to bring the movement to heel under the administrative control of the ROC parish-diocesan management. But the life of brotherhood is far more internal than external, and can't be reduced to its forms of service or objectified or measured quantitatively. Brotherhood is not just another form of deinstitutionalized religious experience, but it is a new manifestation of the institutional church. Brotherhoods make it possible to overcome the individualism of the human person within modern society (especially urban society), they do not demand the demolition of the traditional church structure, but take upon themselves a portion of its function, with which

the traditional church structure is not presently able to cope. In terms of church-society relations, it is specifically Orthodox brotherhoods which are most successful in terms of dialogue with society (rather than government) and may potentially become links in the future of civil society in Russia.”<sup>9</sup>

**Margarita Shilkina, PhD**, Senior Lecturer, Dean, Department of Religious Studies, St Philaret’s Christian Orthodox Institute, Moscow, Russia. Research interests: state-confessional relations, history of the Church.

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<sup>9</sup> Shilkina, M.V., “Methodological bases for the Study of Orthodox Brotherhoods as a Form for Organizing Church Life: Experience from the 20th and 21st centuries”, in conference materials from the conference on Sociology and Society: Social Inequality and Social Justice (Ekaterinburg, 19-21 October, 2016). [Electronic resource] Materials from the 5th Russia-wide Conference / Ed. V.A. Mansurov – electronic data. Moscow: Russian Society of Sociologists. 2016. DVD ROM 106,096 p. (p. 4910 – 4916) (in Russian).

Evgenia Tokareva

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## **CATHOLICS IN RUSSIA FACING THE NEW AUTHORITIES: 1917–1921<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

In late 1917 - early 1921 the situation of Catholics in Russia changed radically. As a result of the new Soviet legislation in the field of the Church-State relations, the Catholic Church was deprived of its status of legal entity, its right to register civil status documents, its property, many of its buildings, documents, libraries; it was expelled from the field of education, etc. Despite the Decree on separation of the Church and the state, the authorities kept interfering constantly into the Church's affairs making demands that conflicted with the Canon Law of the Catholic Church and caused constant protests from the clergy and laity alike. The scale of state pressure on the Church increased dramatically in the second half of 1918, and the clergy's resistance intensified when Russian authorities initiated a period of terror. However, during those years, the authorities rarely had recourse to repressions against Catholic clergymen, and the known cases mostly resulted from the state of civil war and military conflicts with Western countries. Protests on the part of Catholic clergy and laity against the arrests were successful in many cases, and if they did not result in acquittals, the sentences were not too severe. Most of the victims, lost to the Catholic community, were casualties caused by either military actions across the major part of the former Russian Empire or security officers' excessive zeal on the ground. The Vatican was ill-informed about the events taking place in the Soviet Russia. Relying on the information received from Russian Catholics, the Vatican believed that the Bolshevik regime would be short-lived and, following that belief, was making plans concerning penetration into Russia and development of the Catholic Church in the USSR. However, the Vatican's attempts

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<sup>1</sup> The article was prepared as part of the RSF project № 19-1800482 'Entangled Histories: Russia and the Vatican, 1917–1958.

to interfere on behalf of both Catholic and Orthodox clergy failed to achieve their goals. The end of the civil war, the Red Army's victory on the fronts, and strengthening of the Soviet Russia in the international arena fundamentally changed the situation, which entered a new phase in 1921.

**Keywords:** the Roman Catholic Church, Russia, Soviet religious legislation, repressions, the Soviet-Vatican relations

The situation and position of Catholics in Russia facing the new Soviet state has been touched upon in most general works on the history of the Catholic Church in Russia and the Soviet-Vatican relations, both by Russian and foreign scholars.<sup>2</sup> Usually some 10-15 pages were dedicated to this topic. In fact, no more than three specialized works on the period of 1917-1921 exist.<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that these three studies are based on documents from Russian archives (M.I. Odintsov, Yu.E. Karlov) and those from the Vatican Archive (Yu.E. Karlov, R. Morozzo della Rocca). Therefore, taken together, they give a synthetic – though a bit sketchy – view of those events.

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<sup>2</sup> The number of these works may vary – depending of taking into account only the fundamental and most detailed studies, or all that exist – from several dozens to several hundreds. As for the works, where the events of 1917-1921 are described to the fullest extent, they are listed in Appendix 1.

One general consideration is as follows: all existing works can be roughly divided into two groups: the ones dealing primarily with the history of the Catholic Church in Russia (most of them by Russian, Polish and German researchers), and those devoted to the history of the Soviet-Vatican relations (mostly works by Western scholars).

<sup>3</sup> Morozzo della Rocca R. *Le Nazioni non muoiono. Russia rivoluzionaria, Polonia indipendente e Santa Sede*. Bologna, 1992. Karlov Yu.E. The Soviet Authorities and the Vatican in 1917-1924, in *Russia and the Vatican in late 19th – early 20th Century*, E.S. Tokareva and A.V. Yudin (eds), St. Petersburg, “Aleteya”, 2003 (Карлов Ю.Е. Советская власть и Ватикан в 1917-1924 гг. // Россия и Ватикан в конце XIX – начале XX в. Сб. статей / Под ред. Е.С.Токаревой и А.В. Юдина. СПб.: Алетейя, 2003). Odintsov M.I., Catholics and the Catholic Church in Russia in 1914-1924, in *Russia and the Vatican*, E.S. Tokareva and A.V. Yudin (eds), Moscow, Nauka Publishers, 2007, pp. 96–124 (Одинцов М.И. Католики и Католическая Церковь в России в 1914-1920 годах // Россия и Ватикан. Сб. статей / Под ред. Е.С.Токаревой и А.В. Юдина. М.: Наука, 2007, pp. 96–124).

Still, as far as the history of the Catholic Church is concerned, many pages of this tragic period, marked for Russia by revolutionary events, the Civil War and armed conflicts between the Soviet state and Western powers, remain unknown to this day. This can be explained, among other things, by the fact that documentary sources available in Russian and Vatican archives are rather fragmentary and dispersed. Contemporary scholars have repeatedly noted the inadequacy and in many cases a biased nature of the existing source base. Attempts to extend it by using materials from local archives do not yet give an opportunity to reconstruct the whole picture. This article, therefore, does not claim to introduce a substantial body of new sources into the scientific discourse. Still, in the author's opinion, the sources and publications we now have give an opportunity to sum up the research already done and make certain general conclusions.

### Soviet religious legislation and Catholics in Russia

Most authors agree that the revolutionary events of October 1917 and the first Decrees of the Soviet authorities did not immediately provoke a negative reaction of the Catholic clergy and congregation. This idea was formulated clearly by Eduard Yurevich, a young priest from Petrograd, in his final speech during the trial in 1923, where most members of the highest Catholic hierarchy in Russia were convicted. "When the October Revolution broke out in Russia, I, together with other Catholics, welcomed the changes, because the old regime had been persecuting us. Gunshots on Petrograd's streets for me, then a student of the Petrograd theological seminary, signalled the advent of a new era."<sup>4</sup> This situation,

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<sup>4</sup> Beglov A.L., Tokareva E.S., The trial of Catholic clergy in 1923 as reported by the Vatican envoy in Russia, in *Istoria* electronic journal, 2018, vol. 9, issue 4 (68). Access for registered users: URL: <http://history.jes.su/s207987840002218-8-1> (visited 19.05.2018). DOI: 10.18254/S0002218-8-1 (Беглов А.Л., Токарева Е.С. Судебный процесс над католическим духовенством 1923 г. в освещении посланца Ватикана в России // Электронный научно-образовательный журнал «История». 2018. Т. 9. Выпуск 4 (68) [Электронный ресурс]. Доступ для зарегистрированных пользователей. URL: <http://history.jes.su/s207987840002218-8-1> (дата обращения: 19.05.2018). DOI: 10.18254/S0002218-8-1)



according to the historians' opinion, existed at least till the second half of 1918.

The Soviet religious legislation is among the topics best researched by contemporary historians. According to M.I. Odintsov, the first Decree on the separation of church from state was not “aimed at ‘destruction’ or ‘ban’ as the church and liberal press had written at that time. It created a legal framework, generated a social situation where every citizen could freely choose his attitude towards religion.”<sup>5</sup> Still, the book of O.A. Litzenberger, a historian from Saratov, in my opinion contains a more correct analysis of the Decree: she notes that it was based on a similar legislative act of the Paris Commune, and “should not be assessed one-sidedly and in a purely negative way.”<sup>6</sup> Litzenberger emphasizes the vagueness of the Decree's formulas, “the incomplete character of its articles, a possibility for their ambiguous interpretation.”<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, the Decree on the Separation of the Church from the State and the School from the Church (this is its official title) can be assessed within the context of anti-Church laws passed in many European countries – Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal etc. – starting from the French Revolution and mostly in the late 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many European states, striving for centralization of power, pursued a more or less harsh policy of restricting Church influence.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the Catholic clergy in Russia was not shocked by this first Decree. In the Russian context, a law separating the Church and the State could be even regarded by them positively, because it put an end to a multi-century domination of the Orthodox Church.

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<sup>5</sup> Odintsov M.I., Catholics and the Catholic Church in Russia in 1914–1924, in *Russia and the Vatican*, E.S. Tokareva and A.V. Yudin (eds), Moscow, Nauka Publishers, 2007, p. 117 (Одинцов М.И. Католики и Католическая Церковь в России в 1914–1920 годах // Россия и Ватикан. Сб. статей / Под ред. Е.С. Токаревой и А.В. Юдина. М.: Наука, 2007. p. 117).

<sup>6</sup> Litzenberger O.A. *The Roman Catholic Church in Russia. History and legal position*, Saratov, 2001, p. 192–193 (Лиценбергер О.А. Римско-Католическая Церковь в России. История и правовое положение. Саратов, 2001. pp. 192–193).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 194.

The interpretation of the Decree as a document giving more freedom to the Catholic Church led the Catholic clergy to some actions that they had not been able to afford before. M.V. Shkarovskii and his co-authors, as well as O.A. Litzenberger, describe the Corpus Christi organized by Catholics in Petrograd on May 30, 1918. During the festivities “a procession of thousands led by Archbishop von Ropp<sup>8</sup> [proceeded] from St. Catherine cathedral to the Vyborg Catholic cemetery.”<sup>9</sup> In this connection, however, it’s worth noting that all the authors give examples of actions by Petrograd clergy – there is practically no information about the events in other cities. The well-substantiated book by A. Wenger, based on the letters of Pie Eugène Neveu, a priest and later a bishop (from 1926), who in the period we analyse was a senior priest of a church in the town of Makeevka, is of little help as well. According to the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty Makeevka in the spring of 1918 was not a Russian territory. During the Civil War the town in the next eighteen months passed from hands to hands: it was occupied by the Germans, then the White Guards, and only in the late 1919 it finally was reincorporated into Russia. Therefore, Neveu’s letters in 1918-1919 could not contain precise information on the developments in Russia proper.

In fact, the Decree of January 20/February 2, 1918 was just a final result of a series of legislative acts passed in late 1917 – early 1918 (see Appendix 2). All of them were of a restrictive character, completely banning the Church from the economic space, educational sphere and registration of birth, death and marriage. This, of course, inevitably provoked a reaction of the Catholic clergy, as O.A. Litzenberger notes: “Catholic bishops and priests [...] protested against a number of the Decree’s provisions.”<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 195. Stehle H. *Die Ostpolitik des Vatikans 1917-1975*, München-Zürich 1975, p. 15.

<sup>9</sup> Shkarovskii M.V., Cherepnina N.Yu., Shiker A.K., *The Roman Catholic Church in the Russian North-West, 1917-1945*, St. Petersburg, 1998, p. 10 (Шкаровский М.В., Черепнина Н.Ю., Шикер А.К. Римско-католическая Церковь на Северо-Западе России в 1917-1945 гг. СПб, 1998. С. 10).

<sup>10</sup> Litzenberger O.A., Op. Cit., pp. 192-193.

The most active phase of the clergy's protests and resistance to Soviet legislation began in the second half of 1918, provoked by further development of anti-Church legislation, particularly by the People's Commissariat for Justice Resolution adopting the "Instruction on the Enforcement of the Decree on the Separation of the Church from the State" (6 August 1918), the ensuing Resolution (instruction) *On the Measures to Implement the Decree on Separation of the Church from the State and the School from the Church* (24 August 1918) and the circular letter of the Commissariat of the Interior to provincial committees on the measures to enforce the Decree on Separation of the Church from the State (6 September 1918).

The consequences of these legislative acts for the Catholic Church and the ensuing actions by the Catholic hierarchy have been analysed in detail in the works of O.A. Litzenberger, M.V. Shkarovskii, S. Kozlov-Strutinskii, P. Parfentiev and other authors.<sup>11</sup> Litzenberger, among other things thoroughly assesses their economic consequences, while Kozlov-Strutinskii and Parfentiev emphasize the Catholic clergy's active resistance to the Soviet authorities' orders. The most careful attention was paid to the Historical Memo on the *Separation of the Church from the State in the Bolshevik Russia* by K. Budkevich, vicar-general of the Mogilev archdiocese, where he proposed the 'method of procrastinations' as a path for the Catholic clergy. In accordance with this method Budkevich suggested to make small concessions to the authorities awaiting for the imminent downfall of the Soviet regime. Budkevich's opinion was in line with the position of Metropolitan von Ropp, which he spelled out in a number of his letters.

The authorities' demand to submit receipts signed by at least 20 parishioners that the church property (including the church buildings themselves) nationalized by the state passes into temporary use by parishioners became a turning point in the relationship between Catholic parishes and the Bolsheviks. This demand contradicted the Catholic Church's canonical

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<sup>11</sup> Kozlov-Strutinskii S., Parfentiev P., *The History of the Catholic Church in Russia*, St. Petersburg, 2014 (Козлов-Струтинский С., Парфентьев П. История Католической церкви в России. СПб, 2014)

law and provoked protests from the clergy and the believers, who refused to meet it – in spite of the Holy See’s opinion passed to the Tiraspol diocese by the German Foreign Ministry, permitting parishioners to sign agreements on the use of churches, “provided that the priests agree with the agreement’s text”.<sup>12</sup> Refusals to sign the agreements and to submit parish registers and property inventories to the authorities caused a situation that turned into a tragedy in the 1920s, when the regime completely consolidated and resorted to serious repressions.

### Repressions – were they real?

As far as the Soviet policies of repression are concerned, it is worth noting that anti-religion measures were part of the Bolshevik Party’s strategic plans from the start. Of course, even in the first years after the revolution some quite brutal and harsh anti-religious manifestations and actions took place. However, in comparison with the 1920s the anti-religious policy was much softer, in spite of the fact that as early as 5 September 1918, in connection with increasing terrorist activities of the opposition, the Council of People’s Commissars passed a Resolution On Red Terror intensifying repressions and toughening punishments for crimes. For the opponents of the Soviet regime isolation in concentration camps was introduced as a punishment.

Most scholars concentrate attention on the arrest of Metropolitan von Ropp, head of the Mogilev archdiocese, in April 1919: according to Yu. E. Karlov, he and four other priests<sup>13</sup> “were accused in counter-revolutionary activities”. His detention caused a lot of anxiety among Catholics, who went on demonstrations and wrote protest letters. Von Ropp, however, was subjected to rather mild conditions of detention (after the

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<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Litzenberger O.A., *Op. Cit.*, p. 197.

<sup>13</sup> In fact more priests were arrested as hostages: V.I. Isayevich, A.E. Zerchaninov, A.M. Vassilevskii, Ya.A. Vassilevskii, A.A. Raptsevich-Rochis and others (seventeen in total).

first protests he was put under house arrest, and other priests were freed). Moreover, after six months he was released, and immediately left the country. Karlov notes the researchers' surprise with von Ropp's good fortune, thinking that his release was a 'grand gesture' by Moscow aimed to impress the Western powers. In fact von Ropp's arrest was directly linked to the beginning of the Soviet-Polish war in February 1919 (and, particularly, to the capture of Vilnius by Polish forces). Von Ropp and other priests were arrested as hostages. He was released only after a ceasefire on the Soviet-Polish front.

The arrest of Archbishop Jan Cieplak, von Ropp's successor, in April 1920, under the 'Polish case' should be seen in the same context (it coincided with the new Polish offensive in January-March 1920).

Kozlov-Strutinskii's and Parfentiev's observation that the Catholic clergy of Pskov and Siberia were subjected to the most severe persecution in 1918-1921 looks rather superficial. The authors give no numbers or names of persecuted priests. Their statement should be analysed in the light of two factors:

- First, the territory of Soviet Russia diminished considerably in 1918: from the August of this year and up to the second half of 1919, Siberia was under no control by the Soviet authorities (see Appendices 3-4).
- Second, Pskov was situated on Russia's westernmost border. From 25 February to 25 November 1918 the city was occupied by German forces, and from 25 May to 26 August 1919 it was in the hands of the Estonian national army and the White Guards. Therefore, for most of the aforementioned period Pskov was a battleground, and civilians could be killed in the course of combat.

The topic of arrests and persecution of clergymen in 1918-1920 is generally understudied by Russian historians. When we address it, we should have in mind that it was a period of foreign intervention and Civil war. Documents from central Russian archives show that arrests took

place mostly in the cities and towns close to the frontline: Vitebsk,<sup>14</sup> Orsha, Topochin as well as Smolensk,<sup>15</sup> Polotsk and Novgorod. Some clergymen were arrested as hostages,<sup>16</sup> and others on the basis of information received by the authorities concerning their participation in ‘Polish spying organizations’,<sup>17</sup> which in fact could be incorrect.

In spite of this, among the documents from 1918-1920 we find orders from the central authorities to investigate the reasons for arrests of priests in various cities, and if the only reason was that they belonged to the clergy, they were to be released immediately. P. Krassikov, head of the Justice Commissariat’s VIII Department, stated: “In the absence of unbiased evidence of their counter-revolutionary activities their detention is an act politically disadvantageous for the Soviet government, as its only result is to provoke hostility among Catholic believers.”<sup>18</sup>

It should be noted that, among other things, scholars usually ignore the circular letter of 3 January 1920, directly prohibiting violence against clergymen.<sup>19</sup>

However, the authorities regarded very intensive protest activity of both the clergy and laymen with suspicion. For instance, they put under scrutiny a woman named Tomashevskaya (her first name is not mentioned in the documents), a parishioner from the village Aleksandrovskoye (at the outskirts of Petrograd) because of her signatures on allegedly ‘bluntly

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<sup>14</sup> Antoniy Ozhal

<sup>15</sup> Antoniy Shavinskii

<sup>16</sup> For instance, Nikodim Dzyadul.

<sup>17</sup> Central Archive of the Russian Federation (ГАРФ). Collection (Ф.) А-353. Finding aid (Оп.) 3. File (Д.) 752, p.65.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>19</sup> The provisions of the circular read as follows:

«Article 3. Arrests and searches of priests accused in counter-revolutionary conspiracy during a mass are permissible only in case of absolute necessity.

Article 4. During searches in churches and especially their altars a representative of the relevant religious cult should be invited and it is necessary to be respectful of the religious feelings of the cult’s adepts. Therefore agents of the state in performing their duty while conducting searches, seizures etc. should avoid any actions that are not necessary and can be regarded as insulting for the relevant cult.”

counter-revolutionary' documents, to find out whether she was "an instrument in the hands of counter-revolutionary clerical circles".<sup>20</sup>

Proceeding to the statistical data, we find out that, according to the 'Memorial Book' compiled by I.I. Osipova and B. Chaplitskii,<sup>21</sup> in 1918, seven priests were arrested, five killed, three wounded or beaten and harassed, and another five had to go into hiding (two of them left Russia). In 1919 seven clergymen were killed and 43 arrested, in 1920 fifteen priests were killed (mostly during the Soviet-Polish war), 31 arrested, seven persecuted or had to hide. Another twelve monks and laymen arrested mostly in 1918 and 1920 have to be added to this list. For 19 persons there is no precise information: the Book only says that they were repeatedly arrested or otherwise persecuted without mentioning the relevant year. Kozlov-Strutinskii and Parfentiev mention 50 priests arrested in 1919, but in their opinion this data is only from the Mogilev archdiocese, while there is no information from the Tiraspol diocese in their book.

Among the clergymen and laymen arrested in 1918-1920 four groups should be specially mentioned:

1. Those who took part in peasant uprisings in the Volga region in various periods.
2. French citizens taken hostage in the autumn of 1918. Unfortunately we were not able to reconstruct the list of these individuals.
3. Priests arrested as hostages in April 1919, during the Soviet-Polish war (including the group of clergymen arrested together with Metropolitan E. von Ropp)
4. Those arrested under the collective 'Polish case' in April 1920 including Archbishop Jan Cieplak, and Polish hostages arrested during the Soviet-Polish war.

<sup>20</sup> Central Archive of the Russian Federation. Collection A-353. Finding aid 3. F. 752. P. 39 (ГАРФ. Ф. А-353. Оп. 3. Д. 752. Л. 39).

<sup>21</sup> *Memorial Book. The Martyrology of the Catholic Church in the USSR*, authors (editors) rev. B. Chaplinskii, I. Osipova, Moscow, Serebryannye niti Publishers, 2000 (Книга памяти. Мартиролог Католической Церкви в СССР. Авторы-сост. о. Б. Чаплицкий, И. Осипова. М.: «Серебряные нити», 2000).

Apart from arrests, there were other repressions of course: Bolsheviks broke into churches, treated priests and parishioners rudely, conducted searches and confiscations. While most of the churches themselves were still used, if not owned, by believers, the priests' houses usually were requisitioned.

An interesting observation can be found in the memories of rev. F. Rutkovskii: he notes that members of the Polish Communist Party took an active part in various actions against the clergy: because of their nationality it was easy for them to penetrate the community of Polish parishioners.<sup>22</sup>

The clergy's and believers' protests against the actions of the Soviet authorities in 1917-1921 were to some extent efficient: this can be proved by the release of hostages and some other priests, a comparative leniency of punishments they received, and the so-called 'Bobola case' related to the authorities campaign for a mass removal of venerated saints' relics. This campaign affected the catholic community in the mid-1919, and, probably, apart from propaganda aims it had a repressive angle – if we take into account the closeness of the border and suspicions against clergymen in the combat zone. In Polotsk the Bolsheviks wanted to remove the relics of St. Andrzej Bobola. However, a resolute protest from Archbishop Cieplak and the Central Committee of catholic communities<sup>23</sup> against such an insult to the feelings of believers somewhat worried the authorities and the action was postponed until 1922.

### The Soviet-Vatican relations

As far as the Soviet-Vatican relations in this period are concerned, we should first of all answer the question: how well the Holy See was informed about the events in Russia?

Researchers have thoroughly recorded all contacts of the Holy See with the Soviet authorities. According to Yu.E. Karlov, "in the first half of

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<sup>22</sup> Rutkovskii F., *Bishop Antoniy Maletskii*, St. Petersburg, 2006 (Рутковский Ф. Епископ Антоний Малецкий. СПб., 2006).

<sup>23</sup> Formed in Petrograd in January 1919. Functioned until mid-1920.



1919 the Vatican appealed to the Chairman of the People's Commissars Council V.I. Lenin three times – once in connection with the letter to the Pope by Chairman of the High Church Directorate for Siberia Archbishop Sylvester and Bishop Benjamin pleading to help the Russian Orthodox Church 'persecuted by Bolsheviks', and twice in connection with Archbishop's Ropp's arrest."<sup>24</sup> However, we should also take into account those actions of the Holy See that did not involve direct contacts between the Soviet leadership and the Vatican hierarchy. Among them we should mention the Vatican's attempt to protect former Emperor Nicholas II and his family in the summer of 1918. Benedict XV ordered Cardinal Pietro Gasparri to send telegrams to Teodoro Valfrè di Bonzo and Eugenio Pacelli, nuncios in Vienna and Munich, requesting them to ask the Austrian and German governments to negotiate the release of Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna and four grand princesses and their extradition from Russia. These telegrams, however, were sent in August 1918, when the Romanov family had already been assassinated.

The Holy See was keenly interested in the events in Russia, but the information it received was meagre and, as we just saw, sometimes inaccurate. Theoretically, the Vatican could get more precise information from Catholic priests, but most of them after 1918 had left Russia. Von Ropp regularly sent letters to the Vatican, but after his arrest in April 1919 this correspondence stopped. A number of letters was received from Bishop Jan Cieplak, but he informed only on events in Petrograd and Moscow. Letters by priests in other places could reach the Vatican only rarely, if a convenient opportunity arose. The usual way of receiving information – via Western embassies – was also nearly closed. Most of the missions had left Russia, and the ten remaining ones temporarily moved to Vologda. However, the Austrian and German embassies were not among them, while the embassies of Siam, Serbia, Japan and other countries did not send any messages to the Vatican.

As we have already mentioned, Orthodox clergymen also sent letters to the Vatican asking it to protect the Orthodox Church from the

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<sup>24</sup> Karlov, *Op. Cit.*, p. 165

unveiling repressions. But a sharp and vitriolic answer by G.V. Chicherin (Foreign Commissar from March 1918) to the Vatican's appeals showed that the Bolsheviks absolutely included any possibility for the Vatican's interference and paid no heed to its opinion.

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**Evgenia Tokareva, PhD in History**, graduated from the Moscow State University's M.V. Lomonosov in 1977 (Historical Faculty), was post-graduate student at the Institute of Universal History, Soviet Academy of Sciences; works in the Institute of Universal History, Russian Academy of Sciences since 1978. Leading Researcher, Professor, Head of the Center for the History of Religion and the Church. Member of the WAC Expert Council on

Theology; Corresponding member of the Pontifical Committee of Historical Sciences; Responsible editor of the continuing publication *Russia and the Vatican*; Member of the editorial board of the quarterly peer-reviewed scientific publication *The State, Religion, Church in Russia and Abroad* (<http://www.religion.ranepa.ru/>); Member of the Scientific Council of the review *Annali di Storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche*, Milan, Italy (<http://www.bs.unicatt.it/ase/Annali/>). Page on the portal Academia.edu: <https://igh.academia.edu/EvgeniaTokareva>

Liudmila Artamoshkina

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## ‘WHITE KERCHIEFS’ AGAINST ATHEISM<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

For 70 years the official religion of the Soviet power was atheism. How did it happen that not only was the existence of the Orthodox Church officially allowed but real faith was preserved outside official institutions as well as beyond the borders of state ideology? What were the ways of passing religious traditions from generation to generation? What were the main features of “people’s faith” phenomenon?

The report given considers some of the traditions that emerged in the Soviet period. They are metaphorically designated as the “White Kerchiefs” phenomenon. The report was made based on field research materials. Both theoretical approaches to the analysis of suchlike materials and possible methodological foundations are defined here. The author introduces the idea of “biography type” and deals with the concept of “topology of cultural memory”.

**Keywords:** Russian Orthodox Church, ‘people’s faith’, ‘White Kerchiefs’, topology of cultural history

The author of the article will look into some traditions that have their roots in the Soviet period and are metaphorically referred to as the ‘White Kerchiefs’ phenomenon. The article is based on the materials obtained as a result of field research. It highlights theoretical approaches to analysis of

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<sup>1</sup> The publication was prepared with the support of the grant of Russian Foundation for basic research № № 19-011-00775 “The topology of cultural memory in dialogue of generations”

material of this kind and their possible theoretical grounds. The author introduces the notion of the 'biographical type' and looks into the concept of 'topology of cultural memory'.

Konstantin Pobedonostsev, Attorney General for the Holy Synod, defined Russian people's religious commitment in his 19<sup>th</sup> century book *Moscow's Compendium*:

"Religious life of a nation like ours – a nation left to its own resources and uneducated – is a real sacrament! ... when you try to reach for its source, you find nothing... the Bible does not exist for illiterate people. The only thing that is left to them is church service and several prayers that have been passed on from generation to generation, and this is the only link between an individual and the Church... and yet, these uneducated minds contain an altar to the Unknown God, and no one knows who has erected it – just like it was in Athens. These people take it for granted that the will of Providence is omnipresent in all events of their lives; this fact is deeply rooted in their minds, and when death comes, they open their doors to it, as if Death was a familiar and long-awaited guest. They literally give up their spirit and repose with God."<sup>2</sup>

These words were spoken by the guardian of the Russian society's conservative values, who was most hated by Soviet ideologists, shortly before the great mayhem of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; they highlight a crucial feature of the Russian popular religious commitment. It is noteworthy that, by saying so, Mr Pobedonostsev was concerned with the critical situation of the official church at the turn of the century and the dangerous path it was taking – sectarianism. This concern was also expressed by many contemporary authors – for example, *The Life of Vassily Fivveysky* by Leonid Andreyev and *The Life of Klim Samgin* by Maxim Gorky. The movement called *God-seeking*, which emerged within Orthodox Christianity of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, strove to independently seek the Truth and expressed

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<sup>2</sup> Sergey Firsov. Seekers of God: To study the history of Russian 'national Christians' of the late XIX- early XX centuries. // *Russian Logos: Horizons of Interpretation*, vol. 2, 2017, p.350

various symptoms. As a contemporary researcher put it, “God-seeking was both a symptom of a disease and an indicator of potential religious health...”<sup>3</sup>

This healthy potential found its expression in the new forms of preservation and transmission of religious traditions that were practiced in the Soviet times. How was the faith preserved and passed down through the generations? In the family, of course. It so happened that women in the family were not so involved into the official Soviet ideology as men were. Peasant women, who were illiterate for the most part, were not forced to seek employment outside their village. They did their routine peasant chores and had traditional, back-to-basics lifestyle. The revolution gave an impetus to women’s emancipation and enhanced processes of women’s involvement into social life. But that was the initial stage, and, therefore, all women’s efforts and care were focused on their families and children. What is more, during the revolution, while men were involved into the whirlwind of events and became a driving force of history regardless of their will, women were the force that guarded families and cultural values.

Reflections over the predicted pattern of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and over the tragic events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are often reflected in contemporary cinema through the image of a woman. These are just a few significant films that have been released recently: *There Lived a Peasant Wife* directed by Andrei Smirnov; *Sukhodol* by Alexandra Strelyanaya; *Priest* by Vladimir Khotinenko. The image of the woman helps filmmakers to search for connections between Russia’s historical fate and personal fates of Russian women.

However, there is no doubt that the fact of atheism’s victory in 1970s is seriously exaggerated. Struggle for preservation and restoration of religious sanctuaries defined the biography of a human whose existential situation can be considered as a situation of permanent choice that has to be made in the simplicity and continuous course of routine life.

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<sup>3</sup> Sergey Firsov, p. 357



Preservation of traditions took the form of preservation of religious rites; it must have been the only way to express people's faith, its presence and ineradicableness. People managed to combine religious rites and the communist ideology and atheism that officially defined lives of Soviet citizens. Birth and death were the space and time points of metaphysical strain that defined the need for sacralization of these events in the mundane space. The situation was the same for different regions of the country: religious traditions, despite being made a taboo by the Soviet secular authorities, were nevertheless preserved and passed down to from generation to generation. What is more, the very fact of being a taboo communicated a sacral value to those traditions. Religious rites were naturally preserved and performed in families, especially if several generations (grandparents, parents and children) lived together; this was a widespread feature of familial biography. It was true for both rural people (where the tradition of extended families living together lived longer) and city dwellers (where extended families lived together because they could not afford to improve their living conditions).

The best-preserved rites were baptism and funeral service. It might be surprising to see that those traditions could be preserved after total repressions against priests in the 1920s-1930s, demolition of churches, and persecutions of believers. However, these traditions had been deeply rooted in people's routine lives by the 'stagnation' period of the late 1960s – early 1980s. There were even special 'excuses' that had to be made if a 'check-up' suddenly came to the house (it was a routine practice for the trade union and Communist party officials to turn up at people's houses unexpectedly and check their living conditions to make sure they conformed to the state ideology). In such cases people would say that the religious rites belonged to the 'old' living space, because it was their habit. In this context, icons were made to appear as museum rarities and ethnography values. However, in reality, people still needed and exercised everyday religious rites that existed almost subconsciously: they would cross a relative leaving for a long voyage, taking an exam, or facing a difficult situation; they would say a protective prayer if a relative was ill or absent for a long time, etc.

I have already talked about the tradition of ‘readers’ in late 1920s – early 1930s; those were women who went to people’s homes and ‘read’ funeral prayers (the vigil) for the dead, because priests who were to perform the rite had been eradicated by Soviet repressions both in towns and villages. Those women called themselves ‘nuns’, although most of them were not nuns in reality. Indeed, nuns would wander around villages after their monasteries had been devastated and performed some religious rites (baptism or funeral service). Later, however, some secular women took the responsibility. As church books were scarce, books of prayers and chants were copied as manuscripts. It is especially interesting to note that new memorial ‘prayers’ were composed at that time. One of such ‘prayers’ is still sung at memorial tables and funeral repasts in the Central Black Earth Region of Russia (the Southern Russian fertile lands in Tambov and Lipetsk regions).

It is especially interesting to see how the tradition of funeral services was handed down, and how ‘readers’ taught other women to do it. Here is the record of an interview with Zinaida Ryzhova (the town of Morshansk, January 5, 2011):

“Stukalin (one of our villagers) died. We were sitting with readers in the yard on the bench on the 8 of June 1992 at 18:30. They were waiting for the invitation to come in and read the funeral prayers. I asked their permission to come with them and read the Book of Psalms. They exchanged surprised looks: I was an official’s wife and a Communist. They said, “You have to kiss the Book of Psalms first. Get down on your knees.” And so all the five of us started to read the psalms together. Then my first student, Maria Kuchnova, followed in my footsteps and started reading memorial prayers. She knew Old Church Slavonic – I had taught her. When aunt Ganya died in 1992, we read funeral prayers together – Nyura, Frosya, Nastya, Maria and me. Galina Iosifovna, teacher of Russian and Literature, also read the prayers.

Nyura started reading at the age of 28: her husband had been killed during the war, and she was left alone with the kids, so their life was hard. Priest Vassily gave her his blessing. She accidentally

got hold of a Bible. She opened a random page, and the first words that her eyes fell on were, "Do not come to feast, but come to mourning."

#### About the readers:

"I have taught 4 more readers. The last deceased I read the prayers for was Anna Rubtsova. She died on the 26 of August 2007, and I was reading funeral prayers for her during 2 days. And so I would read funeral prayers till the age of 72.

As an adult, I first came to a church when I baptized my son. To do this, I went to another town (Tambov), to a church in the outskirts, because I was a member of the Communist party, and so was my husband. But it went without saying that the boy had to be baptized, because I could not imagine him living without protection (her son Mikhail was born in 1955). And I didn't go to church for 30 years after that.

My husband died in 1987. I invited some old ladies to read funeral prayers for the deceased: Ganya (Agafia Karelina, 1910-1992), Nyura (Anna Korshunova), Nastya, Frosya, Sasha (Alexandra Kochegarova). They took turns to read the prayers. I was astonished to see how much they had learned by heart. As a widow, I had to go to church and attend the service on the 9<sup>th</sup> day and the 40<sup>th</sup> day of his demise, and then after the first year. I feared to come to work every time after the church service: I was afraid that the Communist party bureau could call me in for reprimands. As you see, the persecutions were still present in 1987.

I felt that I wanted to learn the skill of reading funeral prayers. However, no church books were on sale, so I went to all funerals. I feared nothing, because I felt as if the deceased was calling me. I would stand near the readers, looked into their Books of Psalms in Church Slavonic, and after a while I could recognize some words in the Book. I sewed up a 30-page book for myself, took a pen with me to services, and took notes. But I only managed to write down only beginnings of the prayer lines or several sentences. As the pages in my book were numbered, I finished the lines during further services.

Once I saw, with God's blessing, a Book of Psalms in St. Nicholas church. I took it and started turning over the pages. At that time, the prayer was chanted that did not allow turning your back to the altar. Yevdokia, the priest's wife, saw this and told me with a smile, 'Take this, you'll read the book in winter.' So I bought the book. Then I bought a book of prayers and other church books. It was getting easier to find such books on sale in churches. I was looking for prayers that I had heard the nuns chant (I would like to comment on this term here: 'nuns' is the local word in the town of Morshansk and the region for women who read funeral prayers for the deceased). People began to bring books. I learned a lot from the Book of Hours, which I had inherited from my father. When church books were burned in fires in 1917, my father managed to save the Book of Hours and the New Testament. As a little girl, I would lie on a sleeping bench on top of the stove and read the New Testament eagerly.

I started learning by heart those prayers that nuns used to sing. By doing so, I reached the rites for memorial prayer for the dead. I was teaching myself those rites prayers for 9 months every day from 2 to 5 p.m.; I would try to finish all my household chores by that time and get down to my books with greatest pleasure. I was learning the skill of saying and chanting prayers from readers and from priests for 16 years. Those were the best 16 years of my whole life. After reading the funeral prayers during the night, I came home with a renewed soul and peaceful at heart. I have read the burial service for 528 deceased. Lately, I could not read the full service; I came to pray for the dead and to sing religious songs at a memorial repast, because relatives would invite me. I have been confined to my home for two years due to my illness."

In order to analyze certain cultural patterns, I have introduced the notion of biographic type. It helps to study the way in which certain cultural continuities are formed. Research into this field started as early as in the 1920s. The book by Grigory Vinokur *Biography and Culture*<sup>4</sup> is especially relevant.

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<sup>4</sup> G.O.Vinokur. *Biography and culture.* – M.1997. p. 88

We may present 'white Kerchiefs' as a biographic type. The biography as reflection and as experience of living the life constitutes another subject of research. In this perspective the character of correlation between narrative and life experience becomes utterly significant. The concept of 'biographic type' reveals the mechanics of typification in culture in correlation with individual and collective principles. The concept of 'the topology of cultural memory' is dedicated to the character of connection between narrative and strategy of living. The strategy of unfolding of the biographical means that the very formation of biography in its integrity is impossible without assimilating the living space in everyday course. The space of biography appears in its development and then in its completeness as a totality of toposes that are or were building in durability of living life.

The topos exists through the border of 'body' as the condition of 'body' to be and in this being to realize in the event of gesture, act, life. The biography defines itself in its narrative integrity in this tension of 'borders'. The integrity of tension is the intensity of experience the death. The character of topology in the forms of the biographical defines by the correlation of the past, the present, and the future, by the transformation of time into space.

In the idea of culture memory is locked the mandatory toposes of our recollections and the very space of memory. Thus, J. Assmann stresses the importance of toposes for the identity development of a social group.

The perception of the world is deployed from the point/location of Self. This direction of the 'eye' is connected with moments of 'my' self-constitution and constitution in this world embracing view of the same world. The further development of the concept of cultural memory is possible in topos coupling of personal and collective memory. Such coupling corresponds to the connection of autobiographic memory with culture memory.

The religious traditions deeply rooted in social, individual memory and culture memory of culture accumulate the experience of faith, its preservation, reproduction and transmission. This 'taking root' in memory is defined by the 'topological' nature of memory itself. We literally live our

lives by finding not only the places to reside, but by keeping the moments of life in our mnemotops.

Once, in our conversation, a priest told me: “White Kerchiefs have saved and kept faith for us”. I can explain: he was talking about those women who had only one Kerchief to go to the Church and to pray at home.

**Liudmila Artamoshkina, PhD**, Professor, Saint-Petersburg State University, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Culturology, Research manager “Memory of generation in the current situation of crisis of historical consciousness”. Scientific interests: cultural memory; biographies in the context of culture; oral history; semiotics of the city; cultural communication.

Galina Sedova (Sister Euphrosyne)

## ARRESTS OF ORTHODOX CLERGY OF THE RIGA DIOCESE FROM 1944 TO 1952

### **Abstract**

The subject of a report is devoted to repressions of clergymen and laymen of the Latvian Orthodox Church during the post-war period. The main sources were judicial and investigative files of the former archive of the KGB of Latvian SSR.

**Keywords:** Latvian Orthodox Church, KGB archive of the Latvian SSR, Riga Diocese

In 1944, the Soviet regime started to carry out measures to clear the Latvians from the 'enemy element'. The repression caused discontent in the population. That contributed to the activation of armed resistance that was one of the main domestic political problems.<sup>1</sup> The Latvian History Institute in an academic publication cites data on the number of those arrested only for the period from 1944 to 1952; the list amounted to

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<sup>1</sup> *Latvijas nacionālo partizānu karš: dokumenti, apcerējumi un atmiņas, 1944.–1956.* / Sast. Strods H. Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds, 2012, p.117, pp. 130–131, p. 134 *Aizvēstie: 1949. gada 25. marts.* Rīga: Nordik, 2007, p. 23. Elena Zubkova. "Drugoi SSSR? Osobenosti realizashii sobetskogo proekta v respublikah Baltii (1950–1960). Pirmā un otrā padomju okupācija (1940–1941, 1945–1990): sovetizācija un tās sekas. Grām.: *Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti. 25. sējums.* – Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008, pp. 679–680 lpp. Dokumenti sovetskoi istorii. *Sovetskaia natsionalnaia politika: ideologija i praktiki. 1945–1953* / sost. L.P. Ksheleva, O.P. Hlevnuk, V. Denninhaus i dr. Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2013, p. 602

37,857 Latvians.<sup>2</sup> The information is constantly specified because of the different groups of victims during repression.

The main source for the study of the theme – repression against the clergy and laity of the Riga Diocese – is the forensic investigation of the former KGB archive of the Latvian SSR. All the materials are now in the Latvian State Archive, but some of the materials are in the Special Archive of the Lithuanian National Archives and in the Estonian State Archive and also in the archives of the Russian Federation – St. Petersburg, and Pskov Region. Besides, the researcher also used a private archive of the Riga priest – Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

After the war the regime developed a “plan of agent-operative measures against the Lutheran, Catholic and Orthodox clergy in Latvia” and implemented it. In his report addressed to I. Stalin, the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR L. Beria informed that the arrest of the Primate of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Karlis Irbe, was prepared because of his connection with the German intelligence service.<sup>3</sup> Special services also arrested the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church – Priest Jazeps Kazlaus and Prelate Alphonse Pastors,<sup>4</sup> as well as 7 Orthodox clerics.<sup>5</sup> However, officers of SMERSH failed to prove the official connection of the clergy of the Riga Diocese with the German intelligence service. That was mentioned in a reference report by the chief of the UKR SMERSH III of the Baltic front Lieutenant-General M. Belkin in 1945. In the document *The Exarchate and the German Counterintelligence*

<sup>2</sup> *No NKVD līdz KGB. Politiskās prāvas Latvijā 1940–1986: Noziegumos pret padomju valsti apsūdzēto Latvijas iedzīvotāju rādītājs* / Rudītes Viksnes un Kārļa Kangera red. Rīga: LU Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, p. 973

<sup>3</sup> *Pribaltiiskii nachionalizm v dokumentah NKVD, MVD i MGB v SSSR. Sbornik dokumentov* / Sost. N.I.Vladimerchov, V.M. Komissarov, V.D. Krivech i dr. Moskow: Obedinennaiia redakchia MVD Rossii, 2011, p. 180.

<sup>4</sup> Viksne, R. Reliģijas kultu lietu padomes pilnvarotā V. Šeškēna darbība Latvijā. *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls*, № 2 (2005), p. 109, 128

<sup>5</sup> Golikov A., sviashennik. Fomin S. Krov’iu ubelennye. *Mucheniki i ispovedniki Severo-Zapada Rossii i Pribaltiki. Martirolog pravoslavnih sviashennisluzhbiteli I tsrkovnosluzhinelei Latvii, represirovannih v 1940 –1952 gg.* Zhizneopisanie i materiali k nim. Palomnik. Moskva, 1999, p. 143, 146, 147, 149, 153, 155, 158



*Authorities* the Soviet general briefly stated that there were no connections “according to the Riga Diocese”.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, clergymen of the diocese were accused of cooperation with the secret service. So, 50% of the clergy were subjected to repression. From 1941 to 1952, the NKVD-NKGB-MGB services of the Latvian SSR repressed most of the clergy for serving in the Pskov Orthodox mission and for working for the ‘Russian Committee’, a public organization established on January 12, 1943 in Latvia, that assisted refugees from the territories of the Pskov, Leningrad and Vitebsk regions, as well as Soviet prisoners of war, and cooperated with General A. Vlasov. There were 51 clerics and 4 laymen.<sup>7</sup> During the investigation, the security services emphasized the anti-Soviet activities of the Pskov Orthodox Mission and personally Metropolitan Sergius (Voskresenskiy), the exarch of the Baltic States.<sup>8</sup>

The repressive actions of Soviet power against clerics of the Latvian Orthodox Church began in 1940, and only World War II suspended them. But with the restoration of the communist regime in the Baltics, repression continued. During 1944, 21 people were arrested: Archpriests Nikolay Priimyagi,<sup>9</sup> Nikolay Laucis,<sup>10</sup> Nikolay Zhunda,<sup>11</sup> Nikolay Trubetskiy,<sup>12</sup> Sergiy Efimov,<sup>13</sup> Gordiy Olshevsky,<sup>14</sup> Liveryi Voronov,<sup>15</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Istoria Pskovskoi pravoslavnoi missii v dokumentah: [v 2 ch.]. Ch.1. Dokumenti lichnogo arhiva mitropolita Sergia (Voskresenskogo) / A.A. Kuznechova, ieromonah Platon (Rozhkov), S.N. Romanova i dr. – Kozel’sk: Vvedenskii stavropigial’ nii muzhskoi monastir’ Optina pustin’, 2017, p. 29, 34, 41*

<sup>7</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 418. l., pp.74–76; 1. apr., 38530. p. 1, 2; 1. apr., 40325. p. 1, 2; 2. apr., P-2393. l, 2. sēj., 2. apr., pp.195–198, p. 357; 2. apr., P-6134. l., pp. 89–90. *No NKVD līdz KGB. Politiskās prāvas Latvijā 1940.–1986.: Noziegumos pret padomju valsti apsūdzēto Latvijas iedzīvotāju rādītājs / Rudītes Viksnes un Kārļa Kangerā red. – Rīga: LU Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 1999, p. 85, 127, 147, 171, 175, 199, 297–299, 337, 377, 383, 425, 431, 503, 511, 529, 541, 572, 591, 691, 745, 751, 777, 789, 853, 861, 895*

<sup>8</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., 2. sēj., p. 158

<sup>9</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>10</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 37599, p. 1, 2

<sup>11</sup> LNA LVA, 2. apr., P-1240. l.

<sup>12</sup> LNA LVA, 1. apr., 42707. l, 1c.-2. lp.,

<sup>13</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>14</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>15</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

Nikolay Shenrok,<sup>16</sup> Kirill Zayts,<sup>17</sup> Konstantin Shakhovskoy,<sup>18</sup> Pavel Panfilov,<sup>19</sup> Georgy Radetsky,<sup>20</sup> Victor Pershin,<sup>21</sup> Mikhail Kravchenko,<sup>22</sup> Gennady Komarovskiy,<sup>23</sup> Georgy Taylov;<sup>24</sup> Deacon Mikhail Trubetskoy,<sup>25</sup> psalm readers – Konstantin Kravchenok,<sup>26</sup> Georgy Ilinsky,<sup>27</sup> Vitaly Karaev<sup>28</sup> and Andrei Perminov.<sup>29</sup>

In 1945, 12 people were arrested: Archpriests Savva Trubitsyn,<sup>30</sup> Nikolay Krasnogorsky,<sup>31</sup> Alexey Tikhomirova,<sup>32</sup> John Dobrotvorskiy,<sup>33</sup> Jacob Nashis,<sup>34</sup> Priests – Trofim Sivakov,<sup>35</sup> Vasily Shirkevich,<sup>36</sup> Grigory Mikhailov,<sup>37</sup> John Abels,<sup>38</sup> John Lielnors,<sup>39</sup> Deacons Vladimir Dyatkovskiy<sup>40</sup> and Theodore Tsvirko.<sup>41</sup>

In 1947, Priest Roman Bersins<sup>42</sup> was taken into custody, as well as Priest John Trubetskoy<sup>43</sup> in 1948.

<sup>16</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>17</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>18</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>19</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>20</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>21</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 42812. l.

<sup>22</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>23</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>24</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1 apr., 45063. l., p. 4

<sup>25</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1 apr., 17273. l.

<sup>26</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>27</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-5269. l.

<sup>28</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>29</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 1. apr., 1118. l.

<sup>30</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-8009. l.

<sup>31</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1 apr., 15230. l.

<sup>32</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-10683. l.

<sup>33</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1 apr., 13011. l.

<sup>34</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l., 2 sējums., p. 178

<sup>35</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 136. l.

<sup>36</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 5505. l.

<sup>37</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 34224. l.

<sup>38</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>39</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>40</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>41</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2177. l.

<sup>42</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 418, p. l., 3

<sup>43</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 40325. l.

In 1949 they arrested 3 more people: Priest Nikolay Lapiken<sup>44</sup>, Priest Dmitry Okolovich<sup>45</sup> and Deacon Mikhail Trubetskoy.<sup>46</sup>

In 1950, 5 people were arrested: Archimandrite Kirill (Nashis),<sup>47</sup> Priest Peter Mikhailov,<sup>48</sup> Deacons Vladimir Shirshin,<sup>49</sup> Pavel Trubetskoy<sup>50</sup> and psalmist Igor Bulgak.<sup>51</sup>

In 1951, 5 people were arrested: Priests Andrei Ivanov,<sup>52</sup> Vladimir Janson,<sup>53</sup> Vasily Melnikov,<sup>54</sup> Sergiy Vinogradov<sup>55</sup> and Gleb Trubitsyn.<sup>56</sup>

In 1952, the MGB service took 3 people in custody: Priests Vladimir Volodin,<sup>57</sup> Herman Zhegalov<sup>58</sup> and Protodeacon Theodore Yudin.<sup>59</sup>

Arrests were held among the synodal staff of the Latvian Orthodox Church. In 1945, the church historian Sergiy Sakharov<sup>60</sup> was arrested, serving his sentence in Karabas camp in Kazakhstan and released in 1950. The secretary of the Riga Diocesan administration, Boris Plukhanov<sup>61</sup> was arrested. In 1951, 2 more people were arrested: diocesan chauffeur Sergiy Shenrok<sup>62</sup> and Synodal architect Vladimir Shervinsky who served his sentence in a camp in the north.<sup>63</sup>

A vivid illustration of the above is provided by information about the fate of some priests of the Latvian Orthodox Church. Among the

<sup>44</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-6134. l.

<sup>45</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 40001. l.

<sup>46</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-6269. l.

<sup>47</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l.

<sup>48</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-9013. l.

<sup>49</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l.

<sup>50</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 40095. l.

<sup>51</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l.

<sup>52</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>53</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-10419. l.

<sup>54</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-9103. l.

<sup>55</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>56</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 5005. l.

<sup>57</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 6456. l.

<sup>58</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 6433. l.

<sup>59</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>60</sup> Archive Archpriest Andrei Golikov.

<sup>61</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-1864. l.

<sup>62</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l.

<sup>63</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 6433. l.

repressed there was Fr. Georgy Taylov, after his arrest in the village of Gavra, Abrensky district (modern Pytalovsky district of the Pskov region), he was sent to Leningrad, first to the Inner Prison of the NKGB on Shpalernaya, and then to the Kresty. In his memoirs Georgy wrote that he naively explained to the investigator that he was a Latvian citizen, and received a laconic answer: "Having a passport does not yet speak about citizenship, since passporting is a formal matter." According to the investigator's categorical statement, those who lived in Latvia in 1940 were all citizens of the USSR responsible under Soviet laws. According to Fr. Georgy in the process of inquiry only the facts necessary to convict the suspects were taken into account. He was convicted of serving in the Pskov Orthodox mission as a "resident of German intelligence" for 20 years of hard labour in the Sandy Camp of Kazakhstan. In the camps, he spent 11 years, and was released only under an amnesty in 1955. The priest left his memories in which he wrote how the clergy survived in the conditions of the GULAG.<sup>64</sup>

It should be emphasized that the authorized representative of the Russian Orthodox Church under the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR A. Sakharov also played an important role in the arrests of the clergy. Before the war he had served in the NKGB structures of Latvia. During the Second World War he served in SMERSH. After returning to Soviet Latvia, he was appointed head of the 1st Department of the MGB of the Latvian SSR. Sakharov, as a senior investigator, examined materials about the anti-Soviet activities of the Latvian clergy during the Second World War in the Pskov Orthodox Mission. Directly he led the case of the former Priest-missionary Roman Berzins, who served in the Nazi-occupied territory in the Pskov region. Often, interrogations took place at night, as many clerics were interrogated after midnight and they had psychological

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<sup>64</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45063. p.1, pp. 4–5. Georgii Tailov, prot. Za provolokoi. 1944–1955 gg. *Pravoslavie v Latvii. Sbornik statei. 4.* / Sost. A.V. Gavrilin. – Riga: 2004, p. 43 'Peschanii lager' (Osoblag № 8, Peschanlag, Peschnii ITL). Kn.: *Sistema ispravitel'no-trudovih lagere' v SSSR, 1923–1960: Spravochnik/* O-va "Memorial", GARF. Sost. M.B. Smirnov. Pod red. N.G. Ohotina, A.B. Raginskogo. – Moskva: 1996, pp. 352–353

and physical pressure. So, some of them started to accuse themselves. For example, Fr. Roman Berzins accused himself because of hopelessness and wrote a confession using a vocabulary not characteristic for him:

“I, Berzins, should tell the investigation that I lived in the bourgeois Latvia and studied at an Orthodox seminary, and I was brought up in an anti-Soviet spirit and Soviet power for me was alien and hostile. Working as a missionary and contacting often with anti-Soviet inclined churchmen, I perceived their slander against Soviet power as a confirmation of their anti-Soviet views. It is therefore natural that in the sermons I preached after the services I slandered against the Soviet system and said that freedom had come, in particular, freedom of religion.”<sup>65</sup>

Even a superficial analysis of the text shows that the document had been written under the pressure of the investigator. In the archive there was the diary of Fr. Berzins, in which he recorded his ministry in the occupied territory, information about the partisans and pro-communist clergy.<sup>66</sup> The missionary's diary was included in the accusatory case file. The situation was aggravated with the complaint of his ex-wife (about the infidelity of her husband and her financial claims, dated 1942, in the name of the exarch of the Baltic States), all this figured in the case materials. But the priest was sentenced to 10 years of camps with defeats, Fr. Roman died in 1954 on April 12 at the camp in Dubravlager of the Mordovian ASSR.<sup>67</sup>

The arrest of Archpriest Nikolay Trubetskiy by authorities were performed in an unusual way, he was invited to the editorial office of the newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* for a conversation, where he was detained on October 20, 1944.<sup>68</sup> Then he was sent to Leningrad according to the case of the Pskov mission. Investigators noted that it was not advisable to

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<sup>65</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 418. l., pp. 10–15

<sup>66</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 418. l., p. 30

<sup>67</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 418. l., p. 107

<sup>68</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 42707-u/l., p. 1

recruit a priest, since he behaved “as a convinced enemy”.<sup>69</sup> Father Nicholas was sentenced to 10 years of North Pechersk ITL in the north of the Komi Republic and to 5 years in defeats.<sup>70</sup> The priest was released under an amnesty in 1954. A unique collection of the priest’s letters to his wife from the prison has been preserved, reflecting the chronicle of his mournful ‘life in chains’. He answered the questions of his wife about the life in the camp in one of the letters:

“... For me, it is the most sensitive question, because what can I say about myself in these conditions and can I even say what I would like? ... The only thing that gives impetus for a life that replenishes the exhausted energy necessary for the struggle ... – is my infinite love and devotion to the Church and family. In the name of this and for the sake of this, I still exist and want to exist, desperately fighting ...”

This outstanding and well-educated priest set an example of courage as a confessor of the Christian faith.<sup>71</sup>

Archpriest John Trubetskiy was arrested on May 23, 1948 in Ludza. He was accused of the fact that he remained in the occupied territory and actively helped the German authorities in their struggle against the Soviet people. He preached in sermons with anti-Soviet content, travelled to the camps of Soviet prisoners of war and called on the Red Army to change their country and voluntarily join the counter-revolutionary army of General Vlasov.<sup>72</sup> In a complaint to the Prosecutor General of the USSR, the priest wrote that during the interrogation the MVD prosecutor cynically stated: “Whether you are guilty or not, you will not leave this place anyway, the international situation is complicated and we remove you as a

<sup>69</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 42707-u/l., p. 1

<sup>70</sup> Severo-Pecherski' ITL (Sevpechlag, Pechorski' zelnodorozhnii ITL, Pecherskii ITL, Pechortstro' Pecholag). Kn.: *Sistema ispravitel'no-trudivih lagerei v SSSR, 1923-1960: Spravochnik/ O-va "Memorial"*, GARF. Sost. M.B. Smirnov. Pod red. N.G. Ohotina, A.B. Raginskogo. – Moskva: 1996, pp. 387–388

<sup>71</sup> “Duh uninia ne dazhd' mi...” *Vospominania o rizskogradskom protoieree Nikolae Trubeckom i ego sem'e. Pis'ma iz zakluchenia* / Sost. O.A Veteleva. – Moskva: 2007, p. 277

<sup>72</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 40325, p. 1, 2

representative of the fifth column.”<sup>73</sup> The question about the connection of priest John with the fifth column, was given a laconic response: “The MGB is not mistaken. They know everything.”<sup>74</sup> Further, the priest wrote that he could not resist the pressure by the investigator and was forced to accuse himself. According to witnesses, archpriest John participated in the ‘Russian Committee’ in the collection of assistance to refugees and Soviet prisoners of war, the burial service of the Russian officer Roman Borisov, who was an anti-Soviet person according to the investigation, then he advocated the return of private property and the abolition of collective farms, as well as rejected the literary style of the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky. As a whole, he was sentenced to 10 years in the camps in Mor-dovia.<sup>75</sup>

Church sermons could also become an accusation against the clergy. As an example, there were sermons of Priest Nikolay Lapiken (in Soviet documents the name was distorted by Lapekin), in which he urged parishioners in 1938 to pray more that the Bolsheviks would not come to Latvia. The investigator noted that the priest prayed for the deported on June 14, 1941, listened to emigrant radio broadcasts from England, and of course, all this was regarded by the regime as anti-Soviet activity. The Priest was arrested on July 28, 1949. A special committee sentenced Priest Nikolay Lapiken to 10 years of imprisonment for a term in Kargopolag.<sup>76</sup>

In the case of Deacon Mikhail Trubetskoy, it was recorded that he had deserted from the Red Army on July 4, 1941 and spoke about those who did not want to work on collective farms and about the fact that many people of Latvia were deported without being guilty. He also believed that in the USSR there was no freedom of religion, for example, teachers of schools and employees of Soviet institutions were persecuted only for the fact that they visited the church. The fact was also used that Deacon Michael was awarded a church letter for his works in the Pskov mission.

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<sup>73</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 40325. l., p. 107

<sup>74</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 40325. l., p. 107

<sup>75</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 40325. l., p. 107

<sup>76</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-6134. l., p. 43, 75

He was convicted on May 20, 1950 for treason and disclosure of information for 10 years, and for the second time he was convicted by the Military Tribunal of the Western Siberian Military District in the camp for 10 years on December 29, 1951 for concealing information about the counter revolutionary organization.<sup>77</sup>

In October-November 1950, the MGB of the Latvian SSR arrested a group of clerics: the diocesan driver Shenrok Sergiy, Psalmist Bulgakov Igor, Deacon Shirshin Vladimir and Archimandrite Kirill (Nachis Leonid) for the anti-Soviet activity in the Latvian SSR. For example, Bulgakov, being a teacher of the Law of God, 'processed' children in an anti-Soviet spirit.<sup>78</sup> Shenrok worked as a courier in the Pskov Mission and delivered secret packages to the police, since 1948 he worked as a chauffeur for the Metropolitan of Riga Benjamin (Fedchenkov), who arrived from the United States.<sup>79</sup> Nachis was accused of processing children, according to the investigation, in an anti-Soviet spirit, collecting money for the Mission, Shirshin, deacon of the Riga Cathedral during the services, praised the German fascist regime and spread anti-Soviet defeatist rumours. Thus, all these people were sentenced to 10 years in prison.<sup>80</sup>

The work with archival documents allowed to find a complaint of S. Shenrok addressed to the General Prosecutor of the USSR of May 13, 1954. In the letter, the driver told how he was pressed by the MGB officers to identify an 'American spy' in the person of Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenkov). According to the fragment of his letter, the authorities demanded him to keep an eye on the bishop, but the driver did not agree. Probably, they wanted to collect materials for the accusation of Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenkov), administrator of the Riga Diocese, in anti-Soviet activities in favor of the United States, but these plans could not be implemented.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-38530. l., pp. 42–43, 64, 73

<sup>78</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l., 2. sēj., p. 357

<sup>79</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l., p. 357

<sup>80</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l., 2. sēj., p. 180

<sup>81</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393. l., pp. 195–198



The extract from the complaint of S. Shenrok from the camp in Inta to the USSR Prosecutor:

“... In fact, if did not commit any crimes and not one of the accusations brought against me is confirmed by either documents or testimony, then I ask, why am I in prison? ...” The question was rhetorical, since the system of state security bodies worked as a “military-political tribunal created to protect the interests of the revolution from the attacks of the counter-revolutionary bourgeois and their agents.”

As subsequent history showed, cases were crudely fabricated in favour of the political conjuncture of the system. From prison Deacon Vladimir Shirshin wrote his complaint to the Republican Prosecutor of the city of Riga about the work of investigators. There is a fragment of a complaint from a deacon's criminal case:

“In 1950, on November 5, I was summoned by the MGB, where an arrest warrant was presented. During the course of the investigation, the investigator Leith. Soldatov charged me with the participation of the Pskov Orthodox Mission and anti-Soviet propaganda. I, in turn, refuted and argued ... that I did not oppose Soviet power, but it was not advantageous for the investigator to record my testimony, he wrote how he thought to be better. As a result, at the end of my case, I refused to sign ... In the end ... I was forced to sign ...”<sup>82</sup>

About the days spent in the basements of the MGB of the Latvian SSR in the very centre of Riga, Archimandrite Kirill recalled how he got into cell number 33, in a small room for 2 people, but there were 17, and no ventilation, and people began to choke. One Latvian started to shout and then the detainees were taken out into the courtyard and a small hole was opened for ventilation. He also remembered such a detail, that when the prisoners were transferred to an internal prison, they were transported in a car with the inscription ‘Bread’. Father Kirill also spoke about his first

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<sup>82</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-2393.1., 2. sēj., p. 301

days in the camp, about his prisoner number 'B-1- 758' kept by him later and about the Russian abbreviation 'X.B.' (хранить вечно – to store forever) in the affairs of the 'enemies of the people'. Believers perceived the abbreviation as the words of the Easter greetings 'Christ is Risen!' (Христос Воскресе!) and this inspired hope.<sup>83</sup> The priest complained that many modern people do not know anything about the 58<sup>th</sup> article, which declared the person as the 'enemy of the people'. It was extremely important for him to memorize every fact, every person, without even thinking if that information would be needed once. Under the totalitarian regime, all the arrested clerics of the Riga Diocese were under Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR and were considered criminals who directed their actions towards overthrowing, undermining or weakening the power of the workers' and peasants' councils, as well as the 'national gains of the proletarian revolution'. This article defined the general concept of counterrevolutionary crime. It is important to note that the then existing power, the external security of the state and the gains of the revolution were indicated as 'objects of unlawful encroachment'. Almost all people, who were repressed on political affairs, including clerics and laity of the Riga diocese, were rehabilitated in the 1950s, but some of them – much later, in the early 1990s. One cannot but agree with the historian A. Gavrilin that "all the inconsistency of the charges brought against them was proved ... along with the artificiality of their investigative cases".<sup>84</sup>

How did the ruling bishops of the Riga Diocese think about the repressions? It has already been indicated that Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenkov) did not make any public assessments in the matters of a political nature, but showed loyalty to the existing government. For example, when Priest Jacob Leogky, who was in an illegal position, turned to him for advice, the bishop recommended him to surrender to the author-

<sup>83</sup> Kirill (Nachis), arhimandrit. *Sobranim lucee otcov nashih* / Sost. O.T. Kovalevska'. Sankt-Peterburg: 2006, p. 73, 80

<sup>84</sup> Gavriļins, A. Staļina režīma laikā represēto Latvijas pareizticīgo mācītāju krimināllietas kā vēstures avots. *Latvijas Vēsture*, 2010 4 (80), pp. 56–57. Gavrilin A.V. Ugolovhie dela pravoslavnih svashennikov kak istochniki izuchenia stalinskih represi' na territorii Latvii. *Zerkov' i vrema*, 2010, № 3 (52), p. 193

ities, since “otherwise he would not find peace for himself either in conscience or in practical life”.<sup>85</sup> But at the same time, despite the protests coming from a part of the clergy, Metropolitan Benjamin gave the high church reward to the famous Latgalian Archpriest Nikanor Trubetskoy, whose three sons were convicted of anti-Soviet activities. Nevertheless, he supported the aged archpriest both morally and spiritually and went into conflict with some clerics of the Riga Diocese. Metropolitan Benjamin was not afraid to support financially the families of the repressed clergy using his personal funds, and also to send money to the priests in prison every month. To the displeasure of the authorities, the support of the repressed clergy continued at the Riga department by Archbishop Philaret (Lebedev).<sup>86</sup> As previously mentioned, the bishops were in an extremely difficult situation and tried not to go into open confrontation, but secretly supported the repressed.

The authorities did not hide the fact that they mercilessly dealt with the so-called ‘fifth column’, for example, in the questionnaires of the arrested clerics, there was a laconic line ‘a supporter of the bourgeois-democratic system’. For the investigation, these people were class enemies who were in the occupied territory and cooperated with the Nazis, had the intelligence and propaganda purposes as the enemies of the USSR. According to the Russian historian K. Obozny, a leading expert in the history of the Pskov Orthodox Mission, there were many distorted facts, fictitious crimes against those clergymen of the Riga Diocese who served in the Mission, from the files of the Soviet investigative bodies.<sup>87</sup>

Studies of investigative cases of clerics showed that investigators, for example, A. Sakharov, received special training and was informed about the church life in the occupied territory of the Baltic States. Presumably, under the pressure of the investigation, the majority of the detainees

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<sup>85</sup> Evfrosinia (Sedova), inikina. *Sluzhenie mitropolita Veniamina (Fedchenkova) na Rizsko' kafedre (1948–1951)*. Daugavpils: 2017, p. 152

<sup>86</sup> LNA LVA, 1452. f., 3. apr., 3. l., p. 9

<sup>87</sup> Oboznij K.P. *Istoria pskovskoi pravoslavnoi missii 1941–1944 gg.* – Moskva: Izd-vo Krutichogo podvor'a, 2008, p. 44

personally testified and accused themselves, excepting the Archpriest Nikolay Shenrock and Archpriest Liveriy Voronov.<sup>88</sup>

There were also quite unusual cases. For example, Protodeacon Konstantin Dorin became an agent of the KGB of the Latvian SSR and in writing was obliged to inform the special services about the church life and clergy. The real situation was documented by the decision to arrest him. Thus, Protodeacon K. Dorin “turned out to be a double-dealer. He talked about his cooperation with the KGB to his close friends, [so] he simply ‘lied’ and did not give information, with the intention of escaping the required betrayal of good people”.<sup>89</sup> Dorin reported all sorts of rumours about the church and Riga life in his reports, which subsequently led to his arrest and deportation.

The atmosphere, in which the Orthodox lived in the pre-war Latvia, should also be mentioned. Believers lived in spiritual freedom. According to the memoirs of his daughter, Archpriest Gordy Olshevski, who served in the Novo-Trinity Church of the town of Linava in Latgale (now Linova territory of the Russian Federation), was twice arrested by the Soviet authorities and died in prison in 1945. Many believers at that time were distinguished by the strength of spirit and the loyalty of tradition.<sup>90</sup> The orthodox youth actively participated in the Russian Student Christian Movement (RSX Latvian Branch), which flourished in the 1920s–1930s. In the movement, both Russian national ideas and a deep rejection of the leftist views were clearly manifested. This topic was studied in detail by the historian T. Feigmane.<sup>91</sup> The Soviets, or ‘sovietdom’, as they were called in Russian émigré circles, were well informed about the situation of the Orthodox Church and repression. The red terror against the Russian

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<sup>88</sup> Istoria Pskovskoi pravoslavnoi missii v dokumentah: [v 2 ch.]. Ch.1. Dokumenti lichnogo arhiva mitropolita Sergia (Voskresenskogo) / A.A. Kuznechova, ieromonah Platon (Rozhkov), S.N. Romanova i dr. – Kozel’sk: Optina pustyn’, 2017, pp. 327–328

<sup>89</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 2. apr., P-1240. l., p. 1

<sup>90</sup> Arhiv G. Sedovoi. Vospominaniya Olshevskoi N.G. 2010 g. Oboznij Kostantin. Preterpeвшij do konca... O zhizni i sluzhenii protopresvitera Gordija Olshevskogo. *Pra-voslavie v Baltii*, № 6 (15), 2017, p. 31

<sup>91</sup> Feigmane T.D. *Russkie v dovoennoj Latvii*. Rīga: SIA “JUMI”, 2000.

Orthodox Church exceeded in its cruelty even the times of the persecution of the first Christians by the Roman emperors. Russian writer M. Prishvin wrote in his diary about those tragic events the famous: "These are the times that have come: before, the priests judged the devils. And now the devils judge the priests!"<sup>92</sup>

After the outbreak of World War II, the Russian émigré circles in Latvian society, and even in the West, began to be divided into the 'defencists' and 'defeatists'. The first wanted to defeat the Nazis, so they fought against the Germans during the First World War, while others considered the Nazis liberators from Bolshevism (this should be taken into account when considering the historical context). The question is so complex that disputes have been continuous and are still present in the historical discourse today. However, according to the canons of Orthodoxy, the Church, and, in particular, the Latvian Orthodox Church, offers prayers 'about those in power' and thanks God, while the Latvian clerics remained faithful and law-abiding sons of the Church.

The analysis of the forensic materials revealed several important aspects: the convicts did not have Soviet passports – they had the passports of the Republic of Latvia, and someone had the Nansen passport of a stateless person, but as mentioned earlier, for a totalitarian regime this did not matter. It was the presence in the occupied territory that was seen as aggravating circumstances. The defendants were under strong psychological pressure, because after the first interrogation, they slandered themselves and signed documents in which they confessed their own guilt, although some of them admitted partial guilt, but there were also those who refused to sign documents. As subsequent complaints to higher authorities have shown, the investigation put pressure through blackmail, threats, insults and assault. All these methods broke people not only physically, but also morally because of the hopelessness of the situation.

Attention should be drawn to the fact that in some cases there was a *MEMORANDUM* (service note) with operational information of the

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<sup>92</sup> Prishvin M.M. *Chvet i krest* / Sost. VA. Fateeva. – Sankt-Peterburg: Rostok, 2004, p. 164

agent's reports. For example, the noble origin of prot. Georgy Taylov was noted in his criminal case, although, only his father, a collegiate assessor was a nobleman, whose rank was only personal and not given as hereditary nobility. Even after the priest's objections, corrections were not made to the questionnaire. It was followed by the investigator's entry: "It is not expedient to recruit, he is a staunch enemy of the Soviet regime".<sup>93</sup> In the case of prot. Nikolay Trubetskoy there was a laconic wording: "Proved himself as an enemy of the Soviet government; is not subject to recruitment."<sup>94</sup>

It is also important to note that the registration of the protocol of some interrogations was carried out with violation: not always the time was fixed for the beginning and the end of the interrogation, the signatures of the investigators are illegible and without deciphering it is difficult to read both the title and the name of the employee. As for the recruiting of the clergy, the special services used any means. First of all, the financial interest of a whistle-blower among the clerics or believers was used. So, they wanted to keep them as slaves, who were afraid of excusing their activities. It was also practiced to recruit informants through intimidation "by prison, camp for minor reasons, for speculation, violations of rules and orders of the authorities, etc."<sup>95</sup>

In this regard, Lieutenant-General M. Belkin, Chief of the Ukrainian SMERSH of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Baltic Front, should be mentioned. From 1944 to 1945, he supervised the 'case of the Pskov Mission' and was directly involved in repressions against the clergy of the Riga Diocese. In 1951, he was dismissed from the position and arrested according to the 'Abakumov case'. Two years later, he was released and fired from the Ministry of Internal Affairs "due to the facts of discredit".<sup>96</sup> Prot. Liveryi Voronov revealed how the investigators behaved during interrogations in 1956:

<sup>93</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 45063-u/l., pp. 22–22.

<sup>94</sup> LNA LVA, 1986. f., 1. apr., 42707-u/l., pp. 21–21

<sup>95</sup> [15 dekabrya] *Ot Pashi do Pashi (01/05/2016–16/04/2017). Russkaya Golgofa. Pravoslavnii illiustrirovannii kalendar'. Novomuchenniki i ispovedniki.* – Moskva: 2016.

<sup>96</sup> *Istoria Pskovskoi pravoslavnoi missii v dokumentah: [v 2 ch..]. Ch.1. Dokumenti lichnogo arhiva mitropolita Sergia (Voskresenskogo) / A.A. Kuznechova, ieromonah Platon (Rozhkov), S.N. Romanova i dr.* – Kozel'sk: Optina pustin', 2017, pp. 499–500

“During the investigation, Captain Kulakov a) for a long time tried to deprive me of the opportunity not only to formulate my answers to questions, but even to read what was written; b) forced me to stand motionless for dozens of hours, “facing a corner,” he beat me, forced me “not to move,” incessantly showered me with obscene language, tore my clothes on my belt to the waist; c) did not take into account my insistent request to record in the investigation report the data speaking in my favour.”<sup>97</sup>

The subsequently filed complaint against the investigator only aggravated the position of Liveryi Voronov’s father.

The massive corpus of archival documents that could additionally shed light on the events of the church life and the ministry of the clergy of the Latvian Orthodox Church (Riga Diocese) related to the Pskov Orthodox mission is impressive. The materials of forensic investigations are located in the State Archives of Latvia – a structural unit of the National Archives of Latvia, in the Special Archives of the Lithuanian National Archives of the Republic of Lithuania and in the Estonian State Archives of the National Archives of Estonia. The materials are also in the archives of the Russian Federation – the Central State Archive of St. Petersburg, the State Archive of the Pskov Region and the UFSB archive in the Pskov Region.<sup>98</sup> The archives of the latter are currently restricted or restricted by researchers. Therefore, the main source in studying the topic of repression against the clergy and laity of the Riga Diocese are the judicial-investigative files of the KGB archive of the Latvian SSR. Archival materials from these sources are subjective; there are many absurdities, contradictions and open falsification. Studying them requires careful selection and critical analysis.

The losses of personnel for many years became one of the main problems of the Latvian Orthodox Church. The lack of clergy led to the

<sup>97</sup> Istorija Pskovskoi pravoslavnoi missii v dokumentah: [v 2 ch.]. Ch.1. Dokumenti lichnogo arhiva mitropolita Sergia (Voskresenskogo) / A.A. Kuznechova, ieromonah Platon (Rozhkov), S.N. Romanova i dr. – Kozel’sk: Optina pustin’, 2017, pp. 327–328

<sup>98</sup> Istorija Pskovskoi pravoslavnoi missii v dokumentah: [v 2 ch.]. Ch.1. Dokumenti lichnogo arhiva mitropolita Sergia (Voskresenskogo) / A.A. Kuznechova, ieromonah Platon (Rozhkov), S.N. Romanova i dr. – Kozel’sk: Optina pustin’, 2017, p. 5

reduction of parishes. There is no exact data on the laity who suffered during the years of repression and deportations. A careful study of this tragic page in the history of the Latvian Orthodox Church will help not only to eliminate the blank spots in it, but also the mythology, which especially accompanies the history of the Soviet period and, most importantly, is not erased from the historical memory of all the victims of the totalitarian system.

**Galina Sedova (Sister Euphrosyne)** is a Master of theology and an editor of the Sinodal newspaper "Grapevine" of the Latvian Orthodox Church.



Ivan Petrov

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**‘TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT PERSECUTION’:  
THE PERCEPTION AND THE ASSESSMENT  
OF THE BOLSHEVIK PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH  
BY THE ORTHODOX CLERGY, WHO SERVED  
IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORY IN 1941-1944,  
AND BY MEMBERS OF CHRISTIAN SEMINAR  
IN THE 1970S<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract**

This article concerns the assessment of the Bolshevik anti-religious policy in two key periods of the history of the Orthodox Church in Russia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first period was the Nazi occupation, which in many ways lifted the self-censorship of the clergy and believers: the representatives of the clergy could openly and without embarrassment speak out about the Bolsheviks and their religious policies and give a moral assessment of the pre-war tragedy. The representatives of the episcopate and of the ordinary priesthood began to oppose Bolshevism, some due to their own career motives, some due to their convictions.

A new round of criticism began in the 1970s, when the ‘church leaders’ were silent again. Then the neophytes, the Soviet youth who had just turned to God, began to talk about the real situation in the Church. In a different form, but they were clear in their assessments of the Soviet regime. However, just like the priests during the war, they also were put under humiliation and arrest.

**Keywords:** anti-religious policy, Bolshevism, Russian Orthodox Church in the USSR, Christian Seminar

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The formation of various groups of Soviet dissidents back in the late 1950s largely predetermined the future rethinking and strict judgement of the maleficent Soviet system. The representatives of the dissident movement were the first in the USSR who decided to give an assessment to the Bolshevik state system, to its ideological and moral doctrines. It is important to understand another obvious fact - the first who dared to openly confront the Marxist ideology were the representatives of the Orthodox clergy and active parishioners, who did not accept in 1927 the loyalty declaration of Metropolitan Sergiy (Stragorodskiy) and openly opposed his 'compromise' course.

World War II was a new catalyst for rethinking the Bolshevik ideology from a Christian point of view. The demolishing of the borders by the Nazi attack led the Orthodox clergy to the possibility of a new rethinking of the Church's life and to the open expression of their own opinion about the Bolshevik ideology. For 24 years, Orthodox priests were under total control of the Bolsheviks and underwent the toughest repressions, were forced to adapt to the realities of life in the state, whose main goal was to build a non-religious society. Now, albeit in the context of the temporary triumph of another totalitarian regime, the Nazi regime, they gained a possibility to openly express their assessment of the past 25 years and boldly outline the future prospects of Russia's religious 'renaissance'.

However, after the defeat of Germany, an extremely difficult period in the history of the Orthodox Church began again. The Church was turned into one of the tools of foreign policy of Stalin's USSR (Stalin never stopped the anti-religious persecution machine). Then there was a campaign of the so-called 'Khrushchev persecutions' with a new wave of anti-religious measures, mass closure of temples and the shameful Bishops' Council in 1961, that significantly restricted the rights of the priest. Having these persecutions as background, new spiritual quest arose in the depths of the younger generation of the Soviet citizens, which were just converted to Christianity. And this quest turned into criticism of the existing Soviet religious, or rather, 'anti-religious' legislation. Eagerly reading uncensored literature that leaked through the Iron Curtain, these young dissidents have risked to demand justice in the matter of the activ-

ity of the Orthodox churches and protection of the rights of believers. Unwittingly, they largely became the heirs of those who attempted to assess Bolshevism 20–30 years before them, under occupation. I will try to show if there was anything in common in these assessments.

The main motive used by Orthodox priests under the Nazi occupation in describing the Bolshevik religious policy was the opposition, and this opposition was given in two senses: firstly, the position of the Orthodox Church in tsarist Russia was compared to the situation after the Bolshevik Revolution; secondly, the position of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union was compared to the situation under the German occupation. With all the clear prejudice of everything that was printed in the Nazi-controlled press, an indisputable fact should be noted: the characteristics of the Soviet politics given by the Orthodox priests were the results of painful silence that lasted for years. Let us give some examples from different territories of the RSFSR occupied by the Nazis.

Archpriest Dmitriy Bulgakov, who led pastoral courses in the occupied city of Orel, wrote an article in the newspaper *Rech* (published during German rule), where he opposed the perception of the Christmas holiday under the Soviets before the war and under the Germans:

“Bolshevik power by all means eradicated religious feeling, therefore it is not surprising, that a religious person celebrated this day secretly, outside of his work place, in his family atmosphere. Here, everything spoke about the festive mood: table, decoration, food, visits by relatives and friends, often after a nightly hidden church service... The victorious German Army not only freed us from the fear of punishment, but also showed sensitive attention and concern for the revival of our national-religious traditions. The day of Christmas, January 7, is declared a non-working day. The church has radio at its disposal on Christmas Eve and on Christmas; theater and cinema are closed on Christmas Eve as required by the Orthodox church.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Orlovskoi oblasti, f. R-3681, op. 1, d. 6, l. 7; Bulgakov D., prot. 'Radost prazdnika', *Rech*, 7 January 1943.

It is not surprising that the Wehrmacht is mentioned in this article: it was necessary at that time. But what is more interesting is the accent made by Orthodox priest in his article: a comparison with the pre-revolutionary tradition that existed in Russia and respect for the Orthodox Church by the secular authorities.

Similar mood existed in different occupied territories of Russia. Hieromonk Seraphim (Smykov), who belonged to the jurisdiction of 'non-rememberers', the most persecuted and uncompromising part of the Orthodox priesthood, made a very curious assessment of Bolshevik rule in his sermon. On September 3, 1942, the hieromonk served a prayer service in the Church of St. George the Victorious in Krasnodar and gave a clear characteristic of the Bolshevik power:

“Orthodox brothers and sisters! For 24 years, the Orthodox Church, its servants and all Orthodox Christians were subjected to brutal persecutions by the atheists-Bolsheviks. For 24 years, believers in the entire Orthodox Russia were afraid not only to glorify God, but even to openly sign themselves with the sign of the saint cross. Millions of people innocently died from the terror raging in Russia over during those years. They were especially difficult for the Kuban region...”<sup>3</sup>

Further Seraphim declared that with the fall of the Bolshevik power a period of new hope suddenly emerged for the believers, a kind of Easter, that had suddenly come in the fall. The Kuban hieromonk even ended his heartfelt sermon with an Easter exclamation 'Christ is Risen' and the crowd of believers gathered in the church echoed him according to the Easter tradition: "Truly Risen".<sup>4</sup>

The same response can be found among the Orthodox clergy that served in the occupied territory of North-Western Russia. They served as part of the 'Orthodox Mission in the Liberated Regions of Russia' or simply the 'Pskov Mission' organized by the convinced 'Sergianian' —

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<sup>3</sup> 'Blagodarstvennyi moleben', *Kuban*, 26 September 1942.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

Metropolitan of Lithuania and Vilno Sergiy (Voskresenskiy) who refused to evacuate and stayed in the occupied region. The Pskov Mission began to publish the journal *Orthodox Christian* in 1942. In the very first issue of this edition we can find a characteristic of the previous period of Bolshevik rule in the Soviet Union: "A year has passed since the moment when the punishing sword of God's justice was brought over the godless Bolshevism... The liberated land managed to quickly shake off the 24 years long nightmare, stand up and enter a new life. With the help of the liberators this land began to heal successfully the grievous wounds inflicted by Bolshevism."<sup>5</sup> Such statements were made to express the hope that the Nazi religious, agrarian, educational policy could be changed as soon as possible and, in its turn, this could change the attitude of the local population to the occupation regime and help attract more and more new believers to Orthodox churches.

The episcopate, stayed under the German occupation, began to play a significant role in the spiritual overcoming of Bolshevism. We can divide it in three large groups.

The first includes the hierarchs who made an alliance with the Nazis for personal reasons, but previously quite safely, often in the same words, praised the Bolsheviks and described their religious, or rather, anti-religious policy. The most classic examples of this behaviour are given by renovation bishops: Nikolay (Avtonomov), Vladimir (Ivanov), Alexey (Shcherbakov), who usurped church authority in one of the occupied districts and stood on complete and unconditional support of the Germans. It is strange, but many modern historians and representatives of the Orthodox clergy still write about the critical attitude of Germans towards this group of bishops.<sup>6</sup> In fact, the Nazis most often made no difference between renovationists and representatives of the intransigent group of 'non-rememberers'. They assessed every person only by its loyalty to the established occupation regime.

<sup>5</sup> Tsentralnyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Sankt-Peterburga, f. 3355, op. 18, d. 6, l.1; *Pravoslavnyi khristianin*, 1942, no. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Edelshtein G. *Pravo na pravdu* (Moscow, 2016), p. 195

The first group of hierarchs can be characterized not really by their spiritual and moral analysis of the past years of Bolshevik rule, but by their blank praise of the 'new masters'. Here is one of the most striking statements of the Archbishop Alexey (Shcherbakov) about to Nazi rule: "The merciful Lord in the person of the noblest person of Adolf Hitler gave salvation to the church and deliverance from the Jewish rule to the Orthodox Russian people. A miracle happened: the Satanic evil disappeared, the church was resurrected and the lamps were lit in front of the faces of the saints. Long live the noble Adolf Hitler! Many years of his bright life!"<sup>7</sup> As we can see, these words do not contain any moral analysis of the past years of Bolshevik rule, but there are a lot of obvious Nazi propaganda clichés: the uniting of Bolshevik power with Judaism, an uncovered panegyric to Hitler and the absence of any description of the real horrors of Church persecution during the pre-war years, when the representatives of the renovationist jurisdiction were often the real initiators of this persecution.

The second group of bishops, who stayed under Nazi occupation, consists of those who negatively treated not only the Soviet power and its rule, but mostly Russia as a country throughout history and its church policy in general. I will label this group as 'autocephalists' accepting the fact that most of these bishops favoured the independence of their own jurisdiction from the authority of the metropolitan, and later Patriarch Sergiy (Stragorodskiy). The most prominent critics of the Soviet government and the Moscow Patriarchate, which they actually identified with Bolshevism, were: Metropolitan of Tallinn and Estonia Alexander (Paulus); Augustine (Petersons) of Riga and Latvia, who tried to return to the administration of the Orthodox parishes of Latvia after the arrival of the Germans, but failed; Metropolitan Polycarp (Sikorskiy), who actually headed the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church during the period of German rule over Ukraine; Archbishop of Pinsk and Polesie Alexander (Inozetsev), as well as the clergy that was subordinated to Belarusian,

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<sup>7</sup> Kovalev B. N. *Povsednevnaia zbizn naseleniia Rossii v period natsistskoi okkupatsii* (Moscow, 2011), p. 510

Ukrainian, Estonian and Latvian bishops who were opponents of Moscow. A significant difference in their perception of the Bolshevik regime consisted in the fact that they saw its disastrous policy only during the Civil War and during the so-called 'first Soviet year' (1940-1941) when they were forced to repent and union with the church authorities in Moscow. That is why it was very important for them to win the battle for the parishes against the Sergianians, to tarnish Sergians in the eyes of the German command and the local occupation administration. They left an enormous epistolary heritage that consists of appeals to believers and to the German administration, rich of the unflattering characteristics of 'Sergian' clergy. These characteristics are so tough that sometimes it is hard to believe that it can be written by a Christian hierarch. I can mention as an example the characteristic of Metropolitan Sergiy (Voskresenkiy) written by Metropolitan Alexander (Paulus): "That 'crocodile' bares his teeth and stretches his claws to us".<sup>8</sup> With all such tough characteristics, representatives of the autocephalous jurisdictions tried to extend their influence over the territory of Russia: Belarusians to Smolensk and Bryansk regions; Ukrainians to Kuban, Kursk and Belgorod; Estonians wanted to return influence in Pechery and in historical territory called Ingermanlandia.

The third group consists of the bishops that supported the Moscow Patriarchate, but at the same time were ardent opponents of Bolshevism. After the war broke up they began to criticize the regime, whose repressive policies they could observe for so long. The main example is a Church hierarch of that group – the Exarch of the Baltic Metropolitan of Lithuania and Vilnius Sergiy (Voskresenskiy). In 1940 Metropolitan Sergiy (Stragorodskiy) sent him to restore the authority of Moscow over the parishes of the Baltic republics, but in 1941 he refused to evacuate and stayed under the German rule. Metropolitan Sergiy's (Voskresenskiy) assessment of the Bolshevik rule can be divided in two parts. The first includes explicit, most often forced, panegyrics to the invaders that can be

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<sup>8</sup> 'Pisma mitropolita Tallinnskogo i vseia Estonii mitropolitu Rizhskomu i vseia Latvii Avgustinu (Petersonsu) i protoiereiu Ioannu Svempu, napisannye v1941–1943gg., *Pravoslavie v Baltii*, no. 2(11), 2014, p. 157

mostly explained by the need to demonstrate the loyalty to the Nazi regime in order to receive benefits for the Orthodox Church. On November 27, 1942, in Riga, the exarch received 1026 religious books, many of which were of great religious and artistic value. During the Soviet rule these books, some of which are dated to the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, were kept at the Novgorod Museum of Religion and Atheism, which was located in the famous church of St. Sophia. Now the relics were to return to the churches of the Novgorod region to their rightful place. This event was turned into a big propaganda event with the statements about the religious revival in the occupied territories made by German officials. Sergiy (Voskresenskiy) made a statement on pages of *Za Rodiny*, the most famous newspaper in Russian distributed in the occupied territory. He wrote:

“Unlike the Bolsheviks, who destroyed churches, organized mass exiles and even murders of clergy and believers, the national-socialist Germany not only allows any ecclesiastical activity, but also supports it with all possible measures... Simultaneously with the order to kill Stalin, the destroyer of the culture, Adolf Hitler issued a decree on the preservation of all church valuables. In Soviet Russia, the Bibles were partly destroyed, partly exhibited with blasphemous inscriptions in anti-religious museums... We are especially grateful to Adolf Hitler, who found time to take care of the preservation of cultural values and ordered to return the property of the Russian Church. We pray the Lord that he continues to give strength to Adolf Hitler, the strength for the final victory over Bolshevism.”<sup>9</sup>

Despite the fact that this document is, indeed, similar to the materials coming from the renovationalist clergy, the addresses of Metropolitan Sergiy (Voskresenskiy) contained the analysis of the ruling system in the Soviet Union. For example, one should look at a huge array of appeals, decisions, memorandums and notes of the occupation period, many of

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<sup>9</sup> Mukhin V.L. ‘Ot imeni Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi: Gospodi, nisposhli Adol’fu Gitleru silu dlia okonchatel’noi pobedy!’, *Za Rodinu*, 5 December 1942.



which were published in the collection *The Church Against Bolshevism*.<sup>10</sup> A note *The Church in the USSR before the war* drawn up by Metropolitan Sergiy (Voskresenkiy) in the fall of 1941 is the most striking example of this attitude. The note describes the mechanism of influence, or rather complete submission of the Orthodox Church to Soviet power, as well as the form of this submission and its main consequences.<sup>11</sup> In the very beginning of the note Sergiy (Voskresenkiy) describes the main principle of the Bolshevik attitude to religion, and also quite reasonably predicts that this attitude to the Orthodox Church will change due to the future plans of the Soviet government:

“The Bolsheviks set themselves the goal of destroying Christianity. For Bolshevism, the abandonment of this task would be the equivalent to self-abolition. This abandonment is unthinkable. This is clear to anyone who is aware of the satanic essence of Bolshevism. Where did the talks that Bolshevism went to reconciliation with Christianity and allegedly even advocates it come from? These rumours are spread by the Bolsheviks themselves, who consider such a disguise advantageous for themselves in present circumstances. After all, in the past in the interests of their foreign propaganda they already had pretended that they were not persecuting the Church. Lying, along with violence, has always been the favourite weapon of their policy.”<sup>12</sup>

Exarch Sergiy (Voskresenkiy) did not abandon his rhetoric afterwards, but only strengthened his critical assessment of the religious course of Stalin's USSR. A recently published article by K. P. Oboznyi examines the influence of Soviet authorities and the decisions of Sergiy (Stragorodskiy) on the fate of the exarch Sergiy (Voskresenkiy).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Shkarovskiy M. V., Solovyov I. *Tserkov protiv bolshevizma* (Moscow, 2013)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, pp. 164-177

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 164

<sup>13</sup> Oboznyi K.P. “Novyi kurs” religioznoi politiki Stalina i tserkovnaia situatsiia na okkupirovannykh territoriakh Leningradskoi oblasti (1943–1944 gg.), *Gosudarstvo, religii, tserkov v Rossii i za rubezhom*, no. 8, 2017

Shortly before his death Metropolitan Sergiy (Voskresenkiy) spoke at a meeting of archpastors and shepherds of the Baltic Exarchate where he warned the people of the occupied territories of both the Baltics and Russia of a hasty revision of their attitude to the Stalinist regime and exposes the rumours about the changes of the Soviet religious policy:

“Orthodox people! We urge you not to succumb to Bolshevik persuasion and not to believe the Bolshevik promises! Bolshevism is godlessness and inhumanity, violence and lies. Such is its essence, its unchanging nature. Such was it a quarter of a century ago, such it remains now. Is it possible to think that the Bolsheviks suddenly became the champions of the Church after twenty-five years of its persecution, after twenty-five years of terrorist violation of its freedom? That after twenty-five years of slave-owning mockery of Russia they suddenly became filled with love for her? It would be insane to believe it. Stalin is not Saul and will not become Paul.”<sup>14</sup>

The result of this bold statement, distributed among the clergy and believers, was the tragic murder of Exarch of the Baltic States at the end of the April 1944. Researchers still have not given a comprehensive answer to the question of actual customers and perpetrators of this atrocity. But it seems that the ‘Soviet trace’ in this murder was well examined by two researchers from Lithuania (Exarch Sergiy died on the territory of modern Lithuania) — German Shlevis<sup>15</sup> and Regina Laukaityte.<sup>16</sup>

After the end of the war the impartial understanding of the Bolshevik system and its religious policy became impossible again. At this particular time, we can clearly observe the fact of the silence of the ‘church leaders’ about the real religious situation in the country. On the other hand, the discussions begin ‘from below’, on the part of the parishioners, and sometimes they demand the changes in the state religious policy. This problem

<sup>14</sup> Shkarovskiy M. V., Solovyov I. *Tserkov protiv bolshevizma* (Moscow, 2013), p. 256

<sup>15</sup> Shlevis G. “On prishel siuda kak strannik...”. *Sudba mitropolita Sergiia (Voskresenskogo)* (Vilnius, 2017), pp. 200-208, 231-250.

<sup>16</sup> Laukaityte R. ‘Litovskaia pravoslavnaia eparkhiia pod vlast’iu mitropolita Sergiia (Voskresenskogo) 1941-1944’, *Pravoslavie v Baltii*, no. 3 (12), 2015.

was most fully examined by the Russian researcher N.A. Belyakova in her special article about the believers' appeals to power.<sup>17</sup>

The struggle for the rights of religion in the USSR was continued by the emerging movement for the rights of believers and by those representatives of the clergy, who did not agree to be only the obedient executors of the will of the godless state. Today there is no study that would examine the views of the 'Orthodox dissidents' on the Bolshevik persecutions of the Orthodox Church. It is important to note that the existing studies were published outside the USSR and Russia, and were written mainly by foreign authors — Jane Ellis,<sup>18</sup> John Dunlop,<sup>19</sup> Cecile Vaissie,<sup>20</sup> Koendraad de Wolf.<sup>21</sup> For obvious reasons this topic stayed out of the view of Russian researchers for a long time.

In Russia only the last few years have been marked by the release of the series of interviews with dissidents of various ideological convictions: from Marxists to nationalists. The most known collections of interviews are: the collection of Gleb Morev<sup>22</sup> and the collection of Aleksandr Arkhangelskiy.<sup>23</sup> The collection of Aleksandr Arkhangelskiy is better from my point of view and, moreover, it has also a video version consisting of interviews with the main participants of the events. But both these publications only raised new questions, leaving most of the milestones of the dissident movement out of their consideration.

<sup>17</sup> Belyakova N.A. "Soobshchaem o prestuplenii protiv pravosudiia...": obrashcheniia i zhaloby veruiushchikh v brezhnevskom SSSR', *Modern History of Russia*, Vol. 8, no. 3, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Ellis J. *The Russian Orthodox Church: A Contemporary History* (Bloomington, 1986); Ellis J. *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov'. Soglasie i inakomyslie* (London, 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Dunlop J. *Vserossiiskii Sotsial-Khristianskii Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia Naroda. Programma. Sud. V tiur'makh i lageriakh* (Paris, 1975); Dunlop J. B. *The new Russian revolutionaries* (Belmont, 1976).

<sup>20</sup> Vaissie C. *Za Vashu i nashu svobodu. Dissidentskoe dvizhenie v Rossii* (Moscow, 2015).

<sup>21</sup> Wolf, Koenraad de. *Dissident for life: Alexander Ogorodnikov and the struggle for religious freedom in Russia* (Michigan/ Cambridge, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> Morev G. *Dissidenty* (Moscow, 2017).

<sup>23</sup> *Svobodnye liudi. Dissidentskoe dvizhenie v rasskazakh uchastnikov*, Copm. Arkhangelskiy A., Luchenko K., Sorokina T. (Moscow, 2017).

In this article I will try to examine the attitude to the Soviet system of only one association of young Orthodox people — the Christian seminar in Moscow organized by Alexander Ogorodnikov. The members of the seminar described its creation and, most importantly, its striking difference from all other organizations related to the protection of the faith and believers in these words: “For the first time in the history of Russia an Orthodox youth club was started under the leadership of Alexander Ogorodnikov in the city of Moscow. This event shocked the world community. Many still cannot comprehend the grandeur of what happened.”

It was essentially a protest of the Soviet youth, who had evolved from Marxism to Christianity, not only against the existing injustice, but also against the older generation as a whole. In many ways, this movement echoed the ideological search of the younger generation in the West. Even in their musical and ideological preferences the members of the seminar were initially close to American hippies. But the seminar members subsequently overcame that influence. The biography of the seminar leader Alexander Ogorodnikov is a good example of this evolution – he left the university and the Ural region due to the ideological issues, became a student of the VGIK, joined the hippies and only afterwards decided to get baptized.

The participants of the seminar were interested in literally everything concerning the Christianity and the Orthodox Church: the Gospel, iconography, liturgics, church architecture, and, of course, the history of the Orthodox Church. They compiled a special list of references for each topic of the history of Orthodoxy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And that list helped them to get acquainted with recent events and various problems, such as the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad or the Russian Christian student movement. The seminar participants gave special attention to the leaders of religious dissidence – for example, father Dimitri Dudko, priest Gleb Yakunin, Lev Regelson.

Another important detail: the seminar consisted mostly of young people and they loved that the seminar was free from the state atheism, open mockery of religion and ostentatious godlessness. Four dozen of

young men interested in religion were gathering in a small room – in a janitor where Ogorodnikov worked. They listened to lectures, discussed the events that had just happened and criticized the actions of the authorities.

Finally, and in my opinion, this fact is the most important, the seminar participants assessed the godless regime and its activities in relation to the Orthodox Church: “The Russian Orthodox Church suffered terrible sacrifices in the twentieth century and was subject to strict state control. The state violated the limits of its competence and began to regulate religious acts. As a result, it reduced the fullness of the church ministry to the narrow borders of ‘worship’, and has to endure religion only as a museum piece.”<sup>24</sup>

The participants of the seminar paid special attention to the problem of atheistic education and the system of atheistic propaganda in general. In their journal “Obschina” (“Commune”) they assessed the activities of the Soviet authorities in this field in these words:

“Soviet atheism fiercely fights religion, using all means of pressure that state power has. The system of atheistic oppression uses for its repressive interests the means that have emerged as a result of the rapid scientific and technological revolution... Forced atheism is taught in schools and institutes. The huge army of propagandists of atheism, paid by the state, is trying to imbue the soul of the compatriots with the poison of godlessness. Those courageous young people who have taken the liberty to cross the threshold of the church and openly confess their faith are expelled from institutions, dismissed from work, had tragic breaks in families, put to psychiatric barracks, scattered throughout the country as isolated islands.”<sup>25</sup>

It follows from this judgment that only the form of struggle with religion has changed, but in reality the essence of Bolshevism remained absolutely the same and the Soviet authorities continued to oppress the

<sup>24</sup> Arkhiv obshchestva “Memorial”, f. 169, op. 1, d. 9, p. 206

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, l. 16.

clergy and believers, slightly changing its methods: from physical extermination to imprisonment or hospitalization in a special psychiatric medical institution.

The seminar participants also criticized the general orientation on the struggle against religion in the Soviet Union including the accusations that priests either led an asocial way of life or, on the contrary, were enriched by believers; the closure of parishes and the campaign against monasteries, especially against the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra. Another interesting moment – the appeal of the seminar participants to the topic of innocently convicted lay dissidents. Despite all the ideological differences, they paid tribute to the leader of VSHSON Igor Ogurtsov and monitored his jail situation. They also noted the arrests and persecutions of other opponents of blasphemous actions against the Church. Much attention was also paid to Russian emigration. Some of the ‘open letters’ were addressed to Alexander Solzhenitsyn and the seminar participants consulted him about American youth groups and their attitude to religion. There is no doubt that members of the Christian Seminar in Moscow were also interested in the emigrant press – *Posev*, *Vestnik RKhD* and other journals – in order to get information about the religious thought development outside the USSR and about the political aspirations of the Russian emigration.

In addition to religious issues, members of the seminar have decided that they also must publish the ‘open letters’ from believers from different parts of the USSR to the authorities, including the church officials and firstly Patriarch Pimen. These ‘open letters’ concerned the local injustices in the matters of faith. A veteran of World War II Ivan Bovanenko, an active parishioner of the Assumption Church in the city of Pavlograd, Dnipropetrovsk region, complained that the parish had problems with local authorities, and that the commissioner for religious affairs in the Dnipropetrovsk region threatened to active parishioners with arrest in the case of appeals further upstairs. Another published ‘open letter’ came from Poltava.<sup>26</sup> Its author, Zinaida Girinkova, wrote that she was subjected to

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<sup>26</sup> Arkhiv obshchestva “Memorial”, f. 169, op. 1, d. 3, l. 4.

oppression at work.<sup>27</sup> She was forced to dismiss or to give up her view that, on the contrary, would help her promotion. She appealed for help to Patriarch Pimen (Izvekov) as a defender of the interests of all believers.

They seminar members also clearly understood the change in the social structure of parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church. The times, when only old women visited the churches, doing it more according to the tradition than from their fate, passed. Now the intelligentsia, professors and young people rushed into the churches. The seminar members saw it as a fundamental factor of the revival of the Church.

The abolition of the Christian seminar did not take long. The overall intensification of the persecution of dissidents in the late 1970s and early 1980s affected the participants of the seminar. The year 1978 became the most difficult period for them. Besides the arrest of Alexander Ogorodnikov, the events could be restored in the following chronology. On April 30, on Easter Day, the members of the seminar that had gathered at the Ogorodnikov place in Redkino, Kalinin Oblast, were detained. In the middle of May, a search was conducted in Smolensk in the house of the active participant in the seminar Tatyana Shchipkova. The *Obschina* journal and its materials were seized during this search. On the same night, the participant of the seminar Sergey Yermolaev was taken off the train and detained having two typewriters with him. At the end of May the Smolensk KGB engaged in the case. Tatyana Shchipkova will later describe it in her book.<sup>28</sup>

What is common in these two assessments of the Bolshevik anti-religious policies, made in the 1940s and 1970s, so different at first sight?

The first similarity lies in these historical periods. During both the German occupation and the 'Brezhnev stagnation' an unprecedented increase of interest in Christianity was noted. But the reasons were different. During the war the coming to church was caused by an external reason – the temporary occupation of the territory by the Germans, who, although

<sup>27</sup> Arkhiv obshchestva "Memorial", d.1, l.1.

<sup>28</sup> Shchipkova T.N. *Zhenskii portret v tiuremnom inter'ere. Zapiski pravoslavnoi* (Moscow, 2011).

in a reduced form, allowed religious freedom. In the 1970s, the main motive was the search for self, for one's place in society, the rejection of the postulates of the past, the rejection of Marxism, imposed both by society and by the government.

The second common feature is the accurate characterization of the Soviet system and of the essence of atheism. When the official Moscow Patriarchate kept complete silence about the persecutions, and sometimes even publicly refuted them, the representatives of the Orthodox priesthood, who survived the repressions and then served on under the German occupation, could tell about what they had seen during the pre-war years. Just like the young members of the Christian seminar were alone in their attempts to talk about the real relationship between the Church and the Soviet state.

The third common feature is the attempt to send their arguments to those who knew nothing about repressions. In the case of the 1970s these were the circles of the Russian emigration, the Western public in general, who did not know about the real situation of the Orthodox Church in the USSR. During the war the representatives of the Church tried to use the story about the pre-war repressions to force the Germans to change their religious course.

The saddest thing is the absolute lack of interest in this experience from the contemporaries. Moreover, many still criticize the fighters for the rights of the Church, and even openly defame them. And thus it seems that it is not yet the time for this experience to become important for the society.

**Ivan Petrov, Candidate of History**, Saint-Petersburg State University, Institute of History. Research interests: Russian Orthodox Church, Dissident movement, World War II, Antiboldshevism.



Natalia Shlikhta

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## **ADAPTABILITY AS A SURVIVAL STRATEGY UNDER COMMUNISM: RECONSIDERING THE APPROACH OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

Adaptability is a broad and crucial topic for the Soviet-period history of the Russian Orthodox Church that has not received the scholarly attention that it merits. An important reason for this scholarly neglect is in the highly negative connotation of the very concept, as it was not easy and arguably not right for the Church to adapt to Soviet sociopolitical circumstances. Such a view was formed back in the Soviet era under a combined influence of church opposition's and Soviet officials' critique.

This paper suggests approaching the issue through contextualizing the Church's strategy that allows for a more balanced and less value judgment interpretation. Two major contexts are taken into account: of the ecclesiastical tradition and legacy of the Soviet state. Ever since the Great Terror, Soviet power tolerated no opposition and no Other while it employed quite effective methods of the socialization of population.

Taking into account these contexts, I suggest examining the Church's strategy at two closely related levels. The first is a symbolic and rhetorical level, and the second is a level of practice. They are examined against the historical background of estimations from the Soviet period. The chronological focus of the study is the

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mid-1950s –1960s, and it spatially covers the dioceses of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC. The argument advanced in this paper is that adaptability became an inescapable and viable function in the Church's general strategy of survival under communism.

Church opposition and religious dissenters were primarily concerned with the ideological dimension of adaptability. '*Prisposoblenchestvo* to communism' and/or '*prisposoblenchestvo* to atheist power' were amongst the key points of their critique of the official church. The readiness of the hierarchy to accommodate – to identify themselves as 'Soviet citizens', to appropriate Soviet rhetoric, and to reconsider the church social teaching to conform to Soviet sociopolitical circumstances – was condemned as 'conformist', 'opportunistic', and evidence of their subservience.

The communist authorities of the Soviet state were not satisfied with the Church's attempts to adapt either. Stalinist antireligious struggle in the 1920s–1930s was accompanied with a flow of antireligious literature unmasking the Church and its *prisposoblenchestvo*. After World War II, the most powerful challenge came with Khrushchev's antireligious campaign when every effort was taken to overcome backwardness, to indoctrinate population with 'materialistic and scientific outlook', and to make religion 'wither away'.

In this context, any attempt by the Church to maintain its Soviet identification and reinforce its linkage with the state and society run against the continual attempts of state authorities to draw a line of separation based on religious principle. The Church used every opportunity to reinforce this linkage: from the inclusion of state holidays and the official biographies of state leaders into the church calendar to the dedication of special religious ceremonies to official celebrations. The coincidence of Easter with May Day celebrations was interpreted as a symbolically most powerful sign of the unity of the Church and Soviet society.

An examination of episcopal messages and sermons, as well as sermons by priests, sheds light on what might be called the 'appropriation of contemporary (Soviet) consciousness' by the Church. Peace and social morality became usual subjects evoked by the clergy. Conformity between Christian and communist morality was emphasized: Christian principles were presented as identical with the communist ideas of democracy and moreover as their forerunners.

The rhetorical analysis offers valuable insights into the social concern of the Church and the stance of the so-called 'Soviet bishops' and 'Soviet priests'. A designation 'Soviet' is not confined to their political identification as loyal Soviet citizens: it also denotes their socio-cultural identity. During the late 1950s –1960s, a generational change took place in the Orthodox Church: those who were born and

educated after 1917 came to serve the Church as priests and bishops. For inborn Soviet citizens, it was impossible not to believe in the Soviet system or furthermore oppose Soviet sociopolitical, socio-cultural, and socio-economic reality. Their confidence in that the Church had to follow the path and speak the language of modern Soviet society was a logical outcome.

Already those diocesan bishops who survived the antireligious assault of the 1920s–1930s and became bishops under the conditions of the 1943 compromise accepted the rules of the game: the institutional survival of their dioceses and overall of the Church required certain compromise and accommodation on their part. This approach of approximating the interests of the Church with the interests of the state and society and of *religious* and *Soviet* was seen as natural by the younger generation of the episcopate, even under the conditions of Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign. The stance of Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko), head of the Ukrainian Exarchate since 1966, is examined in more details as a perfect illustration.

An interpretation of the Soviet-era adaptability of the Russian Orthodox Church advanced in this paper does not resolve all the complications, however. A case study becomes the most effective research method, as it allows accounting for the context and examining actors' self-justifications, their declared aims, and actual results gained. Simultaneously, when general conclusions are drawn, distant consequences of employing this strategy by the ROC, which became visible after the collapse of the USSR, cannot be completely disregarded.

**Keywords:** Russian Orthodox Church, Soviet period, Stalinism, Khrushchev's antireligious campaign, the Ukrainian Exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church

## Introduction

Adaptability is a broad and crucial topic for the Soviet-period history of the Russian Orthodox Church (thereafter – ROC) that has not received the scholarly attention that it merits. An important reason for this scholarly neglect is in the highly negative connotation of the very concept, as it was not easy and arguably not right for the Church to adapt to Soviet sociopolitical circumstances. Such a view was formed back in the Soviet era under a combined influence of the church opposition's and Soviet officials' critique.

An approach that presumed the Church's acceptance of Soviet socio-political reality and identification of its clergy and faithful as Soviet citizens was put forth by Metropolitan Sergii (Stragorodskii) in his Proclamation of 29 July 1927. The head of the Church explained the reason: "Only impractical dreamers can think that such an immense community as our Orthodox Church, with all its organizations, may peacefully exist in the country by hiding itself from the Government."<sup>2</sup> He then required from priests and believers:

"We must show, not in words, but in deeds, that not only people indifferent to Orthodoxy, or those who reject it, can be faithful citizens of the Soviet Union, loyal to the Soviet government, but also the most fervent adherents of Orthodoxy [...] We wish to be Orthodox and at the same time to claim the Soviet Union as our civil Motherland."<sup>3</sup>

The Proclamation was rejected by many from the Church because of an intended approximation of the interests of the Church and of the atheist state that caused the largest split within the Church and the birth of the underground community. Unexpectedly, it was not well received by the Stalinist regime either and did not safeguard the Church from a new wave of antireligious persecutions. Walter Kolarz explains that the reason is to be found in the same – desired by the Metropolitan – approximation of the interests of the Church and the state, "the Soviet communists feared that people could easily misinterpret the fact that Sergei put religion into pro-Soviet attire. They may have harboured the illusion that this made religion 'less harmful'."<sup>4</sup> According to some evidence, the original Russian term *prisposoblenchestvo* was immediately used as a pejorative label for Metropolitan Sergei's approach by Emelyan Yaroslavskii, founder and leader of the League of Militant Godless.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in: Fletcher W. C. *A Study in Survival: The Church in Russia 1927-1943*. – London: S.P.C.K., 1965, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> Kolarz W. *Religion in the Soviet Union*. – London: Macmillan & Co Ltd., 1961, p. 44.

<sup>5</sup> Talantov B. *Sergeevshchina ili prisposoblenchestvo k ateizmu (Irodova zakvaska)*. Read on February 11, 2019, in electronic format: <http://www.eshatologia.org/329-sergievshina-prisposoblenchestvo-k-ateizmu.html>

This paper suggests approaching the adaptability of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet state through contextualizing the Church's strategy. The first step would be to account for ecclesiastical tradition and legacy. As the Church of Byzantine tradition, it relied on the theory of the church-state *symphonia* and the practice of the 'Constantine'/Caesaropapist' model of relations with state authorities.<sup>6</sup> As the established Church in the confessional state prior to 1917,<sup>7</sup> it used to be 'positive' in its attitude towards secular power<sup>8</sup> and to accommodate itself with state interests, if we recall Ernst Troeltsch.<sup>9</sup> Peter Sugar adds that only a historical tradition could legitimize any possible oppositional role played by the Church in the communist state.<sup>10</sup> Because of the absence of any precedents in the pre-1917 past, it was 'unthinkable' for the ROC (to use Vasyl Ulianovsky's words<sup>11</sup>) to oppose the state, even the one that called itself atheist.

The other is the context of the Soviet state. Adriano Rocucci calls to interpret any decisions by the Church "within their proper historical context".<sup>12</sup> After World War II, the Soviet Union established itself as one of the world's superpowers. At home, the state (because of many reasons

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<sup>6</sup> See, for instance: Papadakis A. The Historical Tradition of Church-State Relations under Orthodoxy // *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by P. Ramet. – Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988. – Pp. 38–41; Kalkandjieva D. A Comparative Analysis on Church-State Relations in Eastern Orthodoxy: Concepts, Models, and Principles // *Journal of Church and State* 53, 2011. No 4, pp. 587–614

<sup>7</sup> For more details on this see: Kalkandjieva D. A Comparative Analysis on Church-State Relations, p. 594

<sup>8</sup> Stark W. *The Sociology of Religion: A Study of Christendom*. Vol. 1: *Established Religion*. – London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966, p.3

<sup>9</sup> Aldridge A. *Religion in the Contemporary World: A Sociological Introduction*. – Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000, p. 39

<sup>10</sup> Sugar P. The Historical Role of Religious Institutions in Eastern Europe and Their Place in the Communist Party-State // *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, ed. by P. Ramet. – Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1989, pp. 42–59

<sup>11</sup> Ulianovsky V. *Tserkva v Ukrainskii Derzhavi, 1917–1920*, vol. 1: *Doba Ukrainskoi Tsentralnoi Rady*. – Kyiv: Lybid, 1997, pp. 4, 184.

<sup>12</sup> Rocucci A. *Stalin i patriarb: Pravoslavnaya tserkov i sovetskaya vlast, 1917–1958*. – Moscow: Politicheskaya entsiklopediya, 2016, p.18

ranging from the mass repressions of the 1920s–1930s to the propagandistic success of Soviet industrialization and educational system) managed to secure loyalty and obedience of Soviet population. The outcome was clear for the Church, as explained by Roccucci, “The Orthodox Church, which wished not to stay aside from the real life of Soviet citizens, had to interact with a new society willy-nilly... But how can you feet into the system, if you are not ready to become alike and wish to remain loyal to tradition?”<sup>13</sup> This was especially so, as the state had totalitarian aspirations and was ready to tolerate no opposition and no Other. Ever since the Great Terror, no institutional opposition was possible in the Soviet state, while institutional survival necessarily presumed accommodation with the dominant system.

The placement of the challenge faced by the ROC under communism and the survival strategy that it chose within a broader comparative context allows for a more balanced and less value judgment interpretation. Back in the nineteenth century, a prominent Catholic theologian John Henry Newman explained that the Church was not “placed in a void, but in the crowded world”.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the views that it expressed must correspond to various “persons and circumstances and must be thrown into new shapes according to the form of society”, in which this Church functions.<sup>15</sup>

Taking all these contexts into account, I suggest examining the strategy chosen by the ROC at two closely related levels. The first is a symbolic and rhetorical level, and the second is a level of practice. They are examined against the historical background of estimations from the Soviet period. The chronological focus of the study is the mid-1950s–1960s, and it spatially covers the dioceses of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC. The argument advanced in this paper is that adaptability became an

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<sup>13</sup> Roccucci A. *Stalin i patriarb: Pravoslavnaya tserkov i sovetskaya vlast, 1917–1958*, p. 19

<sup>14</sup> Newman J. H. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine (The Edition of 1845)*, ed. by J. M. Cameron. – London: Penguin Books, 1974. – P. 131.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

inescapable and viable function in the Church's general strategy of survival in the Soviet state.

### Soviet-Period Characterizations of the Church's Adaptability

Church opposition and religious dissenters were primarily concerned with the ideological dimension of adaptability. '*Prisposoblenchestvo* to communism' and/or '*prisposoblenchestvo* to atheist power' were amongst the key points of their critique of the official church. The readiness of the hierarchy to accommodate – to identify themselves as 'Soviet citizens', to appropriate Soviet rhetoric, and to reconsider church social teaching to conform to Soviet sociopolitical circumstances – was condemned as 'conformist', 'opportunistic', and evidence of their subservience.

In 1956, an anonymous witness at the jubilee celebrations of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the restoration of the Moscow Patriarchy, for instance, criticized 'young bishops' for that "they could adapt to any circumstances, regardless of the interests of the Church".<sup>16</sup> Not unexpectedly, the Open Letter by Moscow priests Nikolai Eschliman and Gleb Yakunin to Patriarch Aleksii (Simanskii) of November 21, 1965, which soon became known in the West thanks to religious samizdat, also raised the issue of *prisposoblenchestvo*. The disastrous consequences of Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign, they claimed, largely resulted from the "connivance of the Highest Church Power, which avoids fulfilling their sacred duties before Christ and the Church and has violated the Apostolic testament and adapted to their own time."<sup>17</sup>

The text by a Kirov priest Boris Talantov, named '*Sergeevshchina* or *prisposoblenchestvo* to atheism (Herod's mold)', contains the most eloquent criticism of *prisposoblenchestvo*. Written in 1967, the text condemns

<sup>16</sup> *Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vshchbykh orhaniv vldy i upravlinnia Ukrainy* (TDAVO), F. 4648, O. 5, File 128, pp. 15-17.

<sup>17</sup> *Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv bromadskykh obiednan Ukrainy* (TDAH), F. 1, O. 31, File 2972, p. 7.

*prisposoblenchestvo* as a “lack of faith, disbelief in Divine power and Divine Providence [that is] incompatible with true Christianity”.<sup>18</sup> Talantov was convinced that this strategy drew from “a false differentiation of spiritual needs into religious and socio-political ones. [According to this strategy,] the Church has to satisfy the religious needs of Soviet citizens only, not affecting socio-political, which are to be satisfied with the ideology of the Communist party”.<sup>19</sup> He sees *prisposoblenchestvo* as a “mechanical [*i.e.*, artificial] conjuncture of Christian dogmas and rituals with the socio-political views and ideology of the Communist party.”<sup>20</sup> The author stresses that this attempt to combine what was incompatible turned the “church government [into an] obedient instrument of atheist power” for the destruction of the Church from within.<sup>21</sup> Talantov clearly contrasts the approach by Metropolitan Sergii and his followers to the ‘courageous struggle for faith and truth’ by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński in socialist Poland.<sup>22</sup> Such contrasting will later become commonplace in the historical literature.<sup>23</sup>

It might sound unexpected, but those who, according to Talantov, benefited from *prisposoblenchestvo* – the communist authorities of the Soviet state – were not satisfied with it either. Stalinist antireligious struggle in the 1920s–1930s was accompanied with a flow of antireligious literature unmasking the Church and its *prisposoblenchestvo*.<sup>24</sup> The earliest attack on *prisposoblenchestvo* from the postwar period is found in a letter

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<sup>18</sup> Talantov B. Sergeevshchina

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Also see his other text: Talantov B. Tainoie uchastie Moskovskoi Patriarkhii v borbe KPSS s Provoslavnoi Hristianskoi Tserkovyu (Krizis tserkovnogo upravleniya). Read on February 11, 2019, in electronic format: <http://afanasiy.net/novomuchenik-borys-talantov-nepomynaiucshyi-sovetskuiu-lje-yerarhiyu-proslavlenniyi-russkoi-zarubejnoi-cerkoviu>

<sup>22</sup> Talantov B. Sergeevshchina

<sup>23</sup> See, for instance, Yelensky V. *Derzhavno-tserkovni vzaiemyny na Ukraini: 1917-1990*. – Kyiv, 1991, p. 39

<sup>24</sup> For more details see: Kurochkin P. K. *Evolutsiya sovremennogo russkogo pravoslavya*. – Moscow: Mysl, 1971, p. 124



written by Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich, director of the Museum of the History of Religion and Atheism, on March 15, 1947. The letter became a clear sign that the state-church compromise brought to life by the Stalinist turn in the policy of September 1943 was coming to an end. In his overview of the publications of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchy*, the author primarily criticized their inclination to reconcile religion and science, Christianity and socialism.<sup>25</sup> The approach of the journal editorial, defined as “a conjuncture of ‘Christian communism’ (‘the worst of socialism,’ as Lenin said) and clericalism”,<sup>26</sup> was seen as an instrument enabling the Church to claim that “there are no borders between the Church and the State in the USSR, while there is a close cooperation between them”.<sup>27</sup> This caused serious harm to communist ideology, as the author warned.<sup>28</sup>

This criticism should not be surprising, given the regime’s persistent striving for the isolation of the *traditionalist* Church from a *modernized* socialist society.<sup>29</sup> Khrushchev’s antireligious campaign of 1958–1964 was just an instance in his grand struggle against backwardness and for communist modernity.<sup>30</sup> Religion was labelled as a remnant and an obstacle to building communism and therefore any attempt by the episcopate and clergy to bridge tradition and modernity/religion and communism / the Church and the state at the level of pronouncements, and the level of practice were regarded as an efficient approach to safeguard the Church.

The Resolution of the Communist Party Central Committee of 7 July 1954, which became the earliest sign of the renewal of antireligious

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<sup>25</sup> *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsialno-politicheskoi istorii* (RGASPI), F. 17, O. 125, File 506, pp. 67, 69

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> For more details see: Shlikhta N. *Tserkva tykh, khto vyzhyv. Radianska Ukraina, seredyna 1940-kh – pochatok 1970-kh rr.* – Kharkiv: Akta, 2011, pp. 39-79

<sup>30</sup> Andrew Stone insightfully contextualizes this campaign in his article: Stone A. B. “Overcoming Peasant Backwardness”: The Khrushchev Antireligious Campaign and the Rural Soviet Union // *Russian Review* 67, 2008, No 2, pp. 296-320

struggle, mentioned the danger of the adaptation of the Church to “contemporary circumstances [which was seen as a] means of spreading the religious ideology”.<sup>31</sup> This assessment was repeated almost literally as soon as the antireligious campaign was waged in the speech of I. Sivenkov, member of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CROCA), on January 20, 1959. He claimed that by “adapting to contemporary circumstances [the episcopate and clergy did not attempt to become] conscious Soviet citizens, [but rather sought] efficient means to influence the faithful and society.”<sup>32</sup> Sivenkov defined priests as “ideological enemies” and reminded Lenin’s warning that “the embellishment of religion, disguised under socialism, under science... is the most dangerous abomination and vilest infection.”<sup>33</sup> The primary danger personified by the *modernized* Church was seen in that it “strengthens its own authority amongst population”<sup>34</sup> and was capable of exerting certain impact also upon Soviet children and the youth.<sup>35</sup>

These remained the key points in the official assessment of church adaptability through the 1960s–1970s. The conclusion was clear: “This form of the self-defence of religion considerably complicates our struggle and requires from us the elaboration of more perfect and effective countermeasures” (1966).<sup>36</sup>

A somewhat different assessment was offered by the Soviet sociologists of religion since the second half of the 1960s. They abstained from using the term *prisposoblenchestvo* while talked about the *modernization* and *update* of religion and considered this to be a complex process, reluctant for the Church, which was aimed at strengthening/spreading religiosity. Simultaneously, this process, as they claimed, undermined the

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<sup>31</sup> Quoted in: Kurochkin P. K. *Evolutsiya*, p. 91

<sup>32</sup> TDAH O, F. 1, O. 24, File 5028, p. 120.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, p. 119

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p. 139

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, p. 101

<sup>36</sup> RGASPI, F. 606, O. 4, File 86, p. 38

Church from within because religion as an ideology and church as an institution were highly conservative.<sup>37</sup>

Very much close to the above are characterizations found in the writings/pronouncements of the episcopate and clergy. They claimed it was impossible for the Church not to adapt within the new sociopolitical environment (“It is one thing to write theoretically ... about the needs and demands of theology in the time of social revolutions... and it’s a different thing to live under these conditions, experience their effects, and profess Christ within socialist and secularized society”<sup>38</sup>) and broader within the context of secular modernity (“[We can see] Christians’ ambition to find place for themselves within a new world and to say something of their own to this world of new ideas and new relations”<sup>39</sup>). Such explanations and justifications can be easily (and actually had been) criticized for their ‘opportunism’ and ‘ideological mimicry’. Estimations would most probably become less straightforward when the same necessity to adapt was voiced by those who are commonly praised for their defence of church rights. Archbishop Luka (Voyno-Yasenetsky)<sup>40</sup> was unequivocal when he said that the Orthodox faithful “is completely alien to materialism which forms the ideological basis of communism”.<sup>41</sup> Simultaneously, he had no doubts that they had to be/were loyal citizens and “Soviet people... who appreciate... the great social truth of our... socialist system” (1948).<sup>42</sup> Frs. Eschliman and Yakunin in their Open Letter criticized the strategy of the church hierarchy. They were nonetheless convinced that while the

<sup>37</sup> RGASPI, F. 606, O. 4, File 80, pp. 86-97; *Ibid.*, File 15, pp. 6-84; Kurochkin P. K. *Evolutsiya*. – Esp. pp. 85-125

<sup>38</sup> Rev. Vitalii Borovoi (1966), quoted in: Kurochkin P. K. *Evolutsiya*, p. 86

<sup>39</sup> Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) (1966), quoted in: Kurochkin P. K. *Evolutsiya*, p. 97

<sup>40</sup> See one of the recent pieces on him: Petrov I. The Orthodox Church and the Totalitarian Regime in the Post-War Crimea: A Survival Strategy of Archbishops Joasaph (Zhurmanov) and Luka (Voyno-Yasenetsky) // *Religijski-filozofski raksti XXIII*. Riga, 2017, pp. 106-120.

<sup>41</sup> Luka (the Archbishop of Krym and Simferopol). K miru prizval nas Gospod // *Zhurnal Moskovskoi patriarkhii* 1. 1948, p. 62

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

essence of church teaching remained changeless, its concrete forms had to be “constantly updated” in order to always make this teaching “available to humankind”.<sup>43</sup> They furthermore drew parallels with Christians’ life outside the Soviet borders and, for instance, mentioned the *aggiornamento* reforms by Vatican II.<sup>44</sup>

### Symbolic and Rhetorical Means<sup>45</sup>

Ever since the 1927 Proclamation of Metropolitan Sergii, the official church claimed it was Soviet and Orthodox clergy and faithful were loyal Soviet citizens. Such identification was not accepted by the state (the 1943 compromise was the only notable exception) that persistently attempted to build the wall between *modernized* Soviet society and the *traditionalist* Church. The most powerful challenge came with Khrushchev’s antireligious campaign when every effort was taken to overcome backwardness, to indoctrinate population with ‘materialistic and scientific outlook’, and to make religion ‘wither away’.

In this context, any attempt by the Church to maintain its Soviet identification and reinforce its linkage with the state and society run against the continual attempts of state authorities to draw a line of separation based on religious principle. The Church used every opportunity to reinforce this linkage: from the inclusion of state holidays and the official biographies of state leaders into the church calendar to the dedication of special religious ceremonies to official celebrations (7 November, Victory Day of 9 May, 1 May, etc.).<sup>46</sup> The official attitude towards any attempt by

<sup>43</sup> TDAHO, F. 1, O. 31, File 2972, pp. 32-33

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p. 33

<sup>45</sup> The issue raised in this section is also addressed in my articles: Shlikhta N. “Orthodox” and “Soviet”: the Identity of Soviet Believers (1940s – early 1970s) // *Forum for Anthropology and Culture* 11. 2015. – Pp. 150-154; Shlikhta N. “Pravoslavnyi” i “sovetskii”: k voprosu ob identichnosti veruyushchih sovetskih grazhdan // *Antropologicheskii Forum* 23. 2014, pp. 92-97

<sup>46</sup> For more details see: Beliakova N. Istoricheskii opyt sovetsizatsii russkogo pravoslaviya i ego transfer v strany Vostochnoi Evropy posle Vtoroi mirovoi voyny // *Slavia Orientalis* LXVI. 2017, Nr 1, pp. 118-119.

the Church to establish this symbolic linkage was vividly disclosed by the chairman of the village soviet of Olbyn in Chernihivska Oblast. He reportedly exclaimed when discovered the parish priest's intention to celebrate the liturgy on the date of Stalin's seventieth anniversary: "How reckless you are to link the name of Stalin with the name of Christ!"<sup>47</sup>

The idea voiced by Metropolitan Ioann (Sokolov), head of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC, had significant and 'dangerous' political implications, as was made clear by Grygorii Korchevoi, Republican Plenipotentiary of the CROCA, in his report of January 6, 1954. Striving to affirm the historical linkage between the Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian and Russian peoples, Metropolitan Ioann found it advisable to widely celebrate the anniversary of the 'reunification' of Ukraine and Russia in all the churches of the Ukrainian Exarchate. He proposed to schedule festive liturgies on the dates of official celebrations and required his episcopate and clergy to prepare special sermons to mark this important event.<sup>48</sup> Korchevoi was negatively disposed towards this undertaking and actually forbade the Church to have a voice in these celebrations.

In no other case, the symbolic linkage of the Church and society so markedly manifested itself as when the pre-eminent feast of Easter coincided with May Day celebrations. Soviet officials were alarmed by the increasing number of people who attended the Easter Mass, notwithstanding that the clergy rescheduled the religious ceremony for a less appropriate time to allow the faithful to participate in the May Day demonstrations.<sup>49</sup> An even more troubling recurrent pattern observed by the local plenipotentiaries of the CROCA and later of the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) was that the participation of the youth and children in festive services similarly increased.<sup>50</sup>

The diocesan administrations seemed to worry little about this coincidence, easily complying with the plenipotentiaries' demands to reschedule

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<sup>47</sup> TDAHO, F. 1, O. 24, File 12, p. 176

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, O. 24, File 3532, p. 2

<sup>49</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 7, p. 2

<sup>50</sup> TDAHO, F. 1, O. 23, File 5377, p. 15-16; TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 1, File 193, p. 2

services during the Holy Week and on Easter to an inappropriate time.<sup>51</sup> They were confident that the faithful would attend churches regardless of public celebrations. Many bishops even issued special orders requiring the clergy to more thoroughly prepare for festivities and increase security measures to keep order in overcrowded churches.<sup>52</sup>

It is, even more, telling that this coincidence usually gave an impetus to a “more solemn and majestic celebration” of Easter.<sup>53</sup> The episcopate and clergy emphasized in Easter sermons that the coincidence of Easter and May 1<sup>st</sup> was a sign of the unity of the Church and Soviet people. An extract from the sermon of Fr. Mylkov from Berdiansk was presented in the report of Kozakov, plenipotentiary in Zaporizka Oblast, to illustrate his point that “*tserkovniki* had not missed this opportunity to adapt in order to attract as many people to churches as possible.”<sup>54</sup> Fr. Mylkov’s sermon contained an insightful passage:

Brothers and sisters! Orthodox! In a few days we will celebrate Holy Easter, which is linked with May Day celebrations. This close unity of two popular holidays is blessed by God and professes our inseparable linkage with our people. God bless our eternal friendship with our people! Thank Jesus Christ!<sup>55</sup>

An examination of episcopal messages and sermons, as well as sermons by priests, sheds light on what might be called the “appropriation of contemporary (Soviet) consciousness” by the Church. Glennys Young insightfully caught the essence of such appropriation. Drawing on her assessment of the ‘perfect adaptability’ of the Orthodox clergy and laity and thereby questioning a simplistic understanding of *prisposoblenchestvo*, she maintains: “They were the assimilators, not the assimilated”.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 1, File 429, pp. 8, 36

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, File 193, p. 32, 123

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, O. 5, File 42, p.125

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, p. 118

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Young G. *Power and the Sacred in Revolutionary Russia: Religious Activists in the Village*. – University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997, p. 276

'Peace' became one of the main subjects evoked by the episcopate and clergy. This served to demonstrate that the concerns of the Church were identical with the concerns of Soviet society. A quote from Archbishop Palladii's (Kaminsky) sermon on the Holy Saturday of April 17, 1971, is representative. The Archbishop began his sermon establishing symbolic linkage between the Church and 'all the progressive people' since both struggled to maintain peace on Earth. He finished it by calling the Orthodox faithful to "actively participate in efforts towards strengthening peace on Earth through the feat of peaceful labour to the glory of Our Great Motherland".<sup>57</sup>

A more careful reading suggests that there was a more significant objective behind such constant references to peace in sermons and messages. Archbishop Palladii's sermon on the Holy Saturday of 1971 opens with the phrase, "After the Resurrection, Christ greeted the Church with the words: 'Peace unto you all!' Today, the call for peace is voiced in all the parts of the Universe".<sup>58</sup> The Easter sermon of 1968 by Rev. Zheliuk from Zhytomyr is representative of priestly sermons, "Jesus sacrificed Himself in order to serve people and He calls us for such sacrifice. He calls us to follow Him and to struggle for peace among all the people."<sup>59</sup> The delivered message was unambiguous: the Christian Church was presented as the perennial guardian of peace. This explains why plenipotentiaries objected to such reference in liturgical sermons, accusing bishops and priests in *prisposoblenchestvo* and 'allegoric pronouncements'.<sup>60</sup>

Another subject developed by the episcopate and clergy was social morality. Conformity between Christian and communist morality was emphasized: Christian principles were presented as identical with the communist ideas of democracy, 'collective behaviour', and 'collective labour'. Archbishop Luka elaborated on the main points of the interweaving of Christian and communist principles in his study *Science and Religion*,

<sup>57</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 246, p. 22.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. See also: Ibid., O. 1, File 193, p. 16.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., O. 5, File 88, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., File 189, p. 4, 78.

implying causality between the two. The Archbishop defined the Evangelical Message as the ‘forerunner of true humanism’ and democracy.<sup>61</sup> Particularly, he elaborated on the following Evangelical principles: love of the people<sup>62</sup> and hence the Evangelical Message of peace (he emphasized that this did not presume “love of the enemies of Our Motherland [...] This is a dangerous and an evidently false accusation”);<sup>63</sup> call for the active attitude towards life and diligent labor;<sup>64</sup> distrust of individualism (“Nothing is less in conformity with the Gospel than individualism”);<sup>65</sup> and protest against social inequality and the “exploitation of man by man.”<sup>66</sup>

The episcopate and clergy emphasized that the Ten Commandments first introduced those patterns of human behaviour that were required by Soviet law.<sup>67</sup> A close proximity of Christian and communist principles – they were claimed to be ‘synonymous’ in many sermons – was used to justify the relevance of the Church in the Soviet landscape: it was “virtually impossible to oppose [communist] democracy and Christianity”.<sup>68</sup> Much attention in the 1954 circular by the CROCA, *Regarding the Nowadays Forms and Methods of the Ideological Impact of the Church on Believers*, was devoted to the sermon of an unnamed Orthodox priest who maintained that Christian ideas served as “the primary sources of all progressive ideas... that penetrated deeply into [contemporary] social and individual consciousness”.<sup>69</sup> This priest traced the implementation of Christian principles in the Soviet educational system, public health system, public insurance, public charity, etc.

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<sup>61</sup> Luka, Archbishop (Voyno-Yasenetsky). *Nauka i religiia*. – Moscow: Troitskoie slovo, 2001. – P. 75.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 77, 89.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 78, 104.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 95–96.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> *Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (GARF), F. 6991, O. 2, File 528, p. 34.

<sup>68</sup> *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii* (RGANI), F. 5, O. 16, File 669, pp. 89–90

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, pp. 90–91



The circular allows accessing the clergy's own justification of *prisposoblenchestvo*. These extracts from the private talks of Orthodox priests (again unnamed) serve as insightful illustrations to the argument advanced in these pages:

“We have to take into account that atheism has penetrated deeply into human society... If we denounce democratic ideals that are identical with Christian, many believers will either become atheists themselves or will not be able to oppose communism. If the Church digresses to reaction, it will only add fuel to [anti-religious struggle]. However, if it follows the path of its people, it will disarm atheism.”<sup>70</sup>

### ‘Soviet Priests’ and ‘Soviet Bishops’: From Words to Actions

The rhetorical analysis above offers valuable insights into the social concern of the Church and the stance of the so-called ‘Soviet bishops’ and ‘Soviet priests’. A designation ‘Soviet’ is not confined to their political identification as loyal Soviet citizens. It also denotes their socio-cultural identity and particularly their assimilation of ‘contemporary consciousness’, if we recall Young. During the late 1950s–1960s, a generational change took place in the Orthodox Church. Those who were born and educated after 1917 came to serve the Church as priests and bishops.<sup>71</sup> For inborn Soviet citizens, it was impossible not to believe in the Soviet system<sup>72</sup> or furthermore oppose Soviet sociopolitical, socio-cultural, and socio-economic reality. Their confidence in that the Church had to follow the path and speak the language of modern Soviet society was a logical outcome.

<sup>70</sup> *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii* (RGANI), F. 5, O. 16, File 669, p. 92

<sup>71</sup> Some statistics is provided by Roccucci: Roccucci A. *Stalin i patriarch*, pp. 358–361

<sup>72</sup> Stephen Kotkin elaborates on the “willing suspension of disbelief” by Soviet citizens: Kotkin S. *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*. – Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, pp. 227–230, 358

Religious dissenters primarily criticized them for their '*prispoblenchestvo* to atheism'. Simultaneously, their activities were of great concern for the CROCA/CRA that urged their plenipotentiaries to "restrict in every way their energy and competence" in extra-liturgical matters.<sup>73</sup>

Since the mid-1950s, the CROCA/CRA repeatedly drew attention to a troubling fact that 'Soviet bishops' and 'Soviet priests' in their overwhelming majority were the graduates of theological schools that suggested the failure of the regime's attempt to turn theological education into the means for the preparation of 'traditionalist rite-performers'. The CROCA information note No 777s to the party Central Committee of December 14, 1955, stated, "It is a widely observed phenomenon that those priests who have graduated from theological schools are the most active amongst the servants of the Church. This is confirmed by many laudable comments on their activities received from bishops, the rectors of parishes, and the faithful."<sup>74</sup>

The number of priests who received institutional theological training was not large.<sup>75</sup> Hence the number of those pastorally and socially active 'Soviet priests', of whom these graduates formed a larger part, was not considerable.

Moreover, still Lenin's explanation of the danger personified by such priests was immediately evoked when Khrushchev's antireligious campaign began, which is quite telling:

"A corrupted traditionalist priest is much less dangerous exactly for "democracy", than a priest... who rejects traditionalism, is loyal to the state, and democratically minded. It is easy to unmask the former... while it is much more difficult to expel the latter; it is a thousand times harder to unmask him (quoted in Sivenkov's speech on January 20, 1959)."<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 1, File 176, p. 80.

<sup>74</sup> RGANI, F. 5, O. 16, File 743, p. 91

<sup>75</sup> Statistics on the graduates of seminaries in the Ukrainian Exarchate is provided in: Shlikhta N. *Tserkva tykb, khto vyzhhyv*, p. 201

<sup>76</sup> TDAHO, F. 1, O. 24, File 5028, p. 119

The Deputy Republican Plenipotentiary of the CROCA, Katunin, observed in the late 1950s that young ‘Soviet priests’ paid more attention to preaching than the older clergy, turning it into an important means of communicating with their flock.<sup>77</sup> An examination of the standard subjects evoked in priestly sermons and their language suggests that ‘Soviet priests’ talked the language of contemporary society, well understood its concerns, and attempted to assert the relevance of the Evangelical Message even within a ‘highly secularized’ context. According to the plenipotentiaries’ observations, the activities of such priests were especially visible in rural areas, where priests interacted with relatively small communities, and it was feasible for them to establish personal relations with others, besides regular churchgoers. Plenipotentiaries, quite predictably, objected to the appointment of active young priests to rural parishes, primarily anticipating their potential influence on the youth with whom they shared a common educational background and socio-cultural outlook.<sup>78</sup>

The activities of ‘Soviet priests’ were never confined to church walls and communication with the faithful during the liturgy. They were eager to assume the role of pastors, caring for the spiritual and general welfare of their flock, their families and children. Fr. Zheliuk from a village in Khmelnytska Oblast opposed the official secularization program when he urged his parishioners who worried about the improper behaviour of their children to bring them to the church: “If school cannot fulfil its worthy task [of the upbringing of the youth], we will try to accomplish this ourselves.”<sup>79</sup> These priests undertook personal visits to the believers’ houses during which they had an opportunity to communicate with their families in an informal and relaxed atmosphere.

Furthermore, they openly acted as counsellors when invited people to visit them in their own apartments with any concern the latter had.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> RGANI, F. 5, O. 33, File 90, pp. 12–13.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, File 91, p. 77; TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 1, File 298, p. 27

<sup>79</sup> RGANI, F. 5, O. 33, File 91, p. 78

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, File 90, p. 13; TDAHO, F. 1, O. 24, File 4927, p. 57

Already those diocesan bishops who survived the antireligious assault of the 1920s–1930s and became bishops under the conditions of the 1943 compromise accepted the rules of the game: the institutional survival of their dioceses and overall of the Church required certain compromise and accommodation on their part. Being a devote believer (“All my joy and all my life is in serving God, because my faith is deep,” from a letter to son<sup>81</sup>) and a staunch defender of church rights and generally of religion,<sup>82</sup> Archbishop Luka considered church members to be loyal Soviet citizens. He was a perfect embodiment of this intrinsic duality himself: a person who served both God and science and carried the cross together with the medal as a winner of the Stalin Prize.

Not only did Archbishop Palladii use familiar Soviet formulas in his speeches but he also called Orthodox flock to be “loyal children of our Beloved Motherland” and “help the Motherland with your honest and selfless work to build the happy future of Soviet people.”<sup>83</sup> He even expressed his support of the Soviet invasion to Czechoslovakia in 1968, “I consider these events in Czechoslovakia, and particularly the fact that our armed forces together with those of other friendly governments entered Czechoslovakia’s territory, as quite normal. Something similar happened in Hungary earlier.”<sup>84</sup> This, however, did not secure him in the eyes of Soviet officials who called him a “two-faced figure”<sup>85</sup> and even the “most reactionary bishop”.<sup>86</sup>

The reason was that many of his actions as a bishop and as the editor-in-chief of the *Orthodox Herald*<sup>87</sup> – from his attempts to raise the

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<sup>81</sup> Quoted in: Rocucci A. *Stalin i patriarch*, p. 210

<sup>82</sup> His study *Science and religion* was an attempt to demonstrate that religion is compatible with modernity and science and to find ways to influence the Soviet youth.

<sup>83</sup> Palladii (archbishop of Zhytomyr i Ovruch) *Vsenorodne sviato // Pravoslavnyi visnyk* 10. 1970, p. 345

<sup>84</sup> RGANI, F. 5, O. 60, File 24, p. 151

<sup>85</sup> TDAHO, F. 1, O. 24, File 5028, p. 167

<sup>86</sup> GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 1788, p. 15

<sup>87</sup> *The Orthodox Herald* was the official magazine of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC.

educational level of the clergy to his opposing remarks on official anti-religious measures and conflicts with local Soviet officials – contributed to securing religious life in his dioceses.<sup>88</sup>

This approach of approximating the interests of the Church with the interests of the state and society and of *religious* and *Soviet* was seen as natural by the younger generation of the episcopate, even under the conditions of Khrushchev's antireligious campaign. The stance of Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko) (born in 1929), head of the Ukrainian Exarchate since 1966, would be a perfect illustration here. It is noteworthy to provide an estimation of the stance of then Archimandrite Filaret provided by Bibik, plenipotentiary in Kyivska Oblast. In the letter to the Ukrainian republican government, Bibik doubted the wisdom of the appointment of Archimandrite Filaret as the Head of the Chancellery of the Ukrainian Exarchate in February 1961. Bibik raised this issue, even though he was aware that "the idea to dismiss Skoropostizhnyi and replace him with Filaret was put forth not by the Moscow Patriarchate but by the KGB... This decision was in the interests of the weakening of the position of the Church in Ukraine and not vice versa."<sup>89</sup> Bibik argued instead, "Filaret is one of the most harmful priests of Kyiv who constantly violates our Soviet legislation on the cults."<sup>90</sup> To elaborate, he contrasted a "well educated, smart, energetic, and able" 'Soviet priest' Denysenko to Rev. Mykolai Skoropostizhnyi, described as a traditionalist priest, moreover compromised because of his collaboration with the Nazis.<sup>91</sup> Bibik emphasized that acting as the Head of the Chancellery, Archimandrite Filaret seriously complicated the CROCA supervision over the activities of the Exarchate and "considerably strengthened the position of the Kyiv Diocesan Administration".<sup>92</sup>

This controversy marking the early stages in the career of Metropolitan Filaret adds to the comprehension of his activities as the Exarch of

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<sup>88</sup> For more details see my article: Shlikhta N. Portraits of Two Bishops Defending Their Dioceses: A Study of the Orthodox Episcopate in Postwar Soviet Ukraine // *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 55. 2014, Nos. 3–4, pp. 343–355

<sup>89</sup> TDAHO, F. 1, O. 31, File 1671, p. 152

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, p. 160

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, p. 159

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, p. 160

Ukraine. More generally, it provides insights into the conduct of the younger generation of the episcopate, “well socialized into the Soviet system, enjoying the confidence of authorities and demonstrating their complete loyalty to the Soviet system”, of whom he was soon to become a prominent representative.<sup>93</sup> The stance of these hierarchs is liable to different – almost diametrically opposite – assessments, for it was too complex and had too many nuances to be estimated in simplistic terms.

His ‘undeniable loyalty’ was not questioned: the best proof is that he retained his position as the Exarch of Ukraine till the collapse of the USSR. His reactions were exemplary (he, for example, characterized the Open Letter of Frs. Eschliman and Yakunin as an “anti-Soviet and schismatic”<sup>94</sup> and praised ‘wise’ reforms introduced by the Archbishops’ Council of 1961<sup>95</sup>) and his language was abundant with Soviet official formulas and estimations.

Simultaneously, he used his position to safeguard church life in the Ukrainian Republic and moreover strengthen the position of the *loyal* Orthodox Church there. Because he was “well socialized into the Soviet system” and completely loyal, he could use a bargaining tactic in his relations with authorities quite successfully. The ‘Uniate threat’ (meaning the activities of the underground Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church after 1946 and the stubborn resistance of formally ‘reunited’ Greek Catholics to any change in their religious life<sup>96</sup>) and the need to win over Ukrainian Orthodox abroad were the major arguments allowing for this. The examples below are illustrative of his tactics.

Metropolitan Filaret was in the position to persuasively argue for the necessity of the publication of the Ukrainian-language church calendar

<sup>93</sup> Bociurkiw B. R. The Orthodox Church and the Soviet Regime in the Ukraine, 1953-1971 // *Canadian Slavonic Papers* XIV. 1972, 2, p. 208

<sup>94</sup> TDAHO, F. 1, O. 31, File 2972, p. 1

<sup>95</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 278, pp. 102–106. For more details on these reforms see: Shlikhta N. *Tserkva tykh, khto vyzyv.*, pp. 102–106

<sup>96</sup> For more details see: Shlikhta N. *Tserkva tykh, khto vyzyv.* – Pp. 252–366; Shlikhta N. “Ukrainian” as “Non-Orthodox”: How Greek Catholics Were “Reunited” with the Russian Orthodox Church // *State, Religion and Church*. 2015, No. 2, pp. 77–95

and prayer books, and of the Ukrainian-language *Orthodox Herald*.<sup>97</sup> In his letter to the CRA Republican Plenipotentiary, Kostiantyn Lytvyn, of March 19, 1967, he described all the undesirable consequences of the closure of the *Orthodox Herald*, becoming especially visible after Vatican II. He paid special attention to clandestine Uniate activities and the growth of the 'autocephalist' Orthodox opposition at home as well as the actions of Ukrainian 'Uniates' and 'schismatics' abroad: "Ukrainian nationalists interpret the closure of the magazine as a sign of the restrictions on the use of Ukrainian language [...] especially given that the church magazine written in Russian (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchy*) is still published."<sup>98</sup> Drawing from this – the (potential) role of the magazine "in the struggle against the activities of Uniates and Ukrainian nationalists" – the Exarch turned to Lytvyn with a request to support his petition for the renewal of the publication.<sup>99</sup>

Metropolitan Filaret's letter to Lytvyn of November 20, 1973, reveals that his "skilful capitalizing on the regime's hostility to the Uniate Church"<sup>100</sup> simultaneously served to gain immediate benefits and to generally secure the position of the Orthodox Church by accentuating the Orthodox – Soviet linkage. The Metropolitan stressed that the conversion of Greek Catholics to Orthodoxy turned them into the loyal subjects of the Socialist Motherland and friends of the Russian nation.<sup>101</sup> This preceded his request to the CRA to increase the circulation of the Ukrainian-language church calendar from 10,000 to 150,000 copies. The publication of this calendar was presented as an important step in the struggle against the Unia and the Ukrainian nationalism. When buying the Orthodox calendar, which listed all official holidays and also contained the biographies of state leaders, he claimed, the 'reunited' faithful openly declared their loyalty to Soviet power. The concluding statement sounds as

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<sup>97</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 351, p. 69; *Ibid.*, File 128, p. 156

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, O. 5, File 69, p. 54

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55

<sup>100</sup> Bociurkiw B. R. *The Orthodox Church and the Soviet Regime*, p. 209

<sup>101</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 351, p. 69

if it was borrowed from official Soviet documents, “This explains why the publication of the Orthodox calendar acquires political significance.”<sup>102</sup>

## Conclusions

This paper suggests approaching the Soviet-era adaptability of the Russian Orthodox Church within a broader context of social and ecclesiastical history. According to James C. Scott, “an accommodation with the system of domination” is implicit in the everyday resistance of discriminated social groups.<sup>103</sup> An attempt by the Church to adapt within the Soviet context was particularly difficult and ambiguous because of the ‘conciliatory approach’ to a hostile ideology that it implied. However, a choice by the Church in favour of this approach was hardly unique. It was furthermore predetermined from the outset and quite ‘normal’ if we recall John Henry Newman: assimilation and absorption of new ideas, language, and values are inescapable when the Church finds itself within altered circumstances.

When examining the survival strategy of the ROC after World War II, one has to necessarily account both for the totalitarian aspirations of the Soviet state and for the fact that church members (clergy and believers) were Soviet citizens, born mainly after 1917. Thereby, scholarly findings on the models of coexistence of society and the state can be fruitfully used in the study of the Church living through Soviet times: from Sheila Fitzpatrick’s general observations on the subaltern strategies of Soviet citizens<sup>104</sup> to Stephen Kotkin’s<sup>105</sup> and Alexei Yurchak’s<sup>106</sup> findings on the use of linguistic formulas and belief/disbelief in what is publicly

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<sup>102</sup> TDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 351, p. 70

<sup>103</sup> Scott J. C. *Weapons of the weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance*. – New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 1985, p. 4, 292.

<sup>104</sup> Fitzpatrick Sh. *Stalin’s Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization*. – New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. – Esp. pp. 3–18

<sup>105</sup> Kotkin S. *Magnetic Mountain*. – Esp. pp. 215–269

<sup>106</sup> Yurchak A. Soviet Hegemony of Form: Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More // *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45. 2003, No 3, p. 480–510



declared. Andrew Stone calls not to forget that “[religious] individuals existed in a discursive and social climate defined largely by Soviet ideology and language”.<sup>107</sup> His research furthermore demonstrates that far from simply repeating accepted formulas, they managed to “infuse official discourse with different meanings and thereby create a space where their ‘normal’ Soviet lives could coexist with religion”.<sup>108</sup>

If approached like this, adaptability can be seen as an inescapable and moreover viable function in the Church’s general strategy of survival through the Soviet period. This cannot resolve all the complications, however. A case study becomes the most effective research method, as it allows accounting for the context and also examining actors’ self-justifications, their declared aims, and actual results gained. Simultaneously, when general conclusions are drawn, distant consequences of employing this strategy by the ROC, which became visible after the collapse of the USSR, cannot be completely disregarded.

**Natalia Shlikhta, PhD in History**, Associate Professor and the Chair of the History Department at the National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy,” Ukraine. She was awarded a PhD in History by the Central European University (Budapest) in 2005; participant of several international projects on ecclesiastical history and oral history. Fields of interests: history of the Church under communism and on-political history of Soviet society. Major publications: monograph *The Church of Those Who Survived. Soviet Ukraine, mid-1940s–early 1970s* (2011) (in Ukrainian) and a textbook on *History of Soviet Society* (2010, 2015 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)) (in Ukrainian).

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<sup>107</sup> Stone A. B. “Overcoming Peasant Backwardness.”, p. 314

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, p. 299

Irina Gordeeva

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## THE RELIGIOUS ROOTS OF THE PACIFIST MOVEMENT IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND THE USSR IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

### **Abstract**

The article explores two waves of the pacifist movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Russia. One of the waves started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it was represented by the Tolstoyan radical pacifist movement that had a massive social base among the Russian religious sectarians. The second one emerged in the late Soviet period in the form of the independent peace movement. It was almost completely secular in character; however, it was preceded by several separate religious peace initiatives of the 1960–1970s.

The Tolstoyan pacifist movement was both religious and socio-political in nature. Its main values were nonviolence, freedom of conscience, and social justice. The final goal of them was proclaimed to be a worldwide revolution of Brotherhood, which had to be a nonviolent, moral, spiritual revolution. Additionally, there were attempts to formulate a programme for Christian anarchism on the pages of Tolstoyan periodicals, along with a discussion on the forms of political life for the Christians and the methods of nonviolent resistance.

Although the leaders of the pacifist movement in Russia came mainly from the privileged circles, the movement was geared towards the ordinary people – namely the religious sectarians, peasants and workers. Apart from the Tolstoyans, the representatives of some other religious and ethical groups declared – individually or collectively – their support to the pacifism. Among them, there were the Dukhobors, Molokans, Malevantsy, S'utaevtsy, Dobroliubovtsy, Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Mennonites, Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovahists (II'in's followers), New Israelites, spiritual monists, Teetotalers (*Trezvenniki*), as well as individual God-seekers. Tolstoy and Tolstoyans supported the popular protest against the total

invasion of the state, enriching it by the ideas of peace and nonviolence and attempted to create a public movement based on these values. Tolstoyans aimed to transform spontaneous practices of passive resistance and non-cooperation ('weapon of the weak') into the modern, ethical (nonviolent) and effective methods of social protest against the state, the Church and war.

The first wave of the Russian pacifist movement reached the peak of their public success after the revolutions of 1917. In the early Soviet period, the Russian pacifists, advocating the values of nonviolence, appealed to the authorities with the protest against violence, coordinated interreligious dialogue, organized lectures on the history of religious freedom and nonviolence. They also struggled against the militarization of consciousness and everyday life, corresponded with their foreign adherents, and organized the famine relief in Russia in collaboration with international organizations.

Those few Tolstoyans, who survived the Great Terror in the late 1930s and the Second World War, did not participate in any public events and never attempted any self-organizing actions. As a result, between the 1940s and 1960s, the traditions of Russian pacifist movement were almost forgotten.

The grassroots peace activism re-emerged in the USSR only in the 1980s on the new social base. The two main groups – the anti-nuclear *Group to Establish Trust between East and West* (the Trust Group) and the pacifist group *Free Initiative* – represented the movement. Their agenda covered antinuclear activism, demilitarization, nonviolence, human rights, freedom of worship, social and cultural tolerance, conscientious objection, alternative military service, calls against psychiatric repressions, democratization, ecological issues, and many more.

At first sight, the new wave of the pacifist movement looked entirely secular. However, just as in the West, the history of the Soviet peace movement has to be considered as part of the history of modern Christianity and contemporary religious thought. Moreover, independent peace movement was preceded by a series of peace initiatives of religious dissidents of the 1970s, namely: the Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists Prisoners' Relatives, 1964-1988; Orthodox feminist club *Maria* in Leningrad, 1979-1980; underground ecumenical circle of Sandrs Riga, 1971-1984 and its clandestine magazine *Prizyv*; the Soviet hippies movement, the late 1960s-1980s; underground religious seminars of Alexander Ogorodnikov, the mid-1970s; hippie-Tolstoyan Georgii Meitin and his Riga circle, the late 1970s – early 1980s.

Ideas and activities of these groups were connected with the traditional agenda of peace movements and greatly contributed to the formation of the grassroots peaceful movement in the USSR.

The study showed that, even though the pacifist movement in Russia in the 1960s and 1970s did not exist in an organized form, the pacifist agenda began to take shape in the activities of the religious and non-conformist groups. It included problems of anti-militarism, violence in the army, religious tolerance and non-violence in everyday life, and also protests against the war in Afghanistan. More vivid and articulated was pacifism of the Soviet countercultural youth, and in particular, the Soviet hippies. In the 1970s, some young hippies started to study the history of the Russian and world nonviolence movement and its tradition, considering themselves as its spiritual and ideological heirs.

**Keywords:** Russian pacific movement, the Tolstoyan pacifist movement, *Group to Establish Trust between East and West*, *Free Initiative*, the ecumenical circle of Sandrs Riga, *Prizyv*

Pacifism as an ideology is based on a fundamental rejection of violence in international, social, and interpersonal relations. The history of pacifism goes back for hundreds of years and alongside with many other contemporary social and political phenomena has religious roots. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ideas and values of pacifism expanded beyond the boundaries of the small number of peace-making religious communities, becoming secularized and growing into social movements. The pacifist movement in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union followed the lead in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with some peculiarities.

There were two waves of the pacifist movement in 20<sup>th</sup> century Russia. One of the waves started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it was represented by the Tolstoyan radical pacifist movement that had a massive social base among the Russian religious sectarians. The second one emerged in the late Soviet period in the form of the independent peace movement. It was almost completely secular in character; however, it was preceded by a number of separate religious peace initiatives of the 1960–1970s.

## The emergence of the pacifist movement in the Russian Empire

The Russian pacifist movement emerged at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a result of public identification of the so-called Tolstoyans – the disciples of Russian writer and thinker Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910). The movement was both religious and socio-political in nature. From the very beginning, the Tolstoyans' pacifist movement had a definite identity as a radical pacifist, Christian socialist and the anarchist movement. The Tolstoyans preferred to call themselves 'free Christians' or 'individuals of free-religious worldview'. Their main values were nonviolence, freedom of conscience, and social justice. The final goal of them was proclaimed to be a worldwide revolution of Brotherhood, which had to be a nonviolent, moral, spiritual revolution.<sup>1</sup>

The Tolstoyan pacifists defended conscientious objectors (COs)<sup>2</sup> and the rights of religious minorities and other oppressed people. They regularly published materials about repressions against religious dissidents in Russia. They struggled against the militarization of society and all kinds of social and political violence. In the specific historical conditions of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, their pacifism was directed against the Russian autocracy with its police and repressive apparatus, the official Orthodox Church, as well as against any ideologies that supported their existence. Additionally, there were attempts to formulate a programme for Christian anarchism on the pages of Tolstoyan periodicals, together with a discussion

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<sup>1</sup> Gordeeva I. The Evolution of Tolstoyan Pacifism in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, 1900–1937 // *The Routledge History of World Peace since 1750*. – Routledge, 2019, pp. 98–108

<sup>2</sup> Conscientious objection (CO) is a rejection of conscription owing to one's conscience or religious, political, philosophical or similar convictions. More on the work of the Tolstoyans with conscientious objections see: Brock P. *Against the Draft: Essays on Conscientious Objection from the Radical Reformation to the Second World War*. – University of Toronto Press, 2006, pp. 155–171, 301–364

on the forms of political life for the Christians and the methods of non-violent resistance.<sup>3</sup>

The pacifist movement reached the peak of their public success after the revolutions of 1917. At this time the Tolstoyans created the Society of True Freedom in Moscow in memory of Leo Tolstoy. Its numerous local branches arranged several central and regional periodicals, established the United Council of the religious communities and Groups (OSROG), organized inter-confessional groups for the defence of the COs, and succeeded in raising public sympathy among ordinary people.<sup>4</sup>

In the early Soviet period, the Russian pacifists, advocating the values of nonviolence, appealed to the authorities with a protest against violence, coordinated interreligious dialogue, organized lectures on the history of religious freedom and nonviolence. They also struggled against the militarization of consciousness and of the everyday life, corresponded with their foreign adherents, and organized in collaboration with international organizations the famine relief in Russia. Among their foreign counterparts were the War Resisters International (WRI), International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), Mahatma Gandhi, Romain Rolland, and other pacifist organizations and activists.

### The social base of the Russian pacifist movement

Despite the fact that the leaders of the pacifist movement in Russia came mainly from the privileged circles, the movement was geared towards the ordinary people - namely the religious sectarians, peasants and workers.

Apart from the Tolstoyans, the representatives of some other religious and ethical groups declared - individually or collectively - their support to

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<sup>3</sup> Salomoni A. *Emigranty-tolstovtsy: mezhdru khristianstvom i anarkhizmom (1898-1905 gg.) // Russkaia emigratsiia do 1917 goda - laboratoria liberal'noi i revoliutsionnoi mysli.* - Sankt-Petersburg, 1997, pp. 112-127

<sup>4</sup> Krapivin M., Leikin A., Dalgatov A. *Sud'by khristianskogo sektantstva v Sovetskoj Rossii (1917-konets 1930-kh godov).* - Sankt-Petersburg, 2003, pp. 170-183

the pacifism. Among them, there were the Dukhobors, Molokans, Malevantsy, S'utaevtsy, Dobroliubovtsy, Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Mennonites, Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovahists (Il'in's followers), New Israelites, spiritual monists, Teetotalers (*Trezvenniki*), as well as individual God-seekers.

The pacifism of these religious groups was largely derived from the fact that their members preferred to refuse the military service. However, in the most cases, the objection to the military service of the religious sectarians was not motivated by their adherence to the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'. The most common motive for conscientious objection was eschatological nonconformity, which meant escape from the world, desire to avoid control of the state of Antichrist, rejection of any collaboration with it. This phenomenon entailed the range of social practices (desertion, breakout, migration), which can be regarded as passive methods of social resistance. The other two widespread reasons for the COs – the absence of the necessary conditions for the fulfilment of the religious rites in the army or warfare and objection to military oaths on religious grounds – also do not have direct a connection with the ethics of nonviolence.<sup>5</sup>

Nonetheless, such moods in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century often were a starting point for the development of genuine pacifist sentiments among the religious sectarians. In this respect, the ethical and religious teaching of Leo Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans' movement was extremely important for the transformation of anti-disciplinary and eschatological practice. Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans supported the popular protest against the total invasion of the state, enriching it by the ideas of peace and non-violence and attempted to create a public movement on the base of these values. The Tolstoyans aimed to transform spontaneous practices of passive resistance and non-cooperation ('weapon of the weak') into modern, ethical and effective methods of social protest against the state, the official Church and war.

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<sup>5</sup> Gordeeva I. Otkazy ot voennoi sluzhby i formirovanie patsifistskogo dvizheniia v Rossii v kontse XIX — nachale X veka // *Krest'ianovedenie*. 2018, Vol. 3, № 4, pp. 78–104

## The fate of the pacifist movement in the early Soviet period

In October 1918 the Tolstoyans established an organization to defend the rights of the COs – the OSROG. Thanks to the activity of the pacifists, on 4 January 1919 the decree was adopted, which declared exemption from military service for some religious convictions. The OSROG became an official expert confirming the pacifist outlooks of the COs.<sup>6</sup>

In June 1920 the All-Russian Convention of Religious Movements proclaimed the problem of the COs to be the chief one for the sectarian communities. One year later, the First All-Russian Conference of the Sectarian Agricultural and Productive Associations confirmed this thesis. Its declaration expressed the pacifist mood in its most radical character.

However, the right for exemption existed only for about a decade, constantly constricting the sphere of its application. In 1923, the OSROG was forced to be closed, and the Tolstoyans continued to defend the COs only informally. In the mid-1920s the Evangelical Christians and Baptists, as well as the Seventh Day Adventists were put under the pressure of the Soviet authorities to renounce their pacifist positions.<sup>7</sup>

The repressions against the pacifist movement started in the early 1920s as part of the first Soviet anti-religious campaigns. They became stronger in the late 1920s and totally destroyed it in the late 1930s in the course of the Great Terror. Since then, the defence of the COs, advocating of peace and nonviolence in Soviet Russia became only the matter of the isolated religious individuals.

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<sup>6</sup> Brock P. *Against the Draft*, pp. 313–324

<sup>7</sup> Koppiters B. Patsifistskie sekty, bol'sheviki i pravo na otkaz ot voinskoj sluzhby // *Almanakh po istorii russkogo baptizma*. Vyp. 2. – SPb., 2001, pp. 410–411



## The rise of the second wave of the pacifist movement in the late Soviet period

Those few Tolstoyans who survived the repressions and the Second World War did not participate in any public events. They created and preserved personal archives, and sometimes corresponded with writers and scholars (who did research on Leo Tolstoy, for example) as private persons.<sup>8</sup> In the letters, they expressed their disapproval of the official interpretation of Tolstoy's social and religious ideas. However, they never attempted any self-organizing actions. As a result, between the 1940s and 1960s, the traditions of Russian pacifist movement were almost forgotten. Emerging in the early 1960s, the Soviet dissidents did not focus on pacifism as such, although some problems of nonviolent resistance were being discussed.

Grassroots peace activism re-emerged in the USSR only in the 1980s on the new social base. The two main groups – the anti-nuclear *Group to Establish Trust between East and West* (the Trust Group) and the pacifist group *Free Initiative* – represented the movement. Their agenda covered antinuclear activism, demilitarization, nonviolence, human rights, freedom of worship, social and cultural tolerance, conscientious objection, alternative military service, calls against psychiatric repressions, democratization, ecological issues, and many more.<sup>9</sup>

At first sight, the new wave of the pacifist movement looked entirely secular. However, just as in the West, the history of the Soviet peace movement has to be considered as part of the history of modern Christianity and contemporary religious thought. Moreover, the independent

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<sup>8</sup> Popovskii M. *Russkie muzhiki rasskazyvaiut: Posledovateli L.N. Tolstogo v Sovetskom Soiuse, 1918–1977: Dokumentalni rasskas o krestianakh-tolstovakh po materialam vyvezennogo na Zapad krestianskogo arkhiva*. – London: Overseas Publications Interchange (OPI), 1983, pp. 264–301

<sup>9</sup> Gordeeva I. The Spirit of Pacifism: Social and Cultural Origins of the Grassroots Peace Movement in the Late Soviet Period // *Dropping Out of Socialism: The Creation of Alternative Spheres in the Soviet Bloc*, ed. By Juliane Furst, Josie McLellan. – Lexington Books, 2017, pp. 129–156

peace movement was preceded by a series of peace initiatives of religious dissidents of the 1970s, namely: (1) Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists Prisoners' Relatives, 1964-1988; (2) Orthodox feminist club *Maria* in Leningrad, 1979-1980; (3) underground ecumenical circle of Sandrs Riga, 1971-1984 and its clandestine magazine *Prizyv*; (4) the Soviet hippies movement, the late 1960s-1980s; (5) the underground religious seminars of Alexander Ogorodnikov, the mid-1970s; (6) the hippie Tolstoyan Georgii Meitin and his Riga circle, the late 1970s – early 1980s.

Ideas and activities of these groups were connected with the traditional agenda of peace movements and greatly contributed to the formation of the grassroots peaceful movement in the USSR.

### The Council of Relatives of the Evangelical Christian-Baptist Prisoners protesting against violence in the Soviet army

In the late 1950s, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev initiated a new anti-religious campaign, in the course of which new restrictive laws were adopted. As a result, in 1961 the community of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists had split into loyal and officially approved Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptists and the so-called *initsiativniki*,<sup>10</sup> nonconformist part of the protestant community.

In 1964, within the underground movement, the Council of Relatives of the Evangelical Christian-Baptist Prisoners was organized. The aim of the new body was spiritual, psychological and financial support of the families of the imprisoned believers. In the next two decades, it became widely known because of its human rights activity.<sup>11</sup>

The Prisoners' Relatives acted exclusively as the wives and mothers of the arrested and imprisoned believers. The membership in this organiza-

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<sup>10</sup> *Initsiativniki*, or the Council of Churches of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists, refused to register and created so-called "initiative group" to protest against the collaboration of the official Union with the Soviet authorities.

<sup>11</sup> Zavatski V. *Evangelicheskoe dvizhenie v SSSR posle vtoroi mirovoi voyny*. – M., 1995, pp. 282–284

tion was fluid, but female predominantly. In different periods the leaders of the Council were Lidia Vins, Galina Rytikova, Alexandra Kozorezova, Lidia Bondar', Nina Yastrebova, Serafima Udintseva, and many others. Some of them were imprisoned because of their human rights defence activities.

For many years it was a commonplace of atheist writings in the USSR that women made up the majority of religious believers. Indeed, it was not simply woman, but 'backward' women of 'low political consciousness'. The history of the Council of Prisoners' Relatives breaks this image completely. They led their activities in different forms, the language of their petitions combined both the traditional values and the human rights activists values.

The believers supported the official Union of the Evangelical Christian-Baptists. They were forced to adopt a concept of Soviet patriotism and totally reject the pacifist values. Their leaders followed the manner of the Russian Orthodox Church, participating in official state 'peace activity' in support of the Soviet foreign policy. However, the rank and file believers inclined to pacifism, so young protestants often rejected conscription or a military oath of loyalty.

In 1973, a *samizdat* newsletter *Bulletin of the Council of Relatives of Evangelical Christians-Baptist Prisoners in the USSR* introduced a new section 'Repressions for faith in the army' (later – 'Christians in the army', 'About soldiers', 'On conditions of the Christian soldiers in the army'). Under this topic, information about the persecutions of believers for refusing to take the military oaths or carry weapons was regularly published along with information on the various cases of violence against the believers in the army.<sup>12</sup>

The Evangelical Christian-Baptists launched an advocacy work to defend their fellow believers. They wrote letters of protest to the authorities,

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<sup>12</sup> During this period, the most common case among Evangelical Christians-Baptists was the refusal of military oaths without refusing military service. However, the Soviet authorities interpreted this as a refusal of military service; this meant imprisonment for the article 249 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR ('dereliction of duty') up to seven years in corrective labor colonies or placement in psychiatric hospitals for compulsory treatment.

spoke at court proceedings, collected information about the cases of hazing in the army, violations of the freedom of conscience, and collaborated with the secular human rights activists. This Council was successful in solving concrete problems of violence in the Soviet army towards the believers. It turned out that the combination of women activism with pacifist problematic has always been fortunate in a practical sense.

However, the Evangelical Christian-Baptists never protested against the state violence and militarization of the Soviet society. We also do not know any cases of solidarity with the representatives of other confessions. Moreover, defending their right to social benefits, Baptists could use 'patriotic' arguments to prove trustworthiness: "During the Czechoslovak events I was in Prague from the first to the last day [or] during the service in the army I had 24 gratitudes written in my personal card."<sup>13</sup> Nothing was mentioned about the beginning of the Afghan war in their *samizdat* publications.

So far we know about only one case when a young member of the *initsiativniki* group took part in the independent peace movement in the 1980s. In 1979, young Baptist Stepan Gura (1962-?) from Tsiuriupinsk of Kherson region was expelled from the technical school because of his religious views. He moved to Riga, where, under the influence of hippie-Tolstoyan Georgii Meytin he became a Tolstoyan and conscious pacifist.<sup>14</sup> In the mid-1980s, he joined the Moscow Trust Group and actively participated in various public actions during the perestroika period.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Bulleten' Soveta rodstvennikov uznikov Evangel'skikh khristian-baptistov v SSSR*. 1980, № 74. – Ss. 28.

<sup>14</sup> Gura S. Vospriniat' Tolstogo // *Den' za dnem*. 1988, № 10, pp. 29–33

<sup>15</sup> Demonstratsii protiv voiny v Afganistane // *Vesti iz SSSR*. 1987, № 24-1 (December 31) Read on April 11, 2019, in electronic format: <https://vesti-iz-sssr.com/2016/11/30/demonstratsiya-protiv-voiny-v-afganistane-1987-23-1/>

## The Orthodox feminist club *Maria* and its protest against the Afghan war, 1979–1980

At the end of December 1979, the Soviet army entered the war in Afghanistan. There were only a few separate people and only one group, which protested openly against the invasion of the Soviet troops to Afghanistan. This group was the club *Maria* from Leningrad. This club was unique in the Russian dissident movement, combining feminism, religious Orthodoxy and pacifist agenda.

The history of the club goes back to 1979 when the *samizdat* almanac *Woman and Russia* edited by Tatyana Goricheva, Nataliia Malakhovskaya and Tatyana Mamonova was issued. The women, the authors of the almanac, addressed other women by writing about the everyday humiliation and violence that every Soviet woman was facing – in a family, hospital, maternity hospital, and prison.<sup>16</sup>

They focused on the ‘feminine’ values of nonviolence and creation, positioning the almanac as feminist, educational and human rights publication. It was founded with the purpose of ‘the religious revival of Russia as a fraternity based on Christian love’ and aimed at spreading ‘Christian culture as an alternative to Marxism’. Among the authors of the first issue, there was a nine-years-old child. In the short article entitled *The Golden Childhood*, the boy tried to explain the reasons that forced him to run away from a pioneer camp: fights, bullying, rudeness of administration, etc.<sup>17</sup>

On 14 January 1980, a large group of Leningrad scientists and *samizdat* authors opposed the invasion of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Among those who signed this document, there were Tatiana Goricheva,

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<sup>16</sup> Malakhovskaia N. [Iz vystupleniia na pervoi moskovskoi feministskoi konferentsii] // *Feminf*. 1993, № 2. Read on April 11, 2019, in electronic format: <http://www.owl.ru/win/books/feminf/01/02.htm>

<sup>17</sup> *Woman and Russia: First Feminist Samizdat*. – London: Sheba Feminist Publishers, 1980.

Yulia Voznesenskaya, Liudmila Dmitrieva, and other participants of the feminist movement.<sup>18</sup>

Repressions against the creators of the almanac were unleashed immediately after its release. The authors were warned that if they continued to work on the publication, they would face arrest and deprivation of parental rights. Therefore, it was decided to rename it, and in the spring of 1980, another almanac under the title *Maria* was launched.

On 1 March 1980, the women who rallied around the magazine held a feminist conference, where they founded the club *Maria*. The first document issued by the club was the *Appeal to the Mothers*. It dealt with aggression in Afghanistan. Tatyana Goricheva told in one of her interviews, that “in this document we explained to the Soviet women that the war in Afghanistan was undeclared and gangster; therefore a draftee who refused to have a military duty in a gangster army was punished not according to the laws of wartime (by shooting) but gets a court sentence (imprisonment up to three years). We told Soviet mothers what terrible losses the Soviet troops had in Afghanistan under the onslaught of the rebels, and called on them to save their sons by choosing an honourable imprisonment instead of a shameful death on a foreign land.”<sup>19</sup>

Sofia Sokolova, a member of the club *Maria*, organized harbouring of recruits in the forest, with the help of Baptist Tatyana Belyaeva. Young people aged 16-19 participated in the ant-military activities of the club, conducting interviews with the soldiers returned from Afghanistan. Later this information was spread around. In the second half of May 1980, when the club members learned about the brutal massacre of a peaceful demonstration of schoolchildren in Kabul,<sup>20</sup> they sent an *Appeal of the Leningrad Feminist club to the Afghan Women Committee*,<sup>21</sup> where they expressed their solidarity with their fight against the Soviet occupation.

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<sup>18</sup> Klub Mariia protiv okkupatsii Afganistana // *Mariia. Zhurnal rossiiskogo nezavisimogo religioznogo kluba “Mariia.”* – Leningrad, Frankfurt-on-Mein, 1982, p. 11

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 11

<sup>20</sup> Aprel'skie demonstratsii 1980 goda v Kabule // *Maria*, pp. 19–20

<sup>21</sup> HU OSA 300-85-9:130 (*Materialy Samizdata*, 1985, Vol. 7)

In March the draft of the first issue of journal *Maria* was confiscated, however, it was fully restored already in May. The second issue was prepared in July, but it was published in Paris, in the Russian language. The issue included additional material that was collected from Afghanistan refugees in the West.

It is not surprising that repressions were intensified, targeting not only the editors but also their children. Under these circumstances, some of the editors decided to leave the country, while others lost their jobs and livelihood. Among them was Iulia Voznesenskaya, a mother of two sons, one of which - Andrei Okulov was threatened to be sent to the army, and possibly to Afghanistan. Those feminists, who remained in the Soviet Union, continued to collect materials and work on the next issues of the journal. However, despite their efforts, the journal ceased to exist by the end of 1982.<sup>22</sup>

In emigration, the activists of the club continued their anti-military activities. They communicated with the Afghan political refugees and published various material related to the war, expressing their anti-militarist and anti-Soviet position. On 19 July 1980, the club disseminated a new document entitled *Stop Blood Splitting*:

“We, the women of new Russia, demand the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from the territory of occupied Afghanistan. Stop the killing and abuse of civilians in a foreign country! Stop sending our husbands and sons to a shameful death!

We are ashamed to listen to the cynical lies that the government of our country is trying to cover up the terrible truth about Afghanistan. We are ashamed to belong to the people, on whose behalf such monstrous atrocities are happening, on whose behalf the honour and freedom of other nations are being trampled upon”.<sup>23</sup>

According to N. Danilova, the Russian social movements combined effectively the ‘traditional’, even patriarchal approach (whose representatives

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<sup>22</sup> Aivazova S. Svoboda i ravenstvo sovetских zhenshin // Aivazova S. *Russkie zhenshiny v labirinte ravnopravii*. – M., 1998, p. 99

<sup>23</sup> *Klub Mariia protiv okkupatsii Afganistana*, p. 2

speak on behalf of the ‘maternal’ values), with civil, human rights movement approach.<sup>24</sup> This is also true for the Evangelical Christian-Baptists’ Council and the Group *Maria*, which can be regarded as forerunners of the contemporary ‘parental’ movement in Russia, represented by the network of influential anti-military organizations – the committees of the soldiers’ mothers.

### Peace and nonviolence in the ideas of the underground ecumenical circle of Sandrs Riga and their journal *Prizyv*

Ideas of peacemaking and nonviolence were at the center of the Soviet grassroots (and at the same time underground) ecumenical movement.<sup>25</sup> Sandrs Riga (Alexander Rothberg, b. 1939) was one of its founders. Born in Riga (Latvia), he used the name of his favourite city as his nickname. Like many other young people, he led a bohemian lifestyle, combining aesthetic and intellectual quests with excessive consumption of alcohol.<sup>26</sup> In Riga he turned to religion, which later – in the early 1970s when he moved to Moscow – led him to establish the ecumenical community.

One of the participants accurately noticed that the idea of “nonviolence over the spiritual experience of other persons” underlined the ecumenical ethics that took shape in the Sandrs’s community.<sup>27</sup> In one of his articles, explaining his choice for the circle’s title, Sandrs Riga wrote: “‘Ekumena’ means ‘Universe’. This is a sense of unity, of participation in

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<sup>24</sup> Daniliva N. Pravo materi soldata: instinct zaboty ili grazhdenskii dolg? // *Semeinye uzy: Modeli dlia sborki*. – M., 2004. – Kn. 2, pp. 188–210

<sup>25</sup> There was an ‘official’ ecumenical movement in the Soviet Union, politicized (similar to the official peace movement) and served the need of the Soviet cultural diplomacy. The highest church hierarchy and a small circle of specially selected people were the main representatives of this movement.

<sup>26</sup> More on the Sandrs Riga see: Pazukhina N. Ecumenism movement in Soviet Latvia: a sketch of the history // *Reliģiski-filozofiski raksti*, XXIII. – Riga, 2017, pp. 223–234

<sup>27</sup> Panshin-Morozov A. *Alternativnaia pechat’ Moskvy* // Riga, S. *Nonfiction*. – Riga; Sacramento, 2011, p. 64



everything. It involves no desire to rule over others, but a readiness to pray for others, for all of them and for each of them”.<sup>28</sup>

Building their historical identity, Sandrs and his friends considered various approaches and forms of ‘seeking for a peace in Christ’. They started with the early Christian church, but some movements of the modern period were regarded to be more close to them: the Bohemian Brethren, the London Missionary Society, the World Evangelical Alliance, the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), the Salvation Army, many other worldwide Christian organizations of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference and the initiatives it entailed, peace movement, the Stockholm Conference, 1925 and the Oxford conference, 1937, and, finally, the World Council of Churches.<sup>29</sup>

By founding this community, Sandrs had far-reaching goals; he believed in the gradual spiritual rebirth of the entire Soviet society based on mutual love and tolerance. His ethical ideas found their place on the pages of underground *samizdat* journal *Prizyv* (The Call), which the Sandrs’s circle had been publishing since 1971. It was typed out, then passed from hand to hand and copied.

Peacemaking, spiritual nonviolence and tolerance were the main subjects of the journal. “Our goal is a general reconciliation in Christ by means of ecumenization, liberalization, evangelization of the world,” this was the credo of the underground ecumenists. ‘Ecumenization’ meant the ‘unity in the most general sense of the world’, ‘liberalization’ – ‘fundamental abstinence from indoctrination and propagation of social regime by means of violence’, ‘evangelization’ – ‘dissemination of the Kingdom of God in people’s hearts’.<sup>30</sup>

The ecumenists called their main worship ‘agape’, appealing for reconciliation and forgiveness, reminding the spiritual kinship between people,

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<sup>28</sup> Riga S. The Society of Ecumenical Christians Before and After the Dissolution of the Soviet Union // *Religion, State and Society*. 1994, Vol. 22, № 4, p. 380

<sup>29</sup> [Riga S.] *Kratkaia istoriia ekumenizma // Prizyv*. – 1971, № 1. – Ss. 9–21. (here and later cited by the copy of Keston College)

<sup>30</sup> [Anonym] *Zametki na poliakh // Prizyv*. – 1977, № 9, p. 200

proclaiming the necessity to look for something that unites people, rather than divides, creating a programme of the resolution of the inter-confessional conflicts.<sup>31</sup>

In 1984, Sands and several other members of the ecumenical community were arrested, tried and received different terms of imprisonment. Sands was sent to a special psychiatric hospital in Blagoveshchensk,<sup>32</sup> where he was ‘treated’ with potent drugs. He was released only in 1987.

Sands’s best friend was the Moscow hippie Vladimir Teplyshev, known under nickname Dzen-Baptist (1949–2009). In 1976, he put together the *samizdat* brochure *Alternativa* (Alternative), in which he collected the best articles about hippies and youth movement from the Soviet and Western press. Two topics especially interested the editor: modern Christianity and alternative communities. On one of the pages Dzen-Baptist depicted a house with a map of the world on the front wall. The captions under the picture say: “Ecumena is one big house, and all the people are brothers.”<sup>33</sup>

The grass-root ecumenical movement shared the slogan ‘All the people are brothers’ both with the Tolstoyan movement in the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the grassroots peaceful movement of the late Soviet era. These words unite religious and secular pacifists of all generations, as well as many ordinary people who have never thought about the problem of violence. The ecumenists had their own mission in this movement – to remind people of the “original solidarity of people who carry the image of God in themselves”.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> [Anonym] Agape // *Prizyv*. – 1974, № 7, p. 152

<sup>32</sup> ‘Special hospital’ meant the hospital of the prison type.

<sup>33</sup> Now one of the copies of *Alternativa* is deposited in Misiņa Library in Riga (Sands Riga’s personal file).

<sup>34</sup> Arkhiv Sanizdata. – № 1517 (Barabanov E. Nравstvennye predposylki khristianskogo edinstva, 1973), p. 11

## The religion and pacifism in the Soviet hippies' movement, the late 1960s–1980s

Soviet hippies with self-designation *Sistema* [System], were one of the most popular informal movements in the USSR. They stood out in the Soviet society because of their appearance, lifestyle and moral values. They organized parties (the so-called *tusovka*) and hitch-hiking (*avtostop*), listened to rock music and experimented with drugs. They also proclaimed their commitment to the ideas of pacifism, free love and psychedelic revolution.<sup>35</sup>

In many respects, it was a generational, aesthetic, and anti-authoritarian protest against the Soviet reality that manifested itself in alienation and in the self-destructive practices (drug addiction, alcoholism, suicidal tendencies, and contacts with criminals). At the same time, the Soviet hippies were clearly explorative in nature; all members were on a mission, searching for their proper place in society, a religion, and an ideology. Within the space of the underground, the period of juvenile nihilism shifted into a period of acquiring new values.

In most cases the spiritual search of the Soviet hippies followed a religious direction – they were an essential part of the general atmosphere of the 'religious revival' of the 1970s. Many hippies joined the Orthodox community, becoming priests and monks, a smaller number of people followed other religions and religious movements, such as, for example Buddhism and Hare Krishna, or various Occult groups and the Sufis, very few became Old Believers, Tolstoyans, or followed the Protestant denominations and alternative branches of Orthodoxy. One could meet among the Soviet hippies people who were fond of the teachings of Nikolai Roerich, Daniil Andreev, Porfiry Ivanov, and even Grigory Skovoroda and Russian dissenters from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>35</sup> Fürst J. "If You're Going to Moscow, be Sure to Wear some Flowers in your Hair': The Soviet Hippie Sistema and Its Life in, Despite and with Stagnation" // *Reconsidering Stagnation in the Brezhnev Era*, ed. by Dina Fainberg and Artemy Kalinovsky. – New York, 2016, pp. 123-146

Religious search and commitment to pacifism are naturally linked in the biography of the famous Soviet hippie Michail Bombin (1951–2011). From the beginning of the 1970s, he communicated with dissidents, and gradually became Orthodox and was involved in disseminating religious *samizdat*. Pretty much thanks to him, in 1978–1993, Latvia became a traditional place for summer gatherings of the Soviet hippies. Their camps were mainly in the forest between the Gauja and Lilaste railway stations. Up to two hundred people passed through the camp over the summer from across the country.

In most cases, hippies saw these camps as a big fun party, with its friendship, free love, rock music, and drugs. However, the ideas of pacifism and religious quest were important themes that were discussed in these camps. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that one could meet there both future members of an independent peace movement and future religious leaders, including Orthodox priests.

The former hippie Alexander Ogorodnikov (b. 1950) was a founder of religious-philosophical seminars in Moscow.<sup>36</sup> In the second issue of the *samizdat* journal, *Obschchina* (1978), Ogorodnikov published an article entitled *Catacomb Culture: On the Experience of a Generation's History*, in which he explored the religious quest of the Soviet cultural underground.<sup>37</sup> One of the important features of this period, in his view, was the creation of 'a second cultural reality' (new spirituality) in the USSR, where hippie youth could realize their need to go beyond the Soviet mentality and lifestyle. This new spirituality was "organized by two coordinates—love and freedom—and creativity is its vital activity". According to Ogorodnikov, a sharp rejection of Marxism and general irrationalism, existentialist and spiritualistic in nature, marked hippie's religious quest. It should have resulted, in his opinion, in revolution, but a "revolution of consciousness, a revolution of spirit and values."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Wolf, Koenraad de. *Dissident for life: Alexander Ogorodnikov and the struggle for religious freedom in Russia*. – Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2013.

<sup>37</sup> Ogorodnikov A. *Kultura Katakomb // Memorial Arhiv*. – Fond Ф. 169, opis' 1, delo 2, pp. 70-76

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, p. 75

Thus, the Soviet countercultural youth movement rediscovered the idea of a peaceful spiritual revolution, which was central to the Tolstoyan pacifist movement of the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The name of Tolstoy was of a great significance for the counterculture of the Soviet youth. In September 1978, many of them took part in the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birthday. Soviet hippies together with other members of the culture underground organized a 'pilgrimage' to Tolstoy's museum-estate, Yasnaya Polyana. The idea for the pilgrimage belonged to Alexander Lobachev, hippie-Tolstoyan from Lviv. He became a Tolstoyan in 1975 and devoted his whole life spreading ideas of Leo Tolstoy and principles of nonviolence.<sup>39</sup> He dreamed to find like-minded people and create a Tolstoyan community but, unfortunately, he did not succeed.

Hippies interpreted and understood Tolstoyan ideas in accordance with their own individual practices, eclectically combining Tolstoyism with a wide range of values and ideas adopted from different religious and ideological traditions, from Oriental religions and spiritual practices, up to the ideas of the New Left and the psychedelic revolution. The spirit of nonviolence inspired the countercultural Tolstoyans.

### Hippie-Tolstoyan Georgii Meitin, his Riga circle and religious and public magazine *Yasnaya Polyana*

There was another hippie-Tolstoyan among the hippie who pilgrimised to Yasnaya Polyana in 1978, his name was Georgii Meitin (Garik). He was born in Riga in 1958 in the family of technical college teachers. By the age of thirteen, he already felt like a believer. In high school, he discovered Tolstoy's ideas and experienced both a religious and an ethical revolution, firmly believed in the inadmissibility of violence, in the deep relationship and unity of life in God, and in the presence of the Divine in

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<sup>39</sup> Lobachev A. Iz avtobiographii // *Khippi u L'vovi: Almanakh*. – Lviv, 2011, pp. 159–164

all people.<sup>40</sup> Because Garik had no interest in obtaining a university degree, he became a coal stoker in a boiler room, and later worked as a gas boiler operator.

After meeting with Riga's hippies, he joined their community and partly accepted their lifestyle, growing long hair and a beard, and practising hitchhiking in search of religious communes of different origins. Like other hippies, Garik was detained several times during his travels. Once, during his arrest, he was asked by the policeman: "What is your faith about?" He answered that his belief did not have any name and but his credo reads as 'all the people are brothers'.<sup>41</sup>

In the first half of the 1980s, a small circle of young people in Riga formed around Garik. All the participants considered themselves believers and pacifists; almost all were interested in the ideas of Leo Tolstoy and were vegetarians. Among them were two rock musicians — Dmitrii Fedotov and Vladimir Shakul' — and a poet, Grigorii Gondelman. In March 1982 the young people had been summoned to the KGB for 'a talk', and then the newspaper *Sovetskaya molodezh* (Soviet Youth) published an article *Lost lamb or...* It indignantly discussed the existence of the Tolstoyan pacifist group in Riga, members of which refused to serve in the army. The author condemned pacifism, considering that "following the idea of Leo Tolstoy about non-resistance to violence in the current international situation is nothing but a betrayal of our Motherland".<sup>42</sup>

Ten years later, from March 1988 to 1991, Garik put out a socio-religious *samizdat* journal, *Yasnaya Polyana*. The periodical was dedicated to the themes of non-violence, the free quest for truth, and the universal brotherhood of man. Vladimir Yakushonok (b. 1968), another young Tolstoyan from Riga, took part in the production and dissemination of the journal. The authors were mostly old Tolstoyans, hippies, and devotees of other religious and social movements. Both in content and style, the jour-

<sup>40</sup> Meitin, Georgii. "[Ot redaktora.]" // *Vek XX i mir.* – 1989, № 1, p. 32

<sup>41</sup> Meitin G. Dva leta // *Yasnaya Poliana*. December 1989 – April 1990, № 9/10, p. 45

<sup>42</sup> Solov'ev A., Trofimov V. Zabludshie ovechki ili... // *Sovetskaya molodezh'* (Riga). 1982, March 10

nal resembles Tolstoyan periodicals from the beginning of the century. This journal was well known among pacifists, religious dissidents and anarchists in the USSR.

The study showed that, even though the pacifist movement in Russia in the 1960s and 1970s did not exist in organized forms, the pacifist agenda began to take shape in the activities of the religious and non-conformist groups. It included problems of anti-militarism, violence in the army, religious tolerance and non-violence in everyday life, and also protests against the war in Afghanistan. The pacifism of the Soviet counter-cultural youth, and in particular, the Soviet hippies, was more vivid and articulated. In the 1970s, some young hippies started to study the history of the Russian and world nonviolence movement and its tradition, considering themselves as its spiritual and ideological heirs.

**Irina Gordeeva, PhD in History**, Lecturer in St. Philarets' Christian Orthodox Institute, Moscow, Russia; 2000 Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, Russia, Thesis Title "The Communitarian Movement in Russia in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century". Research interests: Peace Studies, Tolstoy's ethical-religious teaching, Tolstoyans, alternative communities, pacifism, non-violence, conscientious objection, civil resistance, Christian anarchism, religious and secular nonconformity and utopianism, peace movement, new social movements, Soviet hippies, Soviet dissidents, samizdat, detent from below, public diplomacy, transnational movements, cosmopolitanism, civil society, Human Rights, grassroots ecumenical movement, archives of the new social movements, antinuclear activism, transnational histories.

Solveiga Krumina-Konkova

## **THE LIBERATION THEOLOGY AND MARXISM: THE EXPLANATION OF SOME MYTHS**

### **Abstract**

The liberation theology is one of the most prominent cases where the socio-political and religious ideas have been intertwined so tightly that it has allowed defining its activities as both a religious and a socio-political movement.

The article will give a brief insight into the history of liberation theology, with more attention to the early stages of its formation, the documents adopted at the Medellin Conference.

The attitude of liberation theology and its representatives to the Marxist ideology and relations with the left wing movements in Latin America is also highlighted.

Particular attention will be paid to the attempts by the Soviet regime to shape the notion of the liberation theology as a Marxist movement and to turn this movement towards a direction desired by the foreign policy of the Soviet bloc states. The materials on the "Berlin Conference of European Catholics" from the Archive of the Commissioner of the USSR Religious Affairs Council in the LSSR will be used in this topic.

**Keywords:** liberation theology, Christianity, Roman Catholic Church, Latin America.

The movement of liberation theology is one of the most prominent cases where socio-political and religious ideas have been intertwined so tightly that it has allowed defining its activities as both a religious and a socio-political movement.



In 2018 the movement had a significant anniversary. More than fifty years ago, at the end of August 1968 (precisely from August 24 to September 6) in Medellín (Columbia), the Conference of the Latin American Bishops' House of the Roman Catholic Church (*Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano*) began a movement that covered the entire continent only a few years later, and the influence of this conference also echoed elsewhere in the world. As Gustavo Gutiérrez, one of the founders of the liberation theology always emphasised, it was in Medellín where the Roman Catholic Church became a Church of the poor and for the poor and, at the same time, it stood against poverty. It was in Medellín where it became the Church of Liberation; Church that promised social justice and a new society.

Decisions of Medellín's conference were greatly influenced by the views of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish Dominican monk Bartolomé de la Casas, the advocate of the rights of Latin American indigenous people, as well as Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire, well-known throughout Latin America by his untiring efforts to promote the literacy among the local people. The majority of participants of the conference (there were about two hundred fifty delegates in total) were of the view that the Church should promote social justice, actively contributing to the changing of existing social and economic structures and their institutions. The participants of the conference were convinced that poor people are blessed people and that, along with the promotion of 'religious hunger' in the region, the Church must also actively engage in solving social problems. Instead of getting the poor to receive only that is given to them, they can claim and be entitled to more, such as soup kitchens, day care centres, higher wages, better education and medical care. In the document *Pobreza de la Iglesia*, which was adopted at the closing day of the conference on September 6, it was emphasized that this involvement in promoting social justice for the Latin American Church is not only a challenge but also a mission from which the Church cannot escape, but it must be adopted quickly and with courage.<sup>1</sup> The participants of the conference stressed that the key to the

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<sup>1</sup> Pobreza de la Iglesia, 7. *Documentos finales de Medellín*. Available at: <https://www.ensayistas.org/critica/liberacion/medellin/medellin16.htm>, last accessed 11.04.2019.

mystery of Christ was his ministry to the poor: “Christ, our Savior, not only loved the poor but ‘being rich he became poor’, lived in poverty, centred his mission on preaching of their liberation and founded the Church as a sign of that poverty among the men.”<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after the conference, *comunidades de base* – around thirty people large local communities – began to emerge. These communities were considered as a new way of ‘being the Church’ – the Church at the grassroots, in the neighbourhood and villages. In these communities, priests who were related to the movement of the liberation theology not only helped to understand the Holy Scriptures more profoundly but often taught to read, using the Bible instead of the ABC book.

Some later well-known leaders of the liberation theology took part in the Medellín conference. For example, it is worth mentioning the archbishop of San Salvador, Óscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez, who actively opposed to poverty, social injustice and violence and was killed in 1980 during the Holy Mass in the Chapel of the Hospital of Divine Providence.

Together with the Gutiérrez, the creators of movement’s programme were also the Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff and two Jesuit theologians – a priest from Uruguay Juan Luis Segundo, and one of the founding members of the Central American University in San Salvador, John Sobrino. The Belgian theologian Hose or Joseph Comblin, was, in his turn, closely connected with the organisation of the new Catholic workers, the *Juventud Obrera Católica*. He was one of the principal advisers of Hélder Pessoa Câmara, the so-called ‘red bishop’, a defender for human rights during the time of Brazilian military dictatorship. As a well-known representative of the liberation theology Câmara described his nickname ‘red bishop’ with bitter irony: “If I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. If I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist.”<sup>3</sup> Ideas of liberation theology were also accepted by Protestant theologians, for example, by an evangelist, a missionary in Ecuador, a founder of the

<sup>2</sup> Pobrezs de la Iglesia, 7. *Documentos finales de Medellín*.

<sup>3</sup> Tony Campolo, Mary Albert Darling. *Connecting Like Jesus*. Hoboken (NJ): John Wiley & Sons, 2010, p.158

Integrated Mission René Padilla, and by the most prominent Latin American philosopher and theologian Samuel Escobar.

Long before the anniversary of Medellín Conference, in 2009, Gustavo Gutiérrez posed a question to which the definite answer cannot be expected: Has the Medellín Conference still retained its usefulness in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? True, he immediately replied that this question was asked already a few months after the conference, and many in the Roman Catholic Church believed that the Medellín's meeting was a wrong move and did not accept its decisions.<sup>4</sup> One of the reasons of such attitude was that already when the Medellín conference was held, the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America was involved in political struggles, and after some time the liberation theology became an ideological doctrine of various political groups and thus attracted the attention of the two global geopolitical opponents.

Thus, the Soviet regime, which in the 1960s-1980s had severe geopolitical interests in Latin America, until its collapse insisted that the liberation theology is a Marxist movement that advocates a restructuring of society using the Marxist concept of class struggle. This explanation has proved to be so persistent that, even today, much of the Catholics and, of course, not only Catholics in the post-Soviet countries, primarily see in the liberation theology its similarity with Marxism. The fact that the delegates of the Medellín Conference were inspired by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council and one of the initiators of the conference was Pope Paul VI, who urged Latin American Bishops to focus more heavily on the pastoral ministry, often is forgotten. The participants of the Medellín conference referred to the Pope's statement already before the opening of the conference. On August 23, 1968, in Bogota Paul VI, the first Pope of the Roman Catholic Church who visited Latin America, said that "the present situation demands from bishops, priests, religious and laity the spirit of poverty which breaking the bonds of selfish possession of temporary

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<sup>4</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez. *De Medellín a Aparecida: Nuevos desafíos para la Iglesia y la evangelización de hoy*. Available at: <http://dSPACE.ups.edu.ec/handle/123456789/10767>, last accessed 11.04.2019.

goods, stimulates the Christians to arrange the economy and power for the benefit of the community”. Paul VI also participated in the opening of the Conference. Just the day before the opening of the conference, speaking to the farmers of Mosquera, he said the words that became the guiding light of the conference and its decisions: “You listen to us in silence, but we hear the cry that comes from your suffering.”<sup>5</sup>

At the same time, when the USSR glorified the Latin American liberation theology for its proximity to Marxism, in the USA the liberation theology was accused, ironically, but also because of the ‘use of Marxist concepts’. The condemnation of the movement was caused not only by the events in Latin America. The liberation theology had many followers both in the US National Council of Churches and in the World Council of Churches, which received significant funding from the United States and a part of this funding was diverted to various programmes in Latin America, for example, to the Nicaraguan literacy programme. The US National Council of Churches, in its turn, supported not only the decisions of the Medellin Conference on the struggle against social injustice but also the legitimacy of this struggle even when “violence was the only means left to achieve this goal”.<sup>6</sup>

The official US position against liberation theology is precisely characterised in the so-called Santa Fe document prepared for President-elect Ronald Reagan in 1980: “The war is for minds of mankind. Ideo-politics will prevail. [...] US foreign policy must begin to counter (not react against) liberation theology as it is utilised in Latin America by the ‘liberation theology’ clergy. The role of the church in Latin America is vital to the concept of political freedom [found in] private property and productive capitalism. Any other concept is less Christian than Communist.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Santa Misa para los campesinos colombianos. *Homilía del Santo Padre Pablo VI*, viernes 23 de agosto de 1968. Available at: [https://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/es/homilies/1968/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_hom\\_19680823.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/es/homilies/1968/documents/hf_p-vi_hom_19680823.html), last accessed 11.04.2019.

<sup>6</sup> Editorial. *CovertAction. Information Bulletin*. Nr. 18, winter 1983, p.2. Available at the Archives of the USA CIA: CIA-RDP90-00845R000100180004-4.

<sup>7</sup> Editorial. *CovertAction. Information Bulletin*. Nr. 18, winter 1983, p.3.

Following Reagan's victory in the presidential election, this position was implemented in the US politics in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, as the previous US administration did it in Chile. Various right-wing religious organisations were also actively involved in the implementation of this task. The impact of the USA on Pope John Paul II led to the admonishment for the leaders of liberation theology by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1984 and 1986. The Vatican rejected certain forms of Latin American liberation theology, for example, for its focusing on institutionalised or systemic sin.

However, in this paper I will present in more detail some of the examples where the ideas and activities of the liberation theology were influenced not only by the open action of the USSR and its comrades in arms, especially Cuba, but also by the secret services of the Soviet bloc, using various religious organizations for this purpose. Regarding Cuba, it not only promoted the ideas of liberal theology but also actively participated in the radicalisation of it. In many places, where Cuban communists worked as teachers of literacy, they raised students' political awareness at the same time.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, under the leadership of the KGB and other secret services of the Socialist bloc, several religious organisations were set up.<sup>8</sup> The tasks of these so-called cover organisations included not only propaganda of the Soviet foreign policy, but possibly also the disinformation, intelligence work and recruitment of agency among Western citizens. Several of them, such as the Berlin Conference of European Catholics (hereafter – the Berlin Conference) and the Christian Peace Conference in Prague, were actively attended by Latvian Roman Catholic and Lutheran clergy, including several church leaders. For example, Janis Matulis (1911-1985), Lutheran Archbishop from 1969, actively participated in the activities of the Christian Peace Conference, also those that were organised jointly with the Berlin conference. In such cases, the

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<sup>8</sup> *Christian Peace Conference*. Directorate of Intelligence 19 July 1982, p.1. Available at the Archives of the USA CIA: CIA-RDP83M00914R001200110031-7.

delegations of the two Churches met on one plane from Moscow, where they received last instructions. Recently, after the publication of the list of the KGB agents, it has become known that most of the members of the delegations were the KGB collaborators. Under the control of the KGB were also delegates who, from 1962, participated in the work of the World Council of Churches.

To achieve its goals in Latin America, Moscow also operated through these cover organisations. For example, leaders of the Christian Peace Conference emphasised a shared commitment with liberation theology to struggle against 'Western imperialism'. For example, in Chile, the Christian Peace Conference lobbied the radical Chilean Christian Left Party using it as a channel for Soviet and Cuban funding to radical religious and other left-oriented groups in Chile. The Christian Peace Conference was often successful at manipulating rhetoric and actions of the World Council of Churches. For example, Soviet churchmen had been increasingly successful in co-opting the WCC for their specific propaganda purposes. Pro-Soviet policy pronouncements were considered more effective when issued by the WCC than by a readily recognised cover organisation as the CPC, because of the WCC's ostensible neutrality. In 1960-1970 the WCC's focus shifted away from the traditional ecumenical dialogue toward such 'Third World issues' as 'Western colonialism'. Especially this shift intensified when the General Secretary of the WCC was Emilio Castro, a prominent advocate of the liberation theology, which was exiled from Uruguay for his links to several leftist organisations including the terrorist *Tupamaros*. The WCC representatives cooperated with the Soviet front World Peace Council. It should be noted that one of the representatives of this organisation who established direct relations with liberation theology movement was Soviet Latvian Franciscan priest Father Izidors Upenieks who in May 1986 travelled to Nicaragua<sup>9</sup> and during his stay concelebrated mass in a 'Popular' that is Sandinista Church and later

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<sup>9</sup> *Soviet Exploitation of Religious Leaders and Organizations for Propaganda and Intelligence Purposes*. A Research Paper, p.21. Available at the Archives of the USA CIA: CIA-RDP89T01451R000200230001-8.

endorsed the liberation theology in his sermons and newspaper interviews. By the way, the name of Upenieks can be found in the list of the KGB agents.

Another Soviet-Bloc cover organisation, which had a significant impact on the liberation theology and events in Latin America, was the Berlin Conference. Started in 1964 and headquartered in East Berlin, this organisation had the same functions concerning Catholics as the Christian Peace Conference had with the Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox communions. Although the policy of the Roman Catholic Church demanded to discourage its clergy and laity from maintaining continuing relations with semi-official Soviet-Bloc organisations such as the Berlin conference, the Church did not wish to risk a public confrontation with a potentially vociferous segment of its West European constituency by disallowing participation in the Berlin conference. As for the Catholic clergy in the USSR, the leadership of local churches under the pressure of the Soviet regime even supported the participation of their clergy in the work of this organisation.

If we are talking about the influence of the secret services of the USSR and other socialist countries in this organisation, then the organisation itself was the result of the cooperation of these services. From the very beginning, the Berlin conference worked under the auspices of the Ministry of State Security of the GDR or the *Stasi*. From the time of foundation until 1987, the leader or president of the organisation was Otto Hartmut Fuchs. Fuchs participated actively in the anti-war movement and was also a member of the Presidium of the World Peace Council. In 1972, Fuchs became a member of the Central Council of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany and had a significant influence on the leadership of the party. An indication that the secret services of the GDR initially controlled the activities of the Berlin Conference is the fact that Fuchs was an *Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter* that is a secret agent of the Stasi under the pseudonym 'Hartmut'. After Fuchs's death, the President of the BC was Karl Darksen (Karl Derksen), a Dominican monk from the Netherlands, but actually, the organisation's work was managed by the

General Secretary – Hubertus Guske. Guske was also an unofficial employee of the Stasi from 1959 to 1989 under the pseudonym ‘Georg’. It is known that he was one of the agents who collected information about Josef Ratzinger when he visited East Germany. There was also one more Stasi agent in the leadership of the organisation – Adolf Niggemeier, under the code name ‘Benno Roth’.

The core of the Berlin Conference was the so-called Presidium, consisting of ten people, five from Western Europe and five from Eastern Europe. One of the members of the Presidium was, for example, the Rector of the Kaunas Seminary Viktoras Butkus, whose nickname for the KGB agent, according to materials in Hoover’s Lithuanian Special Archives collection, was ‘Pine tree’. Butkus became an agent in 1959, already before the commencement of his studies at the Lateran University in Rome, and his mission was to report on Catholic clergy in exile as well as to block channels of information between Rome and the Roman Catholic Church in Soviet Lithuania.<sup>10</sup> The other member of the Presidium from the USSR, this time from Latvia, Leons Dzenis had also been a KGB agent under the nickname ‘Kurzemnieks’, recruited by the LSSR KGB in 1972. As the historian Clemens Vollnhals writes, the Berlin conference served as a cover for the secret services of the Communists to influence Western Catholics using propaganda and counter-propaganda as well as activities of intelligence and counter-intelligence.<sup>11</sup>

The information available today on the activities of the Berlin Conference, of course, does not give us a full picture of the operational objectives of the Berlin Conference and its significance in the Soviet foreign policy tasks in the 1970s and 1980s. However, one target can be identified: following the interests of the USSR, the Berlin Conference was used to

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<sup>10</sup> Arunas Streikus. Lithuanian Catholic Clergy and the KGB. *Religion, State & Society*, 2006, vol.34, Nr.1, p.63-70. See also Donald O’Sullivan. Tinker, Tailor, Soldier... Priest. *Hoover Institution*, Nr.1, January 23, 2012. Available at: <http://www.hoover.org/research/tinker-tailor-soldier-priest>, last accessed 16.04.2019.

<sup>11</sup> Clemens Vollnhals. Die Kirchenpolitik von SED und Staatssicherheit: eine Zwischenbilanz. *Analysen und Dokumente*, Band 7. Ch. Links Verlag, 1996, p. 116.



strengthen the Marxist ideas and pro-Soviet orientation in the liberation theology movement.

This fact is evidenced by the documents from the fund of the Commissioner of the USSR Council for Religious Affairs in the Latvian SSR currently available for public access in the Latvian State Archives. Among these documents, there is a significant number of reports written by delegates from Latvia after attending the events of the Berlin Conference. These reports not only described in detail these events, the meetings of the Presidium, but often the most active members of the organisation from Western Europe were characterised, and further plans of the organisation were named.<sup>12</sup>

From reports, you may find out that, for example, delegates from Latin America often participated in the various meetings of the Berlin Conference, so getting into the influence of Marxist ideas and Soviet propaganda. Similarly, in various events, different appeals against fascist regimes in Latin America had been prepared and adopted. Thus, in the summer of 1975, support was provided to Raúl Silva Henríquez, the Archbishop of Santiago and the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Chile.<sup>13</sup> He actively opposed the Augusto Pinochet regime and in 1975 founded the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad* – a body of human rights protection under the umbrella of the Church.

To sum up, it can be concluded that, as a result of the tremendous and often brutal political and ideological pressure, a part of the liberation theology movement radicalised and became left-oriented. No wonder that, experiencing the methods of governing used by the military regimes in Latin America at that time, many of the founding members of the movement actively engaged in the struggle with these regimes. Thus, there were two Catholic clergies among the leaders of the Nicaraguan Sandinistas: Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann and Ernesto Cardenal, who from 1979 to 1987 was a Minister of Culture in Nicaragua. Cardenal joined the

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<sup>12</sup> See, for example: The State Archives of Latvia, record group 1419, descript. 3, case 10.

<sup>13</sup> The State Archives of Latvia, record group 1419, descript. 3, case 10, p.54.

Sandinistas when the National Guard destroyed almost the entire Solentinames' community in which he served. For belonging to the liberation theology and the sympathies to Marxism, Pope John Paul II excommunicated Cardenal from the Church in 1984, and d'Escoto Brockman – a year later. Only in 2014, Pope Francis abolished the excommunication of d'Escoto Brockmann.

However, the question remains whether the liberation theology was initially Marxist or was it renamed this way by those who were entirely alien to the core ideas of this movement? If we carefully read Gutierrez's programmatic work *Teología de la liberación* published in 1971, it soon becomes clear that the ideas about whom Gutierrez wrote and which inspired both clergy and laity at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century not only in Latin America was not Marxism, as they were explained by the Soviet regime and the USA administrations. At least it was not just Marxism. The liberation theology was first and foremost a reminder of the truths of the Gospel, as Medellín conference emphasised. Poverty is not only inhumane; it is a challenge to Christian faith. From that point of view, liberation theology was an attempt to concretise the Church, which makes the statement about Jesus Christ indifferent to the dynamics of historical events in society, the Church focused on caring for the spiritual dimension without any socio-political and economic functions or problems, considers evangelization a reality that is far from the socio-political issues. Gutierrez wrote about the spirituality of liberation (*espiritualidad de la liberación*). This spirituality is not something 'inward'; it is a process that takes place in the socio-economic, political and cultural field in which we live and which we need to transform. This spirituality is also a radical transformation of ourselves: to think, to feel and to live like Christ, but to do it all in another – in a repressed and alienated person. Referring to the Similarity of Jesus about the Merciful Samaritan, he reminded that it is Jesus who brings us into the world of 'other', 'insignificant' people, in the world of people which we have excluded not only from society but who have no place also in our thoughts and ideas. According to Gutierrez, the Other is the priority of Jesus, the evangelical message and the sign of

Christian ethics, and precisely the poor and the outsiders embody it more thoroughly.

Another representative of the liberation theology, Leonardo Boff, explained that the core of the liberation theology was rooted in the very nature of God. He wrote about a direct link between God, oppression and liberation: God is in the poor man who cries for help.

Moreover, God is the one who hears this cry and gives the release so that the poor should no longer be cried.

“In Jesus Christ, God took upon himself the evil and the absurd. By identifying with the problem, he resolved it, not theoretically but through life and love. Consequently, this God alone is the God of the Christian experience. He is no longer the eternal and infinite loner but one with us, in solidarity with our pain and anguish caused by the absence and latency of God in the world”<sup>14</sup>.

On January 24, 2016, Pope Francis said in his Angelus Prayer something very similar:

“Let us ask ourselves: what does it mean to evangelise the poor? It means first of all drawing close to them, it means having the joy of serving them, of freeing them from their oppression, and all of this in the name of and with the Spirit of Christ, because he is the Gospel of God, he is the Mercy of God, he is the liberation of God, he is the One who became poor so as to enrich us with his poverty.”<sup>15</sup>

Pope Francis, who served in Argentina, also knew the theology of liberation well. He also believed that the most crucial thing in this theology was the return to the fundamental truths of the Gospel. He considered that “the option for the poor comes from the first centuries of Christianity. It is the Gospel itself. If you were to read one of the sermons

<sup>14</sup> Leonardo Boff. *Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology for Our Time*. Orbis Books, 1978, p.16.

<sup>15</sup> Pope Francis. *Angelus*, 24 January 2016. Available at: [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2016/documents/papa-francesco\\_angelus\\_20160124.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2016/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20160124.html), last accessed 16.04.2019.

of the first fathers of the Church, from the second or third centuries, about how you should treat the poor, you would say it was Maoist or Trotskyist. The Church has always had the honour of this preferential option for the poor ... At the Second Vatican Council, the Church was redefined as the People of God, and this idea really took off at the Second Conference of the Latin-American bishops in Medellin”.<sup>16</sup>

Recently, when Pope Francis visited Latvia, Archbishop of the Latvian Roman Catholic Church Zbigniew Stankevich (*Zbignevs Stankevičs*) also referred to the Christian solidarity and necessity to be responsible for the needy and socially outcasted. These two contemporary examples, which are much like the world look of the liberation theology, suggest that most of the representatives of the liberation theology in Latin America were no fewer Christians or more Marxists. They, like many members of their communities, were merely sacrificed in a major political game called ‘geopolitical interests’.

**Solveiga Krumina-Konkova, PhD in Philosophy**, is a leading researcher at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia. Her research interests: philosophy of religion and history of religions in the Baltics. She is an author of several books on the philosophy of religion and history of religious-philosophical ideas in Latvia. For several years she has studied relations between the KGB (Soviet secret service) and the Church in Soviet Latvia.

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<sup>16</sup> Transcript of 2010 judicial inquiry “Bergoglio Declara ante el TOF No 5”, p. 37–38. *Internet Archive WayBack Machine*. Available at: <http://www.abuelas.org.ar/material/documentos/BERGOGLIO2.pdf>, last accessed 16.04.2019.

## THEORY IN ACTION: FRENCH PERSONALISM IN THE PUBLIC DEBATES OF POST-WAR POLAND

### Abstract

This article is devoted to the debate on personalism that took place after the Second World War between Polish Catholic intellectuals. Being focused on the historical rather than theological perspective of the issue, the paper deals with three groups of Catholic intelligentsia that were involved in the public discussions on the personalist concept: the Krakow group that published the weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny*, the community of intellectuals gathered around the charismatic figure Bolesław Piasecki, and the group *WIEŹ* that was organised by Tadeusz Mazowiecki (later the first non-communist prime-minister of Poland) after the great social movement of the ‘Polish October’. The article shows how French personalism in general, and the concept of *engagement* coined by Emmanuel Mounier in particular, were adopted by different participants of this discussion. The paper remarks upon the interest of Polish Catholic intellectuals in French personalism since the inter-war period and emphasises that the post-war realities shaped an especial context for the reinterpretation of the socio-political ideas of the French personalists.

It is shown that the leaders of the Krakow group, who had been deeply involved debating personalist ideas in the inter-war period, avoided political questions in their public discourse following the Second World War. Jerzy Turowicz drew the image of an ‘ideal personalist state’ but did not propose a political strategy, while Stanisław Stomma called for creating ideological and institutional defences to protect the Catholic social doctrine in light of the challenges of the new realities. The *Tygodnik Powszechny* continued its public activity until a decision not to publish the obituary to Stalin after his death in 1953.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, after de-Stalinisation

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<sup>1</sup> Formally, the weekly was not closed: the special services and the authorities asked the group of B. Piasecki to continue publishing this journal.

in 1956, *Tygodnik Powszechny* returned to their public activity and has maintained its position in the intellectual landscape of Poland until now.

The group of Bolesław Piasecki, who was one of the leaders of a radical right-wing organisation in the inter-war period, represented a completely different interpretation of personalism after the war. Piasecki, deciding to collaborate with the security service, argued that great social changes were inevitable and would take place independent of the will of Catholics. For this reason, according to Piasecki, Catholics should participate in these processes and spiritualise them. Repeating the theses of Mounier, Piasecki called upon Polish Catholics to actively participate in the new realities. At the same time, Piasecki was not interested in arguing about the question of person in and of itself. The Catholic activist attempted to conceptualise the place of Catholics in the face of the new realities while avoiding speaking of the values of a singular person.

Even though Piasecki's political organisation PAX survived the entire socialist period of Polish history the "Polish October" caused a great split in Piasecki's organisation. Many young people, unsatisfied with Piasecki's political strategy, left the organisation and created a separate one. Tadeusz Mazowiecki created a new Catholic group and a separate journal, which promoted another interpretation of Personalism. Mazowiecki attempted to synthesise the concept of person and the idea of engagement with the current social movement. He argued that personalism is based on a humanistic understanding of human beings. At the same time, he argued that it is not possible to exclude the social component of human nature. Therefore, Mazowiecki was convinced that Catholics should strive to influence the current political and social situation. It is remarked that this attitude later made later Mazowiecki and his colleagues active participants in the subsequent social movement against the communist regime in the Polish state.

In the conclusion of this article, this kind of research illuminates the various ways of legitimatising a chosen strategy through references to a common source. Being united by their rejection of liberalism, the Catholic intellectuals created three types of personalism: the first stuck closely to Maritain's theological concept and did not imply *engagement*; the second one, on the contrary, was based on *engagement* but removed the concept of person; and the third strove to synthesise these elements. At the same time, the paper emphasises the fact that the link with French personalism made the Polish Catholic intelligentsia part of the European intellectual landscape, including them in the socio-political changes sweeping the continent.

**Keywords:** Personalism, Emmanuel Mounier, Jacques Maritain, Polish Catholicism, Catholic intelligentsia, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, *Więź*, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Bolesław Piasecki, *engagement*, Polish October, 1956 in Poland.

The growing socialist movement at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the reshaping of the European political and geographical landscape following the First World War were a great challenge for European philosophy in general and Christian thought in particular. The Christian churches experienced the intellectual deconstruction and material disempowerment of the established images of power, state and society. All this had a particular relevance in the case of the Catholic Church. A considerable part of those Catholics from the majority of Catholic countries were involved in the socialist movement both in theory and in action. Thousands of Catholics across the world (not only in Europe) did not want to deny Christianity while accepting the socialist way of thinking. Additionally, the encounter between Christian and Socialist attitudes took place beyond the control of governmental and Church hierarchies. This fact played an essential role in reconstructing the previous patterns of communication between the Church hierarchy and the masses, weakening the traditional antagonism between anti-religious socialists and religious-based authorities.<sup>2</sup>

It was French personalism that later became one of the most remarkable embodiments of such tendencies. Even though the intellectual biographies of the main representatives of the personalist movement would be an important part of describing the phenomenon, this essay will cover only the most significant moments in the movement's history. The journal *Esprit*, soon after its establishment in 1934, began to be considered among the most significant centres attracting the Catholics interested in debating the current social processes. The founder of the periodical, Emmanuel

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example: Daly G. *Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism*, O.S.A. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.

Mounier, actively participated in public discussions, promoting his idea of personalism. Being influenced and supported by the well-known Thomistic philosopher Jacques Maritain, Mounier discussed the problems of the Catholic doctrine in light of the new social realities in a considerable number of his essays.<sup>3</sup>

One of the most readable of Mounier's works *A Personalist Manifesto* (1936)<sup>4</sup> seemed to be a summary of the crucial ideas of *Esprit's* movement. The Manifesto includes many significant interpretations of the opposition between the person and the collective, the ideas concerning the nature of the social processes, and a critical review of Marxism. Nevertheless, it is more important for this article to highlight Mounier's concept of *engagement* which was a guiding spirit in all his writings. The idea that Catholics should not ignore social changes but must be engaged in them is key for the topic I intend to discuss in this publication.

Often harshly criticised by the conservative Pope Pius XI, Mounier promoted the idea that the social changes about which Marx spoke were inevitable, and the Catholics' aim is to spiritualise these social changes and fill them with Christian values. After his wartime experience, he continued supporting this idea and wrote: "Communism and Christianity reinforce each other like Jacob and the Angel, with a rigour and brotherhood-in-arms that infinitely surpass the struggle for power,<sup>5</sup> [arguing that] it is not we who have invented socialism. It was born of man's suffering and his reflections on the disorders that oppressed him."<sup>6</sup> These statements distinctly illustrate the aspects of Mounier's programme that were so relevant for the post-war Polish reality. That is why the response

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, his writings have been published in book form: Mounier E. *Révolution personaliste et communautaire*, Paris: Éd. Mouton, 1934.; Mounier E. *De la propriété capitaliste à la propriété humaine*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, coll. «Questions disputées», 1936.

<sup>4</sup> Mounier E., *Manifeste au service du personalisme*, Paris: Éd. Mouton, 1936.

<sup>5</sup> Mounier E., *Feu la Chrétienté // Oeuvres de Mounier*. Paris : Éditions du Seuil, 1962. t. 3. p. 614.

<sup>6</sup> Mounier E. *Be Not Afraid: Studies in Personalist Sociology*, New York: Harper, 1954. p. 195.



to this version of personalism, and its proposition of a social-political strategy, will be at the forefront of this article.

This paper aims to examine the social effect of ideas and will thus focus on the historical rather than the theological perspectives of the issue.<sup>7</sup> It is important to demonstrate the links between the ideas/ideologies and actions/life strategies. For this reason, the article will concentrate not only on analysis at the theoretical level of French personalism's interpretation in post-war Poland but also on clarifying the relationship between the strategies undertaken by different groups of intellectuals and their interpretation of French personalism. Taking into account the possible volume of the article, this paper will deal with the key texts written by the leaders of the three groups of Catholic intellectuals that played an essential role in the cultural life of post-war Poland. The socio-political context of the activity of these groups will not be covered in depth, despite its significance.

After the Second World War, the Polish Catholic intellectuals, who were interested in Meunier's programme before and during the war, found themselves in a completely new situation. The socialist regime, which was established in the Polish Republic under Soviet domination, started to struggle against Catholic influence in the public sphere of the post-war Polish state. This fact provoked considerable debate amongst the Catholic intellectuals who decided to participate in public discussions under the new political and social conditions. Personalism, promoting the idea that the significant social changes happening in the bourgeois world were inevitable, seemed to be an apt conceptual frame for interpreting the new political realities. There were two significant centres of attraction for Catholic intellectuals in Poland that were deeply involved in the discussion on personalism immediately following the Second World War: the Krakow group of the weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* and the Warsaw Catholic community headed by the charismatic figure Bolesław Piasecki.

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<sup>7</sup> Personalism has a special theological tradition in Poland and needs a particular examination of the concepts that have not so much to do with the idea of this article. See, for example: Granat W., *Personalizm chrześcijański. Teologia osoby ludzkiej*, Poznań: Księgarnia św. Wojciecha, 1985.

It is remarkable that Polish intellectuals had been extremely interested in French Personalism since the interwar period. The translations of the works of Maritain and Mounier were broadly discussed in the Polish Catholic press of the time.<sup>8</sup> The leaders of the Krakow group, Jerzy Turowicz and Stanislaw Stomma, repeatedly visited Paris to speak to Mounier and other Personalists after the First World War. While activists in the non-nationalistic wing of the young Catholic movement, Turowicz and Stomma read *Esprit* and considered personalism to be one of the most acceptable socio-political ideas within social Catholic thought.<sup>9</sup> It is remarkable that Mounier's texts were broadly discussed, not only among Catholics, but also in the circles of Polish sociologists who proposed them as readings for students before and during the war at the underground universities.<sup>10</sup> There is no evidence of Bolesław Piasecki's contacting French personalists during the interwar period.<sup>11</sup> Even though French personalists were not without interest in the activity of the right-wing 'Action française'<sup>12</sup> movement at certain times, Piasecki, representing his radical fascist organisation, interpreted Catholicism through the prism of ethno-nationalism and Polish messianism and was not yet interested in the internationalisation of his ideology. In any case, as was convincingly argued by Piotr Kosicki, French authors deeply influenced the intellectual formation of most of the young Catholic intellectuals who would go on to represent the Catholic intelligentsia in the debates after the Second World War.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Kosicki Piotr H., *Catholics on the Barricades. Poland, France, and "Revolution", 1891–1956*, New Haven and London: Yale university press, 2018. pp. 40–49, 60–76. By the way, Maritain visited Poland in 1934 and was warmly received Polish Catholics: Kosicki Piotr H., *Catholics on the Barricades...* pp. 46–49.

<sup>9</sup> Turowicz spoke once to Mounier, see: Kosicki Piotr H., *Catholics on the Barricades*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>10</sup> Kosicki Piotr H., *Catholics on the Barricades*, pp. 78–80.

<sup>11</sup> Kosicki Piotr H., *Personalizm po polsku. Francuskie korzenie polskiej inteligencji katolickiej*, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2016. p. 113.

<sup>12</sup> See about Maritain's interest in the ideology of Charles Maurras: Kosicki Piotr H., *Personalizm po polsku*, pp. 45–46.

<sup>13</sup> Kosicki Piotr H. *Catholics on the Barricades*, pp. 33–92.

The weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* was founded on the initiative of the cardinal Adam Sapieha and attracted many former activists from the inter-war Christian Democracy.<sup>14</sup> From the beginning of the post-war period, the Kraków group declared that their public activity would exclusively be in the field of culture, and they would thus avoid participation in politics.<sup>15</sup> When theorising this issue, one of the leaders of the Kraków group Jerzy Turowicz discussed *personalism* in the pages of the journal *Znak* that was published by the collective of the *Tygodnik Powszechny*. Remarkably, Turowicz understood *personalism* to be not only a political theory but also a type of worldview. According to this view, personalism could resolve the most essential contradiction in the European intellectual tradition; that between individualism and collectivism. He wrote:

“Individualism of the modern era, seeing the individual and collectively on a purely natural perspective, professing the optimism of Rousseau and believing in the kindness of human nature, demanded maximum freedom for a person and put it above collectively, believing that the unhindered activity of free individuals would inevitably lead to the common good. This belief failed and individualism went bankrupt led to anarchy, wars, oppression of the masses and a split of culture.”<sup>16</sup>

According to Turowicz, Fascism was a kind of response to these individualistic tendencies in the European intellectual tradition. Fascism proclaimed the importance of a collective, and thoroughly destroyed the value of personality. Commenting on the downfall of Fascism, Turowicz argued: “The only correct solution to the problem is personalism. Personalism is seeing a person against the background of the complete

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<sup>14</sup> Karol Wojtyła, later the Pope John Paul II and a prominent Personalist theologian, was then a young priest who took part in the activities of the weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny*.

<sup>15</sup> See: Jagiełło M. „*Tygodnik Powszechny*” i komunizm (1945–1953), Warszawa: Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza, 1988, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Turowicz J. W stronę społecznienia // *Znak*. 1946. nr 1. p. 88. This opinion was probably influenced by the famous book of Jacques Maritain *Trois réformateurs* (Maritain J. *Trois réformateurs: Luther, Descartes, Rousseau, avec six portraits*, Plon: Paris, 1925.)

natural and supernatural reality of the human condition, knowing that a human being is either good or bad not by nature, but through culture, education, and above all, grace.”<sup>17</sup> At the same time, Turowicz did not consider a society without a strong state possible. According to him, a collective of persons has the capacity to influence and even subjugate a single person:

“[...] a human being is subject to a community as an individual and as a part of the human race, but this community is subject to the interests of the individual as a person. The community organised in a society has the right to the far-reaching subordination of the individual and may claim anything from him, right up to his property or his life.”<sup>18</sup>

Turowicz also proposed consideration of the personalist perspective when debating the form of ‘an ideal state’. His statements on this topic seem especially interesting in the context of the socio-political situation immediately following the war. He described the ideal state as “a personalist democracy, an organic, strong state, organising and managing the planned economic life and material well-being of society and everything that is within its scope, as well as leaving maximum freedom in the field of culture, thus education, and especially the highest vocation of the human person.”<sup>19</sup> Considering these views, it is remarkable that the author did not call for the creation of a ‘personalist party’ or another political organisation. Turowicz’s ‘personalist state’ incorporated a command economy with strong governmental institutions, while at the same time maintaining freedoms of worldview and culture. For good reasons, maintaining these freedoms was key for the Krakow group to keep its position in the socio-political landscape of the Polish state after the Second World War. Meanwhile, other characteristics of Turowicz’s state-

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<sup>17</sup> Turowicz J. *W stronę społecznienia*, p. 89.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90

model strongly corresponded with the project proclaimed in the Polish Republic after the war.<sup>20</sup>

The other leader of the Krakow group, Stanislaw Stomma, provoked an intense discussion by introducing the question of the decline of the Western World. Stomma argued that Mounier's main argument that the fulfilment of Marx's prophecy was inevitable was based on criticism of the social structure of the western societies. According to Stomma, the European nations, about which Oswald Spengler spoke in his writings, are old ones. Therefore, French and Polish Catholics are situated in entirely different contexts. He wrote:

“The French proletariat, which supports Communism mostly sub-consciously, is deliberately heading for a great historical upheaval and is living with the vision of a new socialist era. The French bourgeois, who is conservative to the bone, has extreme features and a strong sense of epigonism. Hence the diffidence, the disbelief in the possibility of victory.”<sup>21</sup>

At the same time, according to Stomma, the Slavic nations are young nations: “For us, everything looks different. The point here is, of course, the youth of the Slavic civilisation, which gives rise to a primitive sense of our strength, which is lacked by a significant number of the French.”<sup>22</sup>

Developing the argument concerning Slavs' ‘primitive feeling of strength’, Stomma coined the idea that Catholics should avoid both direct conflict with the post-war realities and the movement away from the Church's social doctrine toward a socialist one. It should be mentioned that the author understood the ‘Catholic social doctrine’ as primarily the general ideas of the encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* which included the judgments of the Holy See concerning the most essential social questions. Stomme, meanwhile,

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<sup>20</sup> Even though this state-model had to demonstrate a potential loyalty of Catholics to the new political regime, basing my opinion on the knowledge.

<sup>21</sup> Stomma S. Maksymalne i minimalne tendencje społeczne katolików // *Znak*. 1946. nr. 3, p. 266

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 269–270

recognised that the Pope's writings did not contain a coherent political programme. Nevertheless, he highlighted several theses that, in his opinion, should form the central principles that Catholics should follow:

“(1) the fundamental recognition of private property; (2) the desire to compensate for differences in the property status of different social strata; (3) the necessity for interaction between different classes and social arbitration; (4) the existence of the so-called fair pay, where the main measure is the vital needs of the worker, which is necessary to meet their needs in each particular situation.”<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, Stomma suggested to the Catholics not to struggle against the coming socialist period but to survive it without changing the main principles of their worldview. Arguing this, he referred to the metaphor of an old oak tree. The tree may appear to be dead but, with time, new sprouts grow through the lifeless body and bring the tree a second life. According to him, Catholics had to construct a bastion, both at the intellectual and at the institutional level, in which they would survive all probable cataclysms.<sup>24</sup> Even though Stomma's argument does not seem very consistent, it is clear that he was not optimistic about the prospects of the public activity of Catholics under the new political conditions.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, the Krakow group published in their journal the translation of the French theologian Jean Daniélou describing the state of the intellectual life in France. It is remarkable that Daniélou characterised both Liberalism and Marxism as the movements that had lost their philosophical and political relevance, while characterising Mounier's personalism, Maritain's Thomism

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<sup>23</sup> Stomma S. *Maksymalne i minimalne tendencje społeczne katolików*, p. 268

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274

<sup>25</sup> Apparently, this statement was addressed to the Catholics from the group of the journal *Tygodnik Warszawski* who criticised the Krakow group for their passive attitude in the public space. It is remarkable that the leaders of the “*Tygodnik Warszawski*” who had to emigrate to London after the repression against their group accused the Krakow intellectuals that they “being under the influence of Mounier's philosophy, devalued the social Catholic doctrine” (see: Braun J., Popiel K., Sieniewicz K., *Człowiek ze spżżu*, Londyn: Odnova, 1981, p. 208)

and existentialism as representing the mainstream in Philosophy.<sup>26</sup> In such a way, Marxism was not, for the Krakow intellectuals, the prophecy that came true but the political condition of the post-war realities.

Thus, the Krakow group, proclaiming Personalism to be their central philosophical concept (with references primarily to the French thinkers) interpreted it rather as a part of Thomistic theology without proposing any concept of public action. According to them, *engagement* with the social and political changes was not a reasonable tactic, and the protection of personhood was possible from the 'catacombs'. It should be remarked that the Krakow intellectuals were among the initiators of Mounier's visit to Krakow in 1946. Nevertheless, the conversation with Mounier, and the article that he wrote after he returned to Paris, testified to the differences in understanding when it came to crucial principles of social action. It is not surprising that Jerzy Turowicz painfully experienced this misunderstanding with the French philosopher,<sup>27</sup> who, by the way, did not have an idea of the internal conditions of post-war intellectual life in Poland. Mounier was, in fact, more sympathetic to another Catholic group, led by Bolesław Piasecki. The *Tygodnik Powszechny* continued its public activity until their decision not to publish the obituary to Stalin after his death in 1953.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, after the de-Stalinisation in 1956, *Tygodnik Powszechny* returned to their public activity and has maintained its position in the intellectual landscape of Poland until now.

-The Catholic intellectuals associated with the charismatic figure Bolesław Piasecki proposed a completely different interpretation of personalism. It is necessary to pay some attention to the personality of Bolesław Piasecki. During the early interwar period, Piasecki was an active member of several national-democratic organisations headed by the nationalist Roman Dmowski. Piasecki eventually became one of the

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<sup>26</sup> J. Daniélou, *Życie umysłowe we Francji (Komunizm, Egzystencjonalizm, Chrześcijaństwo)* // *Znak*. 1946. nr 1, pp. 93–109

<sup>27</sup> Kosicki Piotr H., *Catholics on the Barricades*, pp. 114–116.

<sup>28</sup> Formally, the weekly was not closed: the special services and the authorities asked the group of B. Piasecki to continue publishing this journal.

leaders within the most radical right-wing organisation ‘ONR-Falanga’. During the war, he was arrested by the Gestapo, but was released from prison after the personal intercession of Mussolini, because of his contacts with Italian Fascists. After that, Piasecki took part in the underground resistance against the Nazi occupation and, with the coming of Soviet troops, was arrested by the NKVD. Despite his nationalistic past, Piasecki was able to get an opportunity to present his political project to the Soviet general Ivan A. Serov, who decided to release the young politician from prison and to give him an opportunity to create a public organisation.<sup>29</sup>

It would not be correct to say that personalism was announced as the main ideology of Piasecki’s group. Nevertheless, Piasecki and his following adopted a considerable part of the arguments that had been used by the French personalists. It should be remarked that he decided to collaborate with the security services immediately after his release from prison. Nevertheless, he attracted many young people who saw in his organisation a real opportunity for public legal activity beyond the communist camp. Unlike the Krakow group, Piasecki was not interested in the concept of *personhood* formulated by the French thinkers. The axiomatic first section of the *General Principles of Worldview* (a program declaration) of his group seemed very similar to the pre-war nationalist concept: God – Humanity – Nation – Family (Bóg, ludzkość, naród, rodzina).<sup>30</sup> There was no ‘person’ in this hierarchy.

At the same time, the idea of *engagement* played a central role in Piasecki’s ideology. He formulated the aims of the Catholic movement in the following way:

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<sup>29</sup> See more about his biography: Kunicki M. S. *Between the Brown and the Red. Nationalism, Catholicism, and Communism in 20th-Century Poland - The Politics of Bolesław Piasecki*. Athens, Ohio University Press, 2012.; Dudek A., Pytel G. *Bolesław Piasecki. Próba biografii politycznej*. Londyn: Aneks, 1990.

<sup>30</sup> Of course, the nationalist version of this did not include “Humanity” as an essential category, See: *Zasady programu Narodowo Radykalnego*, Warszawa 1937, p. 2.; *Ogólne zasady światopoglądowe (deklaracja programowa)*, in Id., *Kierunki 1945–1960*. Warszawa: PAX, 1981, p. 7.



“We believe that this mutual distrust should be broken. We want to contribute to this through 1) joint service with Marxists to accomplish the main task of construction and reconstruction of the Polish state; 2) joint ideological struggle with Marxists for the most complete development of the Polish idea and its ability to serve national needs. Cooperation between Marxists and idealists can only increase the political level of both sides.”<sup>31</sup>

Piasecki strove to conceptualise the place of Catholicism under the new conditions and to draw up a plan of action for Catholics. He wrote that materialists currently represented the vanguard of the ‘social revolution’ in Poland and had been striving for the triumph of the materialist worldview. Meanwhile, the considerable part of Catholics was not in opposition to the social changes and preached the ‘progressive ideas’ on social questions. He wrote: “At the same time, it is true that the revolutionary spiritualist forces exist in Poland. It is also true that these forces, while accepting the socio-economic changes, at the same time profess the Catholic worldview.”<sup>32</sup> It is remarkable that Piasecki spoke of ‘spiritualist forces’, provoking a strong allusion to Mounier’s vocabulary. Additionally, Piasecki was sure, as were the French personalists, that the revolutionary social changes were inevitable. He wrote: “The process of forming a new era can be seen as an inevitable phenomenon that will occur, despite our desire or opposition.”<sup>33</sup> Moreover, Piasecki argued that there were currently only three notable ideas in the intellectual landscape of Europe:

“[...] Marxism on the offensive, capitalism on the defensive. The third idea is an idea based on the coexistence of peoples on the social principles of Catholicism. This idea is in its infancy.”<sup>34</sup> At the same time, Piasecki argued that the idea just to survive the coming social changes could not be regarded as a possible strategy

<sup>31</sup> *Ogólne zasady światopoglądowe (deklaracja programowa)*, in Id., *Kierunki 1945–1960*. Warszawa: PAX, 1981. p.10

<sup>32</sup> Piasecki B. *Zagadnienia istotne // Dziś i Jutro*, nr 1, p. 2

<sup>33</sup> Piasecki B. *Kierunki*, in Id., *Kierunki 1945–1960 ...* p. 22

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34

for Catholics, because: “[...] In the current historical period, there is no possibility of the isolated existence of large communities.”<sup>35</sup>

In such a way, Bolesław Piasecki, who had chosen to collaborate with the authorities and the security services, conceptualised the necessity of the active participation of Catholics in the public life of the Polish state. As it was mentioned above, after his visit to Poland, Emmanuel Mounier sympathised most with Piasecki’s activity and ideology. This was the reason for the active cooperation between Piasecki’s men and the *Esprit* group against the background of increasing repression by the Polish regime, even after the death of Mounier.<sup>36</sup> Even though Piasecki’s political organisation PAX survived the entire socialist period of Polish history, the ‘Polish October’ of 1956<sup>37</sup> provoked a great split within his group. Some intellectuals left the group and organised a separate one. Among others, the future Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki left Piasecki’s organisation and created a new Catholic group around the journal *Więź*.<sup>38</sup> Remarkably, Mazowiecki also considered personalism to be the main source of inspiration for Catholics under the new political conditions. His idea of personalism will be the third example in this publication.

It is significant that Mazowiecki attempted to join the group of the *Tygodnik Poruszyczny* immediately following the war. Nevertheless, having received no answer from Krakow, the young intellectual was invited by Andrzej Micewski to attend the meetings of Piasecki’s group.<sup>39</sup> Having experienced Stalinisation within PAX, Mazowiecki and his colleagues, who had left Piasecki’s institution, disagreed with Piasecki’s strategy of collaboration with the authorities during the great people’s movement of 1956. They strove to create a Catholic organisation without cooperating

<sup>35</sup> Piasecki B. *Walka o odpowiedzialność*, in Id., *Kierunki 1945–1960 ...* p. 37

<sup>36</sup> Kosicki Piotr H. *Catholics on the Barricades*, pp. 230–256

<sup>37</sup> The “Polish October” – *Polski październik*, – the social movement due to the process of “destalinization” in Poland in 1956.

<sup>38</sup> See: Brzeziecki A. *Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Biografia naszego premiera*. Kraków: Znak Horyzont, 2015. pp. 85–101, 111–144

<sup>39</sup> See: Brzeziecki A. *Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Biografia naszego premiera.*, pp. 40–41

with the security services and the authorities. At the same time, Mazowiecki's interpretation of Personalism is a testament to the influence of Piasecki's ideas that attracted Mazowiecki and many other young intellectuals to the PAX after the end of the war. From the first issues, personalism was a question under discussion in Mazowiecki's *Więź*.<sup>40</sup> Unlike Piasecki, he started with a detailed examination of the concept of *personhood* in French Christian tradition. In his essays, Mazowiecki especially emphasised the humanistic roots of Christian tradition. He wrote:

“Thus, personalist humanism is the humanism of a person. The importance of the fact that personalism attaches to the concept of personality becomes clear only against the background of the question of what distinguishes a person, what explains his position in the world of nature and in history. [A human being is] not just a piece of matter, a separate element in nature, as an atom, a stem of grain, a fly or an elephant, or individual elements in nature [but possesses a special and independent value].”<sup>41</sup>

Meanwhile, riding the wave of the ‘Polish October’, Mazowiecki did not deny the necessity of *engagement* in his programme and seriously considered the opportunity to influence the current socio-political situation. According to him, the social nature of human beings should not be ignored in the public discussion and political strategy of Catholics. He argued: “Personalist humanism is also a social humanism. The social features are inherent for human beings by definition. And this is not an artificial element, or some kind of costume imposed on a person through the necessary conditions of life.”<sup>42</sup> Writing so, Mazowiecki was especially interested in the question of the historical role of personality. The historical perspective of the issue led him to argue that Catholics should participate in the processes that would cause the emancipation of the people.<sup>43</sup> Thus Mazowiecki, who was acting as the leader of his own group after the crisis of the Polish October, attempted to combine the idea of personality and the concept of

<sup>40</sup> The first issue was published in 1958.

<sup>41</sup> T. Mazowiecki, *Dlaczego Personalizm?* // *Więź*. 1958. nr 3. pp. 11–24

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11–24

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11–24

*engagement* of Catholics in the current politics. This attitude later made later Mazowiecki and his colleagues active participants in the subsequent social movement against the communist regime in Poland.

This paper has examined three different versions of an 'applied interpretation' of personalism. Based on these sources, I would not argue that this or that understanding of the philosophical concept determined the strategy of a given Catholic group in the public sphere of post-war Poland. On the contrary, in my view, this kind of research illuminates the various ways of legitimatising a chosen strategy through references to a common source. The arguments adopted by the Catholics can reveal the motivation of the primary actors during Poland's social changes, even though their public activity was controlled by the censorship. Additionally, differences in these published opinions not only illustrate the attitudes of the various groups, but also demonstrate the limits of acceptable speech in the public sphere of the socialist state.<sup>44</sup>

The case of French personalism is especially characteristic. The prevalent Polish tradition of a purely theological understanding of personalism and, at the same time, interest in the new French social theory, shaped a unique context for the response to the French personalist theory. Being united by their rejection of liberalism, the Catholic intellectuals created three distinct types of 'personalism': the first one did not imply *engagement*; the second one, on the contrary, was based on *engagement* but excepted the concept of personhood; the third, meanwhile, strove to synthesise these distinct elements.

Comparing the post-war and interwar discussions on personalism, Piotr Kosicki remarked that the post-war realities caused the de-confessionalisation of Catholic discourse in the public discussion following the war.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, in my of view, while debating on an acceptable

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<sup>44</sup> It should be remarked that these "limits acceptable" obviously had been changed with the time. Nevertheless, the mentioned sources give us an important perspective for the father debating this question, even though the format of the article does not allow for the detailed examination of these changes.

<sup>45</sup> Piotr H. Kosicki, *Catholics on the Barricades*, p. 107

social strategy, the Catholic intellectuals determined their own line of *non possumus* in terms of the compromise with the new realities, even though this line was different for the various Catholic groups. Nevertheless, the very fact that all the figures mentioned referred in their political and intellectual discourse to a political theory that originated in France made them part of the European intellectual landscape, including the international socio-political changes. This 'ideological map' was also an important part of the post-war Polish reality. I think that this perspective could be essential in discussing the transborder perspective of the European intellectual and social changes after the Second World War.

**Aleksii Lokhmatov, PhD-Student**, EU-Research Fellow, a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany. Selected publications: *Pol'skaia katolicheskaia intelligentsiia i ideologiia marksizma: Stanovlenie «otnoshenii» (1945–1948)*, *Clio-science: Problemy istorii i mezhdistsiplinarnogo sinteza: Sbornik nauchnyh trudov*, vyp. VII. M.: MPGU, 2016, pp. 186–193. *Pol'skaia katolicheskaia intelligentsiia v 1945–1948. Politicheskoe i dukhovnoe samoopredelenie*, in: I. Aleshkovskii / A. Andriianov / E. Antipov (ed.): *Materialy Mezhdunarodnogo molodezhnogo nauchnogo foruma 'Lomonosov-2016'*, M.: MAKS Press, 2016 [electronic resource].

Ojars Stepens  
Liena Galeja

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## **THE HERITAGE OF THE TOTALITARIAN CONTROL: THE PROBLEM OF THE KGB HERITAGE IN THE CULTURAL SECTOR OF THE MODERN-DAY LATVIA**

Alongside with other areas in the Baltic States, the Soviet occupation regime directed its totalitarian control towards the cultural sector. This area was of particular importance for the Soviet authorities due to its immense potential for ideological control to be exerted on the population as well as for propaganda purposes. Hence, the cultural sector became one of the main targets of the KGB. Consequently, infiltrating the KGB informants and agents into cultural institutions turned to be one of the most effective instruments for the totalitarian control.

After the collapse of the Soviet regime and the restoration of the independence of the Baltic States, the public discourse turned into a battlefield for the dispute on the necessity of lustration, respectively, on researching the information on the former KGB agents and collaborators and making their names public. Due to the prominent role of the public figures representing the cultural sector, the news of their relationships with the KGB became a heated discussion object, leading towards memory wars. In the case of Latvia, these lustration issues related to memory wars have become excessively violent due to the recent claim for publishing the names of the former KGB agents. The paper analyses several aspects of those clashes.

## Cooperation of the cultural sector with the Soviet special services

In order to gain a better understanding of the development of the current situation, some quantitative insight might help to get a preview of the frequency of the cooperation of the representatives of the cultural sector with the Soviet security services during the Soviet occupation period. One of the sources that serve this purpose is the KGB card filing system of the Latvian SSR. The most important hereby is the alphabetical card filing system, which contains information about approximately 4,500 people recruited by the KGB. It should be noted that the card filing system contains information on agent recruitment since the 1930s. However, there is more information regarding recruitment cases dated in the 1960s-1980s. About 600 recruited agents were involved with the cultural sector.<sup>1</sup> In total, cultural sector representatives make approximately 13% of the filing system.

The author of the article has personally examined 1506 files. From those, there are 148 recruited agents representing the field of culture and education or 9,87% of the total amount. The following professions are named: librarians (1), architects (2), photography artists (1), writers (2), publishers (4), members of the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latvians from abroad (7), artists (9), museum employees (10), film directors and film industry employees (11), journalists and media employees (19), musicians (19), actors, directors and theatre employees (20), education and science employees (21), managers and employees of cultural centres and clubs (23).

Among the best-known personalities of the cultural sector who may have been involved with the KGB during the Soviet occupation are writers Vladimirs Kaijaks, Andrejs Dripe, Arnis Terzens, Silvija Brice, journalists Edvīns Inkēns, Ojārs Rubenis, Jānis Šipkēvics, Dainis Lemešonoks, actors Jānis Jarāns, Rolands Zagorskis, Harijs Spanovskis, film directors Arvīds Krievs, Ivars Seleckis, Jānis Streičs, musicians Ainars Ašmanis,

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<sup>1</sup> Research materials of the LPSR KGB Research Commission (2014–2108).

Uģis Roze, Aivars Brīze, Roberts Gobziņš, conductor Arvīds Platpers, artists Gunārs Krollis, Maija Tabaka, etc.<sup>2</sup>

### The most common myths about the relationship between the cultural sector and the KGB

Taking into account the significant extent of the KGB infiltration in the cultural sector during the Soviet occupation period, it can be easily presumed that there would be a great public interest in the problem. The aforementioned also inflicts the formation of different myths and beliefs about the relations between the cultural sector and the Soviet special services.

Some of the most common myths: first, that cultural sector would be of particular importance in the KGB agent formation; second, that it would not be possible to prove the actual cooperation of the cultural sector with the KGB; third, that the information on the most important cultural actors who cooperated with the KGB would be no longer available today. There also exists a myth that all the representatives of the fields of art and culture workers who visited foreign countries during the Soviet occupation period would be related to the KGB, followed by other unjustified assumptions about the cooperation between the Soviet special services and different cultural industries.

The formation and distribution of such myths after the restoration of Latvia's independence in 1991 were undoubtedly supported by the Latvian state policy that, in juxtaposition to some other Eastern European countries, did not suggest lustration of the former Soviet special service staff and agents, but preferred keeping the information about this problem secret and unavailable to the general public for more than twenty years. An article about the KGB published in the Latvian People's Front newspaper *Atmoda* on November 5, 1991, helps trace the genesis of the myths mentioned above. In the article, based on the information provided by a KGB employee, a list of prominent employees of the cultural sector who

<sup>2</sup> Research materials of the LPSR KGB Research Commission (2014–2108).



may have been the KGB agents was published. However, the article did not reveal their names, only their optional agent nicknames: for example, 'Albert' - film director, 'Bush' - television editor, 'Jane' - director, 'Namejs' - from the newspaper *Lauku Avīze*, etc.<sup>3</sup> This publication can be regarded as serving for an early case of myths referring to the KGB infiltration into the cultural sector. First, the article does not indicate the source of information. Secondly, it does not mention the names of the listed potential KGB agents. Thirdly, a selective choice of the published material was directed towards heating the interest of the general public as only well-known professionals in the cultural sector were mentioned, thus creating a false perspective onto social stratification of the KGB agents. Fourthly, the style of the article can be by no means regarded as neutrally informative, as it strives for emotionally affecting the readers by using expressions such as "publishing of the lists would be lethal".<sup>4</sup>

Presenting information this way, along with the state policy of securing information referring to the activities of the KGB agency, contributed to create the above-mentioned and other myths. Now the only way to reveal the truth is to publish true information. In the future, the author of the article will examine some of the aforementioned myths by suggesting ways to explain and eliminate them.

### Myths in confrontation with the historical reality

One of the most common myths about the KGB and the cultural sector is the belief that nowadays it is impossible to prove the cooperation with the KGB. The myth is largely based on the unverifiable assumption that most of the KGB documents are no longer held in Latvia but have been taken to Moscow. This statement is partly true - in 1991, when the USSR collapsed, Latvia took over only part of the KGB archives.

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<sup>3</sup> Veidemane E.; Latkovskis I. Čekas vecākais virsnieks anonīmā intervijā "Atmodai": Sarakstu publicēšana būtu nāvējoša // *Atmoda*. 1991, 5. novembris.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

However, the range of sources currently available enables a possibility to prove a person's cooperation with the Soviet security services. As an example can serve a case study of the Ķekava Secondary School Music Teacher – recruited as an agent with a nickname 'Verdi'.<sup>5</sup> The mentioned person was registered as an agent of the KGB in the KGB agency card of files in 1982.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, the KGB's personal and work case register journals contain a record of the recruitment of this agent. Reports submitted by the agent 'Verdi' are also available in the KGB electronic *Delta* database.<sup>7</sup> Thus we can conclude that, although not always verifiable, there are sources of history that confirm a person's cooperation with the KGB.

The situation is similar with the myth about a supposedly significant number of cultural sphere actors among collaborators of the KGB and with the assumption that the information on important cultural sphere actors who cooperated with the KGB would be no longer available. As mentioned earlier, around 600 people in the cultural and educational sectors can be found in the alphabetical index of the KGB. The number is quite significant, but the total number of the cards in the KGB filing system – around 4,500 people – should be taken into account. The Research Commission of the KGB of the Latvian SSR has concluded that all the social groups existent during the Soviet occupation were represented in the KGB. The number of recruited agents generally relates to the ratio of the social strata in the total population.<sup>8</sup> Therefore there is no reason to assume that the collaboration within the cultural sector would be particularly high.

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<sup>5</sup> *VDK dokumenti*. Read on January 11, 2019, online: <https://kgb.arhivi.lv/dokumenti/vdk/agenti/alfabetiski/90>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Uzraudzības lieta Nr. 7/79 par Arvīda Platpera sadarbības fakta ar VDK konstatēšanu. Reabilitācijas un spēcienestu lietu prokuratūra. Sākta 25. 02. 1997. Beigta 20.06. 1997. g. LNA, f. 2745., apr. 2., l. 10. LR prokuratūra, Reabilitācijas un spēcienestu lietas.

<sup>8</sup> *LPSR VDK zinātniskās izpētes komisijas pārskats*. Read on January 15, 2019, online: <https://www.lu.lv/vdkkomisija/zinas/t/43440/>

At the same time, the outcomes of the research confirm the presence of the cultural sector workers among the collaborators employed by Soviet special services. Likewise, after having examined the currently available sources of information, it can be stated that a plethora of well-known cultural sector actors has been enlisted. Therefore, in the context of promoting the understanding of the history of the society in modern-day Latvia, the questions addressing the verification and the quality of the available sources are of higher importance. In many cases, only scarce information is available about an individual's collaboration with the KGB – namely, only the record in the registration card files of the KGB Agency.<sup>9</sup> Additional sources of information required for a more detailed study (the KGB agents' work files, etc.) are not available in most cases.

An exception is the electronic database *Delta*. Similarly, the SSC TSDC Archive Fund 1 has saved distinct SSC operational cases with enclosed agent reports. However, the reports are not identified by the name of the person concerned, but only by the agent's nickname.

The range of further problems can be outlined by referring to the many legal proceedings taking place since the 1990s on the basis of the suspected person's collaboration with the KGB. Until now there have been hundreds of such court cases, but only a few proved the person guilty. The reason for failing to do so was in most cases lack of additional information that could be verified. For example, *Delta* reports that are not identified by a certain person's data are very difficult to attribute to a specific person in a legal sense. Accordingly, they were not considered sufficient evidence.

Examples of such court proceedings include the case of the conductor Arvīds Platpers (1948) in 1997<sup>10</sup> and the case of the film director

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<sup>9</sup> *VDK dokumenti*. Read on January 11, 2019, in electronic format: <https://kgb.arhivi.lv/dokumenti/vdk/agenti/alfabetiski/90>

<sup>10</sup> Uzraudzības lieta Nr. 7/79 par Arvīda Platpera sadarbibas fakta ar VDK konstatēšanu. Rehabilitācijas un specdienestu lietu prokuratūra. Sākta 25. 02. 1997. Beigta 20.06. 1997. g. LNA, f. 2745., apr. 2., l. 10. LR prokuratūra, Rehabilitācijas un specdienestu lietas.

Dzintra Geka (1950) in 2017.<sup>11</sup> In both cases, the court admitted that the available materials (KSC agency recording cards, summaries of the KGB agents' reports from the electronic database Delta etc.) do not allow identifying the person's deliberate cooperation with the KGB.

Similar cases contribute to widespread various unjustified beliefs and prejudices in society regarding the cooperation of the cultural sector employees with the KGB. An insight into the framework of such developments can be provided by taking a closer look at three specific cases.

The first is the case of the poet Jānis Rokpelnis (1945), who in 2014 published a statement indicating that during the Soviet occupation he served as a KGB agent under a nickname 'Miķelis'.<sup>12</sup> His confession launched a fierce public debate. In December 2018, following the publication of the KGB agent card files on the website of the Latvian National Archive, the discussions were resumed because the file of Jānis Rokpelnis was not available amongst the card files.<sup>13</sup> Although the staff of the Centre for the documentation of the consequences of totalitarianism by the Constitution Protection Bureau of the Republic of Latvia (SAB) had previously provided an explanation on the case of Rokpelnis<sup>14</sup>, one of the mechanisms of myth genesis can be traced here as the general society often fails to pay attention to explanations and commentaries provided by researchers, preferring to believe in unverified social network information instead.

In fact, after Rokpelnis had published his statement on being connected with the KGB and had appealed to the SAB for assistance, an

<sup>11</sup> Pārbaudes lieta Nr. 251.2.6/2017/27 par Dzintras Gekas – Vaskas, p.k. 310150-11573, sadarbības fakta ar Valsts drošības komiteju esamības vai neesamības konstatēšanu. Iesākta 2017. gada 14. martā. Pabeigta 2017. gada 21. aprīlī. 1. sēj. Latvijas Republikas prokuratūra, Specializētā vairāknozaru prokuratūra, Rīgas pilsētas Pārdaugavas tiesa. Nr. KGB-422-17/10.

<sup>12</sup> *Rokpelnis J. Liecība*. 28.10.2014. Read on January 15, 2019, in electronic format: <https://nra.lv/latvija/232634-janis-rokpelnis-es-biju-vdk-agents.htm>

<sup>13</sup> *VDK dokumenti*. Read on January 11, 2019, in electronic format: <https://kgb.arhivi.lv/dokumenti/vdk/agenti/alfabetiski/90>

<sup>14</sup> Kolektīva atbildība nav iespējama. Saruna ar bijušo SAB TSDC vadītāju Induli Zālīti. // *Ir*. 2018, 20-26. septembris.

information check was carried out. Since Rokpelnis's nickname was available, it was possible to check the information in the register journals of the agents of the KGB and to find out that an agent with the given nickname was recruited at the time.<sup>15</sup> However, this did not stop the various rumours from circulating further via social networks regarding co-operation of Rokpelnis with the KGB.

The second case relates to the composer Imants Kalniņš (1941). In 2015 there appeared information on Latvian mass media suggesting that the former head of the Latvian People's Front (1988–1990), journalist Dainis Īvāns (1955), would have pointed out that Kalniņš had possibly been recruited as a KGB agent.<sup>16</sup> The Research Group of the KGB Research Commission was entitled to research the SAB archive from February to May, 2018. This research work included access to the KGB agency alphabetical index. The results of the study did not confirm the version that Kalniņš would have been a KGB agent. From December 2018, after being published on the Latvian National Archive website, a full filing card system is available for research, and now it can be proved that there is no Kalniņš's name on any of the cards. Although in this case false suspicions have been overcome, it has to be admitted that for at least two years the version of the composer's relationship with the KGB has served as the basis for various myths and prejudices about the cooperation of cultural sector representatives with the KGB.

The third case relates to the composer Raimonds Pauls (1936). In 2017 and 2018 alongside with the intense public debate on pros and cons of the publication of the KGB documents, a plethora of rumours and speculations regarding those people who might have been the KGB agents developed. Often the name of the composer Pauls was also mentioned. Even after publishing the KGB agent files on the Latvian National Archive website in December 2018, which made it possible to verify that

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<sup>15</sup> Kolektīva atbildība nav iespējama. Saruna ar bijušo SAB TSDC vadītāju Induli Zālīti. // *Ir*. 2018, 20-26. septembris.

<sup>16</sup> Dainis Īvāns dod mājienu par komponistu Imantu Kalniņu kā VDK ziņotāju. // *Pietiek*. 2015, 24. septembris.

Pauls's name card does not exist, the circulation of rumours and suspicions in the public space, particularly on the Internet, did not cease. Rumours were strongly supported by the composer's interview to the magazine *Ieva* in January 2019, where despite the recent publication of the KGB documents, the composer himself associated his name with the KGB: "I was expecting to hear my name [among the agents]. It has not been mentioned yet. But it is going to be mentioned soon! [--] And this is just the beginning, more names will be revealed. Maybe mine will be revealed later because I belong to a higher level?"<sup>17</sup>

Consequently, it must be admitted that the publication of the KGB documents, one of the tasks expected to disintegrate the numerous myths and prejudices, has not reached this goal so far, at least not in the eyes of the general public as long as it refers to supposed cultural sector representatives' collaboration with the KGB.

As another myth referring to this collaboration, there must be mentioned a rather common belief that all the cultural workers who visited foreign countries during the Soviet occupation were linked to the KGB. This myth is often promoted by potential former KGB agents as they would comment on foreign trips and reports as one of the justifications for being connected with the KGB. However, as a result of deeper source analysis, it shall be concluded that although sometimes such a justification is verifiable, it cannot be regarded as a general rule. There are sources that confirm that in the case of cultural sector actors, their trips abroad and reporting shall not be exclusively related to cooperation with the KGB.

The author of the statement has examined the control of the KGB over the Latvian SSR Theatre Society. In the Latvian National Archive, there have been recorded several hundreds of reports on creative trips abroad between 1960 and 1980 submitted by the Latvian SSR Theatre Society Foundation actors and theatre workers. Among the destinations, there are also countries outside the sphere of influence of the USSR. An

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<sup>17</sup> "Man dzīvē laimējies". Ar komponistu Raimonu Paulu sarunājas Agnese Meiere. // *Ieva*. 2019, 9. janvāris.

examination of this material proves that in most cases the participants of such trips have not been recruited as the KGB agents.

The journey of the Latvian SSR State Youth Theatre actor Jānis Vītoliņš (1937–2000) to Rome, Naples, Algiers and Oran in 1971, can be mentioned as an example. Although the archive has recorded the actor's self-written long report on the trip,<sup>18</sup> the investigation of the SAB archive materials does not list Vītoliņš as one of the agents.<sup>19</sup>

### Final notes

The activity of the Soviet security services still belongs to one of the little researched subjects regarding the Soviet occupation period in Latvia. This also applies to relations of the Latvian cultural sector with the Soviet special services. The fact that after the publishing of the KGB agency's card filing system in 2018 it is possible to find several hundreds of cases of the cultural sector actors as potential KGB agents prove the infiltration in the sector.

Concerning this, it is understandable why there is still a public debate about the heritage of the Soviet special services in the cultural sector. It should also be noted that there are different myths and prejudices regarding the relationship between the cultural sphere and the KGB.

Some of the major myths are the following: that cooperation between the cultural sector and the KGB services was particularly intense; that it would not be possible to prove this cooperation with facts and evidence; that the information on the most important cultural actors who cooperated with the KGB is no longer available today. It is also worth mentioning that there exists an assumption that all art and culture workers who visited foreign countries during the Soviet occupation period would be

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<sup>18</sup> Ļeņina komjaunatnes LPSR valsts jaunatnes teātra aktiera J. Vītoliņa atskaite par komandējumu uz Romu, Neapoli, Alžīru, Orānu. 1971. LVA, f. 618., apr. 4., l. 1073. LPSR Teātra biedrība. Atskaites par radošajiem komandējumiem. 1971.

<sup>19</sup> *VDK dokumenti*. Read on January 11, 2019, in electronic format: <https://kgb.arhivi.lv/dokumenti/vdk/agenti/alfabetiski/90>

related to the KGB, followed by other unjustified assumptions regarding the cooperation between well-known cultural industries and Soviet special services. Examining the currently available documents on the activities of the KGB in Latvia, it can be stated that the assumptions mentioned above lack substantiated justification. However, it has to be admitted that such views are still popular in Latvian society and perhaps the only way to overcome them is to further investigate the problem and to make it available for the general public.

**Ojars Stepens, Mg. Hist., Mg.Art. in Cultural studies**, 1995 – 2014 worked at the Museum of Occupation of Latvia. Since 2016 Stepens has been working as a researcher at the Government Commission for the KGB Research at the University of Latvia. Currently, he is a doctoral student in history at the University of Latvia.

**Liena Galeja, Mag. art.** (Cultural theory), **Mag. art.** (Direction of dramatic plays), candidate of a doctoral degree at the Latvian Academy of Culture.



Anatoliy Alekseev-Apraksin  
Boris Erokhin

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## THE NETWORK PARADIGM IN BUDDHIST STUDIES<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

Expansion of Buddhism in modern societies tends to take forms the researchers often define as global transnational networks. It opens the way to studying Buddhism from the standpoint of network analytics. The novelty of the network paradigm is shifting the focus from studying objects to analyzing their connections and relationships using the 'graph theory' as the mode of description. The network approach successfully develops in many modern fields of science (mathematics, physics, biology, sociology, psychology) and even pretends to be a new interdisciplinary paradigm. Many parallels between the network theory and Buddhist ideas call for the investigation of the respective fields. Buddhism regards the phenomenal world in terms of coherence and interdependence. In the Buddhist texts and exegetical literature, the network narrative is found pervading the whole teaching by concepts of dependent origination, karma patterns, logical methods and constructions along with enumerating manner of presentation, the concepts of illusory character of the so-called reality, mandala, personalized way of transmission, and nonlinear dynamics. Contemporary research of social networks allows to study the topology of religious organizations, to identify their structure, interconnection, and scope, to conduct comparative studies of various communities, to ascertain the density of connections and the level of clustering, to estimate the life cycle of a network, its dynamics and specifics that induces its quality changes. Such an approach that may alter many established ideas opens up new perspectives for religious studies and beyond.

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**Keywords:** global transnational networks, connectivity, cluster, nodes, graph, rhizome, interdisciplinary paradigm, nets, Buddhism, Vajrayana, Diamond Way, emptiness, illusion, dependent origination, tantra, mandala.

## The scientific approach in the study of networks

A network is a natural way of communication and development of any type of connectivity. The roads of the ancient nomads, medieval trade and caravan paths, diplomatic connections, even migratory bird routes and ways of communication between ants leaving traces of pheromones can be described as networks. Networks are found wherever interaction occurs and contact is made.

The founder of the scientific network analysis is considered to be a St. Petersburg resident Leonard Euler, who in 1735 while solving the famous problem of crossing seven bridges in Königsberg without passing through any of them twice, laid the foundations of a new mathematical discipline, the graph theory. However, the term 'graph' was introduced only in 1878 by James Joseph. Thus, in the time period of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, a simple and clear language was created to describe network structures that many scientists began to use. Visually, a graph looks like a line between two points. It consists of vertices, or nodes (of any subjects or objects that can be assigned meaning), and communication links connecting them, such as friendship. This simple visualization allows representing any relationship and network as a set of vertices (nodes) and the relations connecting them.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, attention to the network structure of the world has increased significantly. In a particular context, representatives of ever widening range of disciplines continued to address it. Many scholars consider Charles Pierce who in 1909 proposed the use of existential graphs to represent logical statements to be the progenitor of modern semantic networks. The scholar called this kind of systematization the 'logic of the future'. The network approach in the social and human sciences was used in the works of G. Simmel and E. Durkheim, psychologists A. Bavelas,

T. Newcomb, J. L. Moreno, anthropologists G. C. Mitchell, A. Radcliffe-Brown, and others. A further advance in understanding the social networks usually is associated with the studies of R. Solomonoff and A. Rapoport, as well as John Barnes who in 1954 introduced the concept of 'social network'. In the 1960s, Hungarian mathematicians P. Erdős and A. Rényi, who had created the theory of random graphs, made a valuable contribution to the study of the formation of the social networks principles. D. Watts and S. Strogach developed the theory of social networks by, among other things, taking into account the coefficient of clustering and the degree of proximity between heterogeneous groups. The theories of networks in the 20<sup>th</sup> century did not go unnoticed by philosophers. In 1976, G. Deleuze and F. Guattari opposed the linear structures of perception of life and tree-like organization of thinking – so traditional for the West – by introducing the idea of the invariant unity of many rhizome-nodes and the non-linear way of organizing integrity. The concept of rhizome became the key idea in the post-structuralism and postmodern philosophy. Significant results in the frame of the network structures studies were also obtained by physicists, who on the basis of empirical data and statistics, revealed some properties of networks previously ignored by mathematicians and sociologists. Currently, it is the physicists who publish most of the papers on networks. Some of them express the opinion that theories of complex networks are as important for modern scientific and technological progress as the quantum mechanics was for the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which gave the world nuclear power, cell phones, and computers.

It should be recognized that currently the word 'network' has become commonly used. It is used in a variety of contexts while talking about computer, commercial, political, criminal, leisure, and scientific networks. The network principle is used by the governments of countries and regions to analyze and model the exchange of natural, economic, energy-based and information resources. The study of the nature of this phenomenon is far from being comprehensive. The appeal of scholars from a wider range of disciplines to this topic may indicate the emergence of a new interdisciplinary paradigm.

Studying the network structure of relationships and interconnections allows identifying different types of networks and distinguishing between their topology and scale. The choice of approach for network analysis and understanding is largely determined by the mode of connection within a network. Since the set of properties of most networks is heterogeneous, different subsystems are always observed in it. In network theories, such subsystems are called clusters. Analysis of the structures of decentralized sociocultural networks allows finding out how people are connected and what links them. In addition, modern researchers have the opportunity to analyse the density of ties within a network, to see the most important nodes and clusters forming them. This phenomenon is called the degree of clustering of the network. In fact, it is about the number of people a person is familiar with and their interactions. A large number of interconnected people for researchers serve as a mark of a high level of clusterisation. Once again, if clusters are here, it is a sign of decentralized networks. They are formed around nodes and centres (hubs), which provide other members of the network with global connections. Such a system effectively links the entire network.

The reason for networks clustering is saving on resources. For example, a communication with a nice person requires less effort than with unpleasant or foreign one who demonstrates unusual cultural habits, stereotypes of behaviour, speaks a different language. Thus, the clustering is specified by local conditions. Clusters can be very diverse. By understanding them one can see the ways of allocating resources and information; means of consolidation and dissociation of a network; a degree of cluster resistance to various influences.

Every scholarly paradigm represents a specific set of methods and assumptions. Despite the possible claims to universality, any theory is a limited vision as the history of science demonstrates; nor is it perfect because by concentrating on one perspective, the other is invariably missed. In order to obtain a more accurate picture of a certain phenomenon, it would be very promising to revise research and analytical approaches by switching attention from the study of individual elements to their coher-

ence. It is impossible to understand a phenomenon as a whole simply describing the properties of its parts because the whole exists due to the connectivity. It is the connectivity of elements, the relationship of clusters that are the subject of network research. It allows detecting the synergy effect of the theory of complexity thus opening for observation not particular cases but some general vectors of activity, the result always exceeding the sum of actions separately. It is influenced by the effect of emergency, which arises from the interaction of various configurations of connectivity, that is, the appearance of new properties in a whole. All these and other properties of networks need further study.

### Basic characteristics of the Diamond Way community network

Assuming that the transnational community of the Diamond Way Buddhist centres has the appearance of a global network, in accordance with the network paradigm a researcher has to abandon the traditional approach. Scholarly studies of the Russian Buddhist communities, monuments, and the content of certain texts have been held for about two centuries so significant parts of the Buddhist teachings and individual practices are known to us in great detail.

It is important to note that at the beginning of the Diamond Way Buddhism Network (DWBN) formation no one intentionally invented the structure and rules for emerging and developing a system of the global network. From the outset it was, as typical for many networks, a self-organizing body so that the first phase of development demonstrated the significantly different character of local Buddhist centres.

The Russian branch of the network<sup>2</sup> started in St. Petersburg in 1990 when a dozen of unfamiliar seekers, who were looking for a direct transmission of Buddhist Dharma, met with Danish Lamas Ole and

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<sup>2</sup> Now, the “Russian Association of Diamond Way Buddhism of Karma Kagyu tradition is the largest Buddhist organization in Russian Federation by its representation in the regions.” – *Diamond Way Buddhism Karma Kagyu. Buddhism in Russia*. <http://www.buddhism.ru/en/teachings/buddizm-v-rossii/>, accessed on 15.02.2019.

Hannah Nidahl and were convinced and much inspired for practicing Tibetan Buddhism. The basis of the future hub self-organization was mutual sympathy, trust, common interest, and personal involvement that connected people in the process of receiving, practicing, and transferring methods of liberation and enlightenment. First students shared their impressions with friends who were also convinced and fascinated by Lama Ole's teachings - fresh, Western-oriented, and direct-to-the-point, and joined the company. Years had been passing, and means of communications were changing from postcards, faxes, and expensive long distance calls to digital facilities; in a similar way, the DWBN was growing due to the followers' volunteer work and meditation practices carried out in the close friendship atmosphere, bringing together tens of thousands of people.

The Karma Kagyu global network is present in some fifty countries around the world, the Russian branch being among the most structurally developed and numerous in the European countries. Such development was not a result of the ingeniously elaborated plan carried out by a handful of struggling for survival and preservation of their identity Tibetan refugees, as some sociologists and religious scholars assume.<sup>3</sup> But the well acknowledged worldwide appreciation of Tibetan Buddhism contribution to human values treasury, wellbeing, and survival of mankind much certainly overpowers the benefits some 100,000 refugees could obtain. In the absence of resources, they proposed new knowledge, reference points, profound semantic and semiotic systems, relations value protocols such as the purity of teachings transmission lineage. All this served as the basis for the formation of global transnational networks because it has covered the deficiencies of modern globalism with its unification and pragmatism. Strictly speaking, the DWBN is just an example taken from among other

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<sup>3</sup> Ostrovskaya E.A.-ml. *Voiny radugi: institucionalizaciya buddijskoj modeli obschestva*. [Rainbow Warriors: The Institutionalization of the Buddhist Model of the Society.] St.-Petersburg: St.-Petersburg State University. 2008. 400 lpp. Ostrovskaya E.A. *Religioznaya model' obschestva: Sociologicheskie aspekty institucionalizacii tradicionnyh religioznyh ideologij*. [Religious Model of the Society: Sociological Aspects of Institutionalization of Traditional Religious Ideologies.] St.-Petersburg: St.-Petersburg State University. 2005, p. 377

traditions and schools of Buddhism spreading over the world. This example is indicative, for it turned out to be of interest for people of all continents over half a century. It indicates the anthropological universality and relevance of the theory and practice of Mahamudra, Dzogchen, and Zen teachings, which develop in the modern world the perspective of interpersonal relations. Self-organization is the determining feature of these approaches as well as the fact that no one planned to create global financial networks or the Internet (someone suggested a concept; others developed protocols, languages, batch processing, email and chat services).

Network approach in the study of religious structures of a new type takes into account a different type of complexity and nonlinearity. Returning to our case, we should note that the scope and dynamics of development of the DWBN should not be estimated just by the number of elements (followers or communities, as is often done). Why? Because while the number of network elements can grow linearly (1, 2, 3 ...), the number of connections between them grows exponentially because thousands of links arise between a dozen of network elements. Modern-Buddhists use all known methods of communication and social networks platforms, and usually, do not hide their beliefs thus multiplying external relations. The DWBN people and groups are connected not only socially through ordinary ways of communication but also existentially with respect to the experience of transgressive meditation practices of instant connection with Lama or another meditation aspect.

In order to get a vivid, multidimensional, dynamic image of a socio-cultural organization and its communicative links along with the projection of the future development, a researcher is bound to start with minute personal details of a practitioner in a Buddhist centre located in a particular region with its ethnic and cultural context. The specific and general features of communication character between members of a community cause specific 'flavour' of the *Sangha*: some members travel extensively and teach thus bringing the local cohort closer to the central hub; others may incline towards a more traditional and rigid, 'monastic' approach in their activity. High mobility of the DWBN followers intensifies

speed and smoothness of functioning, too, so the factor of time adds a new dimension. Of no surprise, the head of the DWBN Lama Ole Nydahl emphasizes the connectivity of his students: "...we must remember our roots: We appeared and became strong due to the timeless power of the 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa and our equality and horizontal grass-root friendships."<sup>4</sup> Constant or occasional relations with amicable, pervading, or neighbouring bodies (a particular sect, sub-school, tradition) create other vectors of interconnections within the hierarchy according to the precedencies of its clusters. The DWBN, a complex, trans-cultural and multi-layered compound in itself, is the part of Karma Kagyu within Kagyu tradition out of four (five, or nine, according to different accounts) main schools of Tibetan Buddhism thus in itself being a cluster of the global Buddhist community. Such structure completely fit with the basic Buddhist idea of universal interdependence of phenomena in the conditioned world, its dynamic and relative character.

In the wake of the network paradigm, the research focuses not on individual elements but on the patterns of correlations and ornaments of interconnections that the global 'tantric loom' of the Vajrayana weaves today. The novelty of the holistic picture of the process providing us with more detailed representation and predictable perspectives is determined not by who and what, but what is connected with what, and how.

The next step in research would be a mathematical analysis of a particular configuration of clusters in its dynamics. More detailed information concerning the emergence and development of the DWBN was presented at the conference *Buddhism of Vajrayana in Russia* on 19 October 2018.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Nydahl, Ole Lama. New Year's letter of 2014. Copenhagen. 22 Dec. 2014. <http://www.buddyzm.pl/en/home-2/31-news/115-new-year-letter-2014>, accessed on 18.02.2019.

<sup>5</sup> Alekseev-Apraksin A. Perspektivy setevoy paradigmy v izuchenii transkul'turnykh protsessov. [Perspectives of the Network Paradigm in the Study of Transcultural Processes]. Published in: *International Journal of Cultural Research № 4 (33) 2018*. P. 6-19. DOI: 10.24411/2079-1100-2018-00061. - [https://www.eposlink.com/ru/catalog/library/elibrary/book/mezhhdunarodnyy\\_zhurnal\\_issledovaniy\\_kultury-2216/publication/144651/](https://www.eposlink.com/ru/catalog/library/elibrary/book/mezhhdunarodnyy_zhurnal_issledovaniy_kultury-2216/publication/144651/). Accessed on 26.03.2019.



## Research perspectives of the Buddhist network

The use of network approaches in the study of Buddhism and the life of Buddhist communities, especially the traditions of the Vajrayana, for several reasons seems to be more adequate than traditional religious studies approaches pertaining to the primitive and theistic religions.

The Buddha always spoke of the world as of interdependently originating phenomena. At the relative level, sentient beings are just collections or clusters (*skandhas*) of their minds and bodies which are the result of actions performed before, karma. Drawn by their own illusions, tendencies, and habits, karma creatures are connected by thoughts, words, and actions committed towards each other; drawn by former relations, they group together. For humans, there are families, clans, communities, nationalities; cosmically, there are different spheres of existence and types of sentient beings. Such a network structure, in accordance with the Buddhist worldview and Indian cosmology, characterizes all levels of existence from the smallest dharmas (phenomena), be it moments of consciousness or material particles, to the limits of unaccountable order of universes ruled by their Lords, Brahmas. The sutra, remarkably called *The Brahma Net*, says:

“The innumerable worlds of the cosmos are like the eyes of the net. Each world is different, its type infinite. So too are the Dharma Doors (methods of cultivation) taught by the Buddhas.”<sup>6</sup>

“All sentient beings possess this Buddha Nature,” – it continues indicating the relation of the text with the third cycle of Buddha’s teachings.

The concept of Brahma (or Indra) Jewel Net is elucidated in Chinese apocryphal attributed to the *Flower Garland (Avatamsaka) Sutra*:

“Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra (Brahma), there is a wonderful net which has been hung by some cunning

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<sup>6</sup> The Young Men’s Buddhist Association (YMBA). - <http://www.ymba.org/books/brama-net-sutra-moral-code-bodhisattva/brama-net-sutra>, accessed on 06.02.2019.

artificer in such a manner that it stretches out infinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant tastes of deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each “eye” of the net, and since the net itself is infinite in dimension, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars of the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to behold. If we now arbitrarily select one of these jewels for inspection and look closely at it, we will discover that in its polished surface there are reflected all the other jewels in the net, infinite in number. Not only that, but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels, so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring.”<sup>7</sup>

*The Flower Ornament Sutra* gives another analogy describing compounded multiplex network as follows: “[...] Buddha’s pores each containing innumerable lands, with each atom in those lands also containing innumerable lands, each land containing innumerable Buddhas, and so on, ad infinitum.”<sup>8</sup>

The ideal hero of Mahayana, a bodhisattva, is able by “means of distinction of the cosmic net of Indra, distinguish all reality-realms [...]”<sup>9</sup> It is just one of the qualities a realized practitioner possesses, other abilities are minutely described in the *Ornament of Clear Realization* by Maitreya – Asanga.<sup>10</sup> For the first level of bodhisattva, it is summed up as follows:

<sup>7</sup> The Young Men’s Buddhist Association (YMBA). - <http://www.ymba.org/books/brama-net-sutra-moral-code-bodhisattva/notes> (12). Accessed on 06.02.2019.

<sup>8</sup> *The Flower Ornament Scripture. Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra by Thomas Cleary.* Boston & London: Shambhala Publications.1993. p. 1643, p. 1530. Philosophical aspects of universal net implications along with parallels in postmodern European theories are well elucidated by Loy, David. Indra’s Postmodern Net. *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Jul., 1993), pp. 481-510. Published by: University of Hawai’i Press DOI: 10.2307/1399579 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1399579>.

<sup>9</sup> *The Flower Ornament Scripture* 1993, p. 656.

<sup>10</sup> *Gone Beyond: The Prajnaparamita Sutras, The Ornament of Clear Realization, and Its Commentaries in the Tibetan Kagyu Tradition, Vol. 1. Translated and introduced by Karl Brunnhölzl.* 940 lpp. Ithaka, New York: Snow Lion Publications. 2011.

“A bodhisattva who abides at the bhumi of Great Joy makes great exertion for his aspirations. If he is renounced, then in one moment he can enter into a hundred different types of absorption and see one hundred Buddhas and be perfectly aware of their blessings. He can move one hundred world systems, proceed to one hundred different Buddhafields, manifest one hundred different worlds, and mature one hundred different sentient beings. He can abide for one hundred kalpas, see the hundred previous kalpas and the future hundred kalpas. He can open one hundred doors of Dharma teaching and manifest one hundred manifestation bodies, each with an entourage of one hundred bodhisattvas.”<sup>11</sup>

Could such a fantastic description be a metaphor for an advanced Internet user – freely playing games, searching, communicating, appearing as different avatars, and altering other humans’ minds – at its most, ideal capacity?

Another dimension of Buddhist network is presented by the Teaching (‘Dharma Gate’) in its various forms, the most general division being the three turnings of the wheel of Dharma: (1) Four noble truths, twelve links of interdependent occurrence, and egolessness; (2) sutras of prajnaparamita (Perfect Wisdom) revealing the true essence of all phenomena (emptiness) along with instructions on bodhisattva practices; (3) teachings about the Buddha-nature inherent to all beings. The description pertaining to the first is the highly structured *Encyclopedia of Clear [Explanations] of Phenomena* (Abhidharmakośa) by Vasubandhu elucidating the position of Sautrantika philosophical school. The second is called Madhyamaka, Middle Way. The last turning forms the basis for the Cittamātra, Mind Only school of thought pointing out to the illusory nature of the world; it serves as the view supporting practices of Vajrayana (Diamond Way) methods.

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<sup>11</sup> The citation is derived from the *Ten Noble Bhumis Sutra* given in: Gampopa. *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation. The Wishfulfilling Gem of the Noble Teachings. Translated by Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche, Khenpo*. Ithaka, New York: Snow Lion Publications.1998. pp. 266-7.

As for the Buddhist anthropology, it describes an individual as a stream of momentary mental states interconnected with energy channels and nodes on the physical level; externally, as a social being that exists within the framework of causal relationships in the boundless world. Such ideas have distinctive features of network interaction concepts.

Buddhist teachings are also very structured and logical. Generations of scholars and realized beings have created a massive corpus of treatises and commentaries that systematize Buddhist knowledge. Even in the early period the corpus of sutras was computed and collected in tree ‘baskets’ according to the topics; the overall system of thorough enumerations and systematization of the knowledge arriving from India and China particularly blossomed on the Tibetan soil disclosing authors and commentators’ adherence to rank the information with the purpose to present all details, avoid the loss of the content, for mnemonic objectives, and demonstration of universal interconnection.

The term *tantra* (in the Buddhist context, it is the synonym for Vajrayana and Mantrayana) is taken from the weaving craft: Indian weavers called *tantra* the longitudinal threads forming the basis of the fabric that appears during the process of manufacturing with transverse weaving. Similarly, the enlightened experience that arises through the application of any tantric means is aimed to be interwoven into the mindstream of the practitioners. Moreover, a realization by a single mean brings about the perfection in all other methods, as the set of practices introduced by the Ninth Karmapa Wangchug Dorje (1556-1603) is named: “*Knowing One Frees All*.”<sup>12</sup> In this way, the concept of communication is no longer just a theoretical reflection on how relations work in time and space. Here, the living teacher – student relationship and the experience of realizing the awakened wisdom come to the fore. To keep these connections clean is also an important commitment of a Buddhist practitioner since the perspectives of the personal growth depend on the transformation of disturb-

<sup>12</sup> rgyal dbang karma pa dbang phyug rdo rje/ *sgrub thabs sna tshogs pa'i gzhung rjes gnang gcig shes kun grol*. [Collected Works by Karmapa 09 Wangchuk Dorje. Volume 1.] pp. 3–66. sde dge: dpal spungs thub bstan chos 'khor gling. [n.d.].

ing emotions into various kinds of wisdom and elimination of the ego illusion.

In Vajrayana scriptures, there are numerous references to the ideas of interconnected networks, too. A voluminous collection of highest tantras brought to Tibet during the early stage of propagation (8<sup>th</sup> c.) called *Secret Nucleus* (Skt. *guhyagarbha*) contains a cycle known as the *Web of Magical Illusion* (Skt. *Māyājālatantra*).<sup>13</sup> It consists of eight- or four-fold sections dealing with essential for network paradigm concepts of the multidimensional mandala (power field), influx and exchange of energy (empowerment), types of activity, and many others topics accessible in its full only to the initiates even though profound scholarly researches on this topic were conducted.<sup>14</sup> Among them, the mandala principle is the cornerstone of contemporary communities of Vajrayana practitioners; its structural organization of elements and their connections substantially differ from traditional for many religions pyramidal hierarchy structures.

Another example of textual pertinent coverage is the *Highest Bliss of the Net of Dakinis in Union with All Buddhas* (*Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinijālaśaṃvaratantra*, before 8<sup>th</sup> c.), the first known tantra of Samvara cycle.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *sgyu 'phrul drwa ba'i chos skor*, a collection without imprint data under Tibetan Buddhist Research Catalogue reference W8LS19371. [s.n.], [s.l.]. [n.d.].

<sup>14</sup> Dorje, Gyurme. *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary phyogs-bcu mun-sel. PhD Dissertation*. University of London. 1987. – [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Eight\\_Sections\\_of\\_Magical\\_Illusion](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Eight_Sections_of_Magical_Illusion), accessed on 15.02.2019.

<sup>15</sup> Bushuyev E.S. *Sanskritskiy pis'mennyye istochniki po istorii tantricheskogo buddizma VII–XI vv. Dissertatsiya na soiskaniye uchenoy stepeni kandidata istoricheskikh nauk. [Written Sanskrit Sources for the Tantric Buddhism History of 7–9 centuries. PhD dissertation.]* p. 348 Sankt-Petersburg: Institut Vostochnykh Rukopisey RAN. pp. 188–196.

## Conclusion

Having ascertained that Buddhism is not foreign to the network narrative, a researcher may apply developed so far methodological base<sup>16</sup> that allows to carry out several types of examination refreshing our knowledge about Buddhism. Among them, one can single out a pool of comparative studies of various transnational Buddhist and other religious organizations by analysing the revealed connections from the point of view of their equivalence and relations as bi-directional or one-sided. Mutual dependence between network as a whole and a cluster is another promising outlook to investigate. The extent and forms of pressure and regulation performed by the central, growing more complex nod influence its participants thus limiting their freedom; it is additional standpoint to examine. An interesting perspective would be the comparative studies of various confessions with respect to the orderliness in exposing their own principles as a sign of the network character of a given religion. Moreover, the network approach could be applied to the creation of a scale of extremist tendencies in various communities as well as to the task of finding the instruments for regulating the objectionable activity. Separate lines of the quest can be directed to identifying the types of connectivity, which determines the fundamental differences between socio-cultural clusters, and to understanding the types of network structure. A special pool of questions may concern the life cycle of networks, the dynamics of their development and the specifics of the processes leading to changes in its qualities. Exploring the processes of dissemination of something within the network, one can understand and develop mechanisms for accelerating positive and eliminating negative influences on the network making communications more resistant for random failures or planned attacks; it is important for applied research.

Network approach in the study of Buddhism also seems very promising for more fundamental tasks, especially since the Buddhist teachings in

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<sup>16</sup> Kurkina E.S., Knyazeva E.N. Metodologiya setevogo analiza sotsial'nykh struktur. [The Methodology of the network analysis of the social structures.] In: *Filosofiya nauki i tekhniki* 2017. T. 22. No. 2. pp. 120–135.

many aspects have similar structure and are the mine of philosophical discourse pertaining to the network theory. Buddhism has been studying connections of the world for much longer than science. The network paradigm helps to understand Buddhism better, and when the latter, in the spirit of the newest tendency to develop the dialogue of science and religion, is used as the source of methods and perspectives of contemporary research, such cooperation may produce new knowledge about the world and society.

**Anatoliy M. Alekseev-Apraksin, Dr. Habil.**, Professor of the Higher School of Media Technologies at the St. Petersburg State University of Industrial Technologies and Design, Associate Professor at Department of Cultural Studies, Philosophy of Culture & Aesthetics St. Petersburg State University. Scientific interests: Theory and history of culture, interaction of cultures, Buddhist art and philosophy, West-East, Author of more than 80 publications.

**Boris R. Erokhin**, Lecturer of the Karmapa International Buddhist Institute (New Delhi, India), Post-graduate researcher of the Institute of Orientology of the Russian Academy of Science (Moscow), Buddhist Studies, Competitor PhD submission to the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences; English – Tibetan - Russian - English Translator, wrote the script, oversaw, and participated in all phases of video pre- to post-production for *Transparent Lama* documentary (Dir. A. Novikova, 2007); consulted the content of the scenario, assisted in choosing locations for shooting, and arranged interviews for the projects: *Rebirth*, REN-TV, 2008 (Dir. A. Miloslavov), *Salvation* (Dir. I. Vyrypaev, 2009); Information and content filling for different exhibitions in Russia, such as *The Treasure of Tibet*.

Izdevējs **LU Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts**  
Kalpaka bulvāris 4, Rīga, LV-1940  
Tālr. 67034861, e-pasts [fsi@lza.lv](mailto:fsi@lza.lv)  
[www.fsi.lv](http://www.fsi.lv)  
Izdevējdarbības reģistrācijas apliecība Nr. 2-0521