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The Female Spiritual Elder and Death: Some Thoughts on Contemporary Lives of Russian Orthodox Saints

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In contemporary Orthodox hagiography a special type of saint has emerged — blessed female spiritual elders (blazhennye staritsy). *In some respects this form of sainthood is a successor to the traditional "fools for the sake of Christ." Yet the* staritsy *have their distinctive features, chief among them the saint's possession of an incurable disease such as blindness or motor function disorders. The meaning of these ailments can be interpreted as a sign of permanent liminality and the person's divine election. The disorder indicates that while alive the female elder also belongs to the world of the dead (or the next world). The creation of these iconic narratives can be seen as an attempt to democratize the hagiographical canon by including folk religious motifs and images. This "folklorization" of the genre of church hagiography expresses the idea that the Orthodox faith has deep roots in popular religiosity and therefore can be accessible to common people.*

Keywords: anthropology of religion, Orthodox saints, contemporary hagiography, female sainthood, body, death.

ON a spring day in 1952, sixty-seven-year-old Muscovite Matrona Nikonova sensed the approach of death and called for a priest. During confession "she was very agitated," and when the priest asked, "Are you really afraid of death?" she answered, "I'm afraid" (*Matronushka* 2009, 56). This short little dialogue, when included in an official version of the life of the blessed female elder Matrona, is always accompanied by the publishers' explanatory commentary — for example, that the priest was very surprised by such an answer, or that she feared death just as ordinary, sinful people do, "out of her humility," that is, that she thereby continued to perform special Christian spiritual feats even on her deathbed. A paradox, subtle but comprehensible to a devout reader, shapes these commentaries — apparently, there are saints who fear death. However minimal the devout reader's acquaintance with the hagiographical tradition, he or she knows, of course, that for those special individuals whom others consider saints the fear of death is not typical. Saints have a distinctive, trustful relationship with death: they know a lot about it, they expect it, they foresee it and in many cases experience joyous excitement because of the coming encounter with it. For them, as for the Apostle Paul, "to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21, ESV).

Even in a strict legal sense saints become saints only after, or, more precisely, as a result of their death. Until a hero of the faith has crossed from this life to eternal life, no icons or akathists of the saint exist, regardless of the devout sentiments the saint may evoke in his or her most ardent devotees. Consider a typical hagiological claim, that so-and-so was a saint even while still living. One cannot fail to notice the oxymoronic meaning of this formulation, which contains an unspoken presumption: one speaks of a living righteous person, "N," as if the person were a saint, knowing that this status can be achieved only after death, that is, we get ahead of ourselves, conferring on "N" this honorific title in advance. A similar play on meanings is contained in a phrase with the opposite sense and the corresponding practice of conferring the title of hero (of a certain state) posthumously. A hero decides to perform a great deed and carries out the intended act while still living. Officially, however, the person becomes a hero after death, that is, retroactively. A saint, too, is a saint though still alive. It is as if the saint were betrothed to sainthood, and one must only wait for the moment when one can legally formalize the actual state of affairs. Then, too, the demise of the future saint is a signal for the saint's devotees to collect the materials — documents and narratives — that will be used for the person's glorification among the saints. It is precisely at this moment that the saint's images change their status — portraits become icons.

In those Christian traditions in which the veneration of saints has acquired settled forms, death and sainthood are inextricably linked, genetically and functionally. One of the first specifically Christian customs was the practice of venerating the remains of martyrs who had borne witness with their lives, or, more accurately, their deaths, to their fidelity to Jesus Christ — their faith in his redemptive sacrifice and resurrection. As is well known, a special relationship to particular people who have died appeared prior to, as well as within, Christianity. But the early Christians' custom of gathering at the tombs of their first saints for special feast days truly scandalized their neighbors of other faiths. Peter Brown, the distinguished scholar of the cult of the saints, illustrates the sense of revulsion a person of antiquity felt toward the bodies of the dead and the rejection of Christian ritual acts through the words of the Roman emperor Julian the Apostate, addressed to Christians: "You have filled the whole world with tombs and sepulchres" (Brown 1981, 7). Mingled with the aesthetic grounds for the rejection of Christian customs, there was certainly also their contemporaries' incomprehension of how the veneration of someone else's dead, of someone who was not one's relative, was able to shape the religious life of so many people. The spiritual families forming around the tombs of new saints were an indisputable affront to the basic dominant ideas of the ancient world's social imagination.

The cult of the saints, the veneration of their deaths and relics, has a long, colorful history and to this day remains a testament to true piety to some, and a bizarre, almost pagan superstition to others. And although one can speak with confidence of the continuance of practices dating to the first centuries of church history,[1] to ignore the significant changes that have occurred over the intervening centuries would be idealistic at the very least. Each era and culture expects and produces its own "very special dead" (Brown 1981, 69) and its own views on death and establishes varied, and sometimes unexpected, relations between the former and the latter. But our goal is not the construction of a complete picture of this phenomenon at the level of universal church history. A comparatively peripheral question interests us: how the phenomena of sainthood and death are associated in the hagiological imagination of Orthodox believers as they reflect on the historical path of their church in the twentieth century — more precisely,

1. See the description of the "typical" model for establishing the veneration of a saint in Cunningham 2005.

the "short twentieth century," delimited chronologically by the dates of the birth and death of the Soviet state.[2]

The New Wine of Contemporary Hagiography

Looking back and trying to evaluate the hagiographical inheritance left to the Russian Orthodox Church by the Soviet period in the Church's life,[3] one can somewhat conventionally distinguish two separate groups of saints, each of which occupies its own clearly defined place in the space of Orthodox piety. The first group is that of the New Martyrs, officially designated the "New Martyrs and Confessors of the Russian Land." In contrast to martyrs in the narrow sense, those who perished for their faith at the hands of the persecutors of Christianity in the first centuries of its existence, the New Martyrs (understood as a separate hagiological type) suffered in modern or contemporary times. In both instances, the persecutors were those who implemented the official policy of the state — the pagan state during the Roman Empire, the Islamic state in Ottoman Turkey, the atheistic, communist regimes of the twentieth century. Moreover, the images of the New Martyrs and the initiatives to canonize them often had "national-patriotic" overtones, that is, they were directly linked with attempts by one national autocephalous church or another to articulate the specific characteristics of its own historical path and mission.

The canonization of New Martyrs in the Russian Orthodox Church, Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP), has become a large-scale phenomenon over the last decade and a half, and those saints glorified for veneration by the entire Church or a locality now number more than 1,500. The second group of saints, which will constitute our main topic, is definitely less numerous than the first group. This second group consists of the "blessed female elders," representatives of a specific type of sainthood that began to develop in the second half of the nineteenth centu-

2. Of course, we realize these dates are entirely a matter of convention. Clearly, the turning point in social consciousness marked by the date of 1917 had its roots in events and social processes that occurred much earlier, and, indeed, the conclusion of the Soviet era would be better dated not to 1991 but perhaps to 1988. One sees glimpses of the regime negating its very self — or, at any rate, doubting its own legitimacy — in its permission of the public celebration of the millennium of the baptism of Rus', canonizations, and the idealization of prerevolutionary Russia. Contrasted with the exhaustion of fundamental Soviet ideologies, discursive clichés, and portraits of heroes, the images of prerevolutionary Russia seemed appealing and authentic even then (recall, for example, the 1992 film *The Russia We Lost*).

3. For a study of the history of the canonization of saints in Russian Orthodoxy in the twentieth century, see Semenenko-Basin 2010.

ry as a separate hagiographical phenomenon and object of Orthodox piety and flourished by the beginning of the present century. The image of St. Matrona of Moscow serves as this latter group's ideal exemplar.

We base our reflections on death and sainthood in the twentieth century mainly on the reading of a special genre of literature, the lives of the saints. This literature, despite its apparent uniformity, is in fact quite varied and diverse. For example, multivolume compendia of saints' lives exist, menologies (*Chet'i minei* [literally "monthly readings" — Translator]) in which the stories of saints' great deeds and miracles are collected, beginning with the early Christian martyrs. These are entirely "official" documents housed in the libraries of religious seminaries and the great cathedrals and may be used in liturgical practice. Another form of official hagiographical text consists of the materials from the work of the canonization commissions, which serve as the basis of the documents for the church councils that decide on the canonization of new saints. But, in addition, there are numerous slim booklets one may obtain at low cost in church shops, as well as in entirely secular bookstores. These books are often written in simple language, intended for a mass readership, and contain information and concepts that from a canonical perspective are open to question, to say the least. Within the body of sources concerning saints' lives one must also include such contemporary conduits of hagiographical information as documentary films and television programs.

Although one usually thinks of the lives of the saints as fixed texts in which the image of a saint has reached a static form, ongoing hagiographical creation is a necessary condition for a saint's veneration, even for a saint who died and was glorified long ago. When a saint is still beloved by his or her devotees and is consequently important in contemporary religious life, the saint's new posthumous miracles will be included in publications of "old" lives. Furthermore, the dynamism of hagiography as a religious-artistic process manifests itself in the possibility of reinterpreting already well-known elements of the saint's life narrative, and consequently nuances that hitherto had not been brought out appear in the saint's literary portrait. In this way, change in a hagiography on the level of both narrative and interpretation defines the forms of veneration of the saints, that is, the reasons for which the faithful resort to the saints' intercession, the methods of communicating with the saints and their representatives in this world, and the like.[4] In other words, the hagiological portrait of a saint

4. One may read of the functioning of institutionalized mechanisms of mediation between the widely venerated saint Ksenia the Blessed and her devotees in Kormina and Shtyrkov 2008.

is contingent upon the present-day needs of the faithful, "each day's own trouble." But besides this, what will be written about a particular Christian ascetic depends on the information about him or her that lies at the disposal of the hagiographer, that is, of that person who set out to create a new literary icon or to update one already in existence.

Clearly, hagiography on the one hand, and the practice of venerating a saint on the other, exist in a complex relationship of both functional and logical interdependence. For example, the Orthodox practice of canonization presupposes the following logic: in order to be glorified by the Church, a saint must already be an object of pious veneration for which there must be evidence. Therefore, it is precisely the practice of invoking a still living or already deceased hero of the faith that leads to the appearance of those testimonies of miracles that will be reflected in the saint's hagiography or in materials for the compilation of that hagiography presented to the special commissions on canonization. And it is specifically this evidence that will advance the saint's canonization. But sometimes it is possible to assert confidently that hagiographical writings not only reflect the established cult of a saint but also actively participate in the cult's development, popularizing and even initiating it and transforming it from a localized to a church-wide cult.

This was exactly the case with respect to the "spiritual career" of Matrona of Moscow: in 1993 the printing house of the Moscow-area Novo-Golutvin Monastery published a "proto-saint's life" concerning her. It consisted of the collected reminiscences of several people who had known her. At the end of the 1990s the future saint came to the attention of influential Church figures, and in 1998 her remains were transferred from the Danilovsky cemetery to the then-restored Pokrovsky women's monastery. Subsequently her canonization was carried out, and on the basis of the above mentioned reminiscences, which were brought into line with the requirements of hagiographical literary etiquette and hagiological norms, her "official" saint's life was written. (For more detail, see Kormina 2010.)

Not only may one harness administrative resources toward the glorification of a saint, as occurred in the case of St. Matrona, but also other authoritative support. At times, the hagiographical creation and initiative of a single individual, someone possessing the skill to produce written texts and access to the publishing industry, stands behind a canonization project. Orthodox local history specialists and journalists working in the provincial media, both professionals and amateurs, fill this role. Incidentally, this happens not only in the provinces: the first book that collected the stories of several contemporary female el-

ders, *Holy Women of the Russian Land*,[5] was written by a female staff member of the Moscow journal *Literary Studies* and published by this journal's press (Il'inskaia 1994), while Gennady Durasov, the author of essays on the female elder Schema-nun Makaria and the energetic popularizer of her veneration, began as a specialist in the folk culture of Northern Russia and formerly wrote essays on the clay toys of Kargopol, village *chastushki* [four-line verse ditties that can have lyric, topical, bawdy, or humorous content — Translator], and the like, essays that were entirely academic, though not devoid of patriotic sentimentality.[6]

Is it possible that contemporary saints originated exclusively from the creative imagination of the authors of hagiographical literature? In general, we are inclined to answer this question in the affirmative. But this particular answer requires very important qualifications that may fundamentally alter our stance toward the origin of the practices and texts that constitute the living fabric of the veneration of new saints. And here one must keep in mind that in discussing these stories we still must distinguish between two planes — praxis and narrative — if only analytically, that is, conditionally, since it must be clear to the impartial reader that stories about a saint, their composition, transmission, and the reading of and listening to them also constitute religious practices, together with devotional prayers, pilgrimages, and the singing of akathists.[7]

As far as praxis is concerned, the author of a saint's life relies to a certain degree on extra-textual, empirical, factual information, direct-

5. The word translated here as "women," *matushki*, is the plural of a form of the word "mother (*matushka* instead of the usual *mat'*) that shows affection and respect, and can also refer to an Orthodox priest's wife, a nun, or an elderly woman — Translator.

6. Hagiographical texts concerning the spiritual mother Makaria have been published many times. See, for example, Durasov 1994.

7. A hagiographical composition, a book, can become not only an informational but also a material mediator between a saint and a potential devotee. Note the introduction to the description of a posthumous miracle by one of the new blessed female elders, Schema-nun Maria (Matukasova, also known as Maria of Samara): "Somehow in church I found out about the blessed Schema-nun Maria Ivanovna Matukasova and ordered a book about her by mail. I received the book on January 29, 2002. When I opened the package and caught sight of the portrait of the Great Elder, tears flowed from my eyes. Tears and great agitation also accompanied my reading of the book. I wanted to get through the book quickly, and at the same time I didn't want the book to end. In short, everything I learned made a very strong impression on me, and I went to church." And when the writer of the letter, Olga Medzhidova, from the town of Buguruslan (although the choice of certain turns of phrase and the general stylistics of the letter make one suspect that the Samara journalist Anton E. Zhogolev [Zhogolev 2006], the author of articles and a book about Mother Maria, had something to do with the composition of this text), began to tell her acquaintance about her experiences with the book, she saw, "beyond the church, in the east, against the background of a solid gray canvas a golden radiance like a crown" (*Sviatye matushki* 2010, 179–80).

ly linked to the cult being portrayed. In other words, behind the saint's story and in the story itself there always lies the factual background, which in principle the reader can verify — the venerated holy sites associated with the life and death of the hagiography's protagonist (first and foremost the saint's burial place); other people who were witnesses of the saint's great deeds or at least their recollections of these deeds; and, when possible, other documents (photographs and so forth). Of course, we realize that all of these things can be used by the author of a hagiography as he or she wishes, but, nonetheless, basic common sense and knowledge of the general conventions of presenting information place natural limits on the author's creative freedom.

The hagiographical literary tradition may serve as a still more significant system of limitations and guidelines shaping a hagiographical narrative. This tradition is grounded in the existing canon and simultaneously strives to conform to the expectations and discursive customs of the audience, elements that change with the times. In other words, the text of a saint's life must be recognized by its readers as hagiographical, while its main hero or heroine must look and act in this tale as a saint should. In practice, though, the world of the hagiographical canon proves to be not quite so conservative: the clichés and features common to other writings in the canon leave sufficient room for individual authorial creativity, as well as for the development of old images through the acquisition of new meanings as these images enter a changing historical context. The lives of blessed female elders present an extremely telling example of the functioning of these mechanisms. Below we shall describe how long-standing narrative patterns are realized in these hagiographies and how new ones arise.

As already noted, there is every reason to speak of a new type of Orthodox sainthood established over the course of the last century and a half — that of the blessed female elders.[8] These women possess two special qualities, the gifts of "spiritual discernment and insight,"[9] and accordingly fill two roles, as spiritual advisor and as counselor-helper in the difficult matters of everyday life. One can gain an understanding of the elders' first function through an example from the hagiography of the female elder Schema-nun Serafima of Michurinsk. One of the elder's female devotees tells a story about her friend, who wanted to go with her

8. The comparison of the image of the female elder with that of the male elder is complex and merits a separate discussion. For some observations on this topic, see Kormina 2013.

9. A quite concise record of the spiritual feats of blessed female elders can be found in the life story of Maria of Staraia Russa (see *Sviatye matushki* 2010: 379).

> to the dear mother [*matushka*] and was always asking her: "When will you take me with you?" I asked the mother's approval to bring her along, but she objected: "No, I am already [too] old to receive people." Having returned, I told my sister about all this, and she burst into tears: "What's to become of me? Shall I perish? For no matter how much I go to church, I never see the elders." (*Sviatye matushki* 2010, 253)

The story's protagonist links the question of her eternal soul's posthumous fate directly to the presence of a spiritual advisor — in this case she sees her friend (her "sister") in this role of spiritual patroness and, we may add, attains what she desired: "and Maria became the holy mother's [spiritual] child" (*Sviatye matushki* 2010, 254). The reputation of the blessed female elder depends to a much greater degree, however, on how she fulfills her second function, that of helper and counselor, to whom various people, not necessarily her "spiritual children," turn in difficult situations of life. This is how the documentary film *One Favored by the Queen of Heaven* describes this aspect of the activity of one of the currently most well-known female elders:

> And all these people kept coming and coming to Temkino. Cast aside by the indifference of official medicine, they awaited deliverance from the infirmities oppressing them through the prayers of the blessed female elder. And she received everyone, teaching them to support her prayer with their own. "Say the Our Father and the Hail Mary," she said. "Go to confession and take communion, and then you will be healed." She herself prayed for forgiveness for their sins and took upon herself all their spiritual and bodily afflictions. Only the special grace of God helped Schema-nun Makaria to bear this immeasurable burden. (Khoroshavina 2009)

Incidentally, the idea that the elder takes upon herself the problems of others, their cares and sins, and bears them in her suffering, is one of the typical features of such stories.

"She is already dead to the world"

Nevertheless, these roles, presented in detail and repeatedly in the hagiographies of female elders, still do not make these women a special category of saints. The portrait of a typical female elder necessarily contains a sign of special distinction that in secular language would be called a disease, either mental or corporal. In cases of insanity, even if feigned, the situation is more or less clear: in this the

blessed female elders follow the traditions of the fools for Christ. The sole canonized female holy fool in the Russian Orthodox Church, St. Ksenia the Blessed of Petersburg, who lived in the eighteenth century, appears to be paired in the information space of the contemporary veneration of saints with the recently canonized and relatively recently deceased Matrona of Moscow, whom they also called *blessed* ["blessed" (*blazhennaia*) can also have the meaning of "a holy fool" — Translator]. Their hagiographies are often published as a single book, paired companion icons are produced, and beyond the borders of the church world proper, the two women are known as patronesses of the two capital cities, as fellow countrywomen, friends, and, to a certain extent, rivals. The enigmatic way of speaking of holy fools, the inclination to unusual actions, the meaning of which is discovered only after the passage of time — these traits, albeit significantly reinvented, are nonetheless the recognizable legacy of the hagiographical canon of saints who were holy fools (Ivanov 2005).

The innovation in hagiographical writings about the new female elders consists of the marked corporeality of the images of these saints. First, speaking in contemporary terms, many, if not the majority, of these elders were people with special needs or simply invalids. This attracts the reader's attention initially to the state of the elders' bodies and creates a particular frame for the reception of the hagiographical narrative. A second striking trait characterizing the hagiographical portraits of the blessed elders is the presence of certain physical attributes, particularly a special, unmistakable fragrance, making the material dimension of their image still more powerful. On the one hand, all this is doubtlessly connected with the general tendency of contemporary hagiography to portray saints to their existing and potential devotees as personages intimate with cultural and material space. On the other hand, this powerful corporeality of the saint, which may evoke positive emotions in the reader, heralds the material mark of sainthood, something Robert Orsi, after Peter Brown, calls *presence* (Orsi 2008, 12–16). A person can hear or sense the warmth and fragrance of grace and in doing so can experience unmediated contact with the transcendent. Usually, such contact is thought possible only through mystical experience, accessible to select "religious virtuosi." But in the new hagiography an elite mystical experience gives way to the functioning of the organs of the senses, an activity common to any human being.

Upon opening one of the compendia devoted to contemporary holy women, one would find that nearly all of them suffered from various serious infirmities that were either congenital or acquired at an ear-

ly age. Matrona of Moscow was born blind, entirely without eyes, and another Matrona (of Anemniasevo) became blind at the age of seven after contracting smallpox. Schema-nun Makaria (Artem'eva) lost the use of her legs in early childhood and spent most of her life seated or lying in bed. The Blessed Liubushka of Riazan "remained in a state of enervation" from the age of fifteen, that is, she was paralyzed. We could continue this list, adding new names, but the diagnoses would remain basically the same — paralysis and blindness.

To be sure, pain and physical suffering are not something unusual and surprising in the Christian's experience: the sufferings of Christ and the torments of the martyrs fill (and even define) this experience, finding reflection not only in saints' life stories, but also in iconography, in which the saints are depicted with the instruments of torture or the parts of their bodies that have suffered, such as St. Paraskeva with her own eyes on a platter in her hands. Stigmata and extreme forms of asceticism — the nakedness of fools for Christ and the hunger of the hermits — are also portrayed. One cannot say that "old" saints did not suffer — they suffered, and some obtained the salvation of their souls through this. For example, one of the Kiev-Pechersk fathers, Pimen the Much-Ailing, a hero of the Old Russian paterikon, well-known solely for his humility in the face of severe illnesses, said: "I would rather turn into a corpse in this life, so that in the next life my body will be incorruptible; I would rather endure stench here, so as to delight in ineffable fragrance there" (Dimitrii Rostovskii [Dimitry of Rostov] 1999, 85).

Christian literature explores the phenomenon of illness not only through hagiographical narrative but also through theological reflection. The theodicy of bodily ailments arises in answer to the question: Why does God send illnesses to a person? Church and Church-related literature gives a simple and persuasive answer to this question — for punishment and correction. But why does God send sickness to those who are already pious and seem not to deserve punishment? Generally speaking, the correct answer to this question is known from God's dialogue with Job: "You want to overturn my judgment, to accuse me, in order to justify yourself?" (Job 40:3),[10] that is to say, "You are sure you have the right to question me about the reason for your sufferings?" Incidentally, answers formulated in a somewhat different mode possess great practical value: afflictions are sent to a pious Christian to

10. The above is a translation of the Russian biblical text. This verse in an English-language version of the Bible, such as the New Revised Standard Version, is numbered as Job 40:8 and reads in the NRSV as follows: "Will you even put me in the wrong? Will you condemn me that you may be justified?" — Translator.

test the believer's faith and purify the soul,[11] that is, the believer shares the fate of Job the Long-Suffering. Or again another variant is possible, without in practice excluding the first: a terrible affliction is sent to a person so that through the future recovery of the patient the glory of God is revealed to the world. (On this see *Ob iskusheniiakh* 1994.) Thus, Pimen the Much-Ailing also recovers before death in a miraculous way, in order to take communion, to show the brothers his resting place, and to pass away right there, that is to cross over where "there is neither sickness, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but life everlasting."

In the case of the blessed female elders, however, their ailments do not presuppose healing and do not aid in spiritual growth. In this instance physical infirmities document, so to speak, these women's special status as living saints. To have a serious illness and to suffer from it already serves as convincing proof of sainthood. The disease is not a trial from which one may emerge with merit; it is a clear sign that a person who has not yet experienced death belongs to the heavenly world.[12]

Let us see how this plays out on the level of the narrative's internal logic. The description of the first miracle in the hagiography of Matrona of Anemniasevo is constructed in the following way; one of her fellow-villagers turned to the blind and paralyzed Matrona for help, commenting upon his decision thus:

> "Matresha, now [since] you have already been lying here several years, you are no doubt pleasing to God. My back hurts, and I can't saw [wood]. Touch my back, maybe, and something will pass from you [to me]. What am I to do? I've had treatments; the doctors don't help." Matrona did as he asked, and the pain in his back indeed ceased. (*Sviatye matushki* 2010, 370)

In another saint's life the authors of the narrative directly correlate the malady that unexpectedly befell the saint with the wonder-working abilities that appeared within her:

11. And one can find grounds for this assertion in Scripture: "Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God" (1 Peter 4:1–2, NRSV). [The Russian biblical text begins with "Since Christ suffered for us (*za nas*) in the flesh . . ." — Translator.]

12. In his book, the priest Alexander Shantaev proposes a completely different approach to understanding the physical impairment of blessed female elders. He explains the veneration of new, handicapped saints as "the great exhaustion of the nation, which has broken itself in its debilitating conquest of the summit." If one takes into account the rather long history of this practice of veneration, his view leaves the reader with an important question: Just when did this bold assault on the heights begin? (See Shantaev 2004, 70).

> Once, an old woman came to her home. Looking at Feodosia, she said with surprise: "How little she is, and she's already walking." And then she patted her on the back. Right then the little girl's knees buckled and she fell down. Something was wrong with Feodosia's legs, and, according to the holy mother, "from the age of three she did not walk a step." Thus began the many years of trial that fell to her lot. But at the same time a gift was given to her, which great Christian zealots have received through long, persistent spiritual effort, the gift of healing and saving. (Shevchenko 2004)

In other words, what came to others through great Christian deeds came to little Feodosia (the future Schema-nun Makaria) with her affliction.

A still clearer sign that a blessed female elder was preordained for sainthood is her blindness.[13] The inability to see this world permits one to gain a glimpse of another world inaccessible to a typical sighted person, a glimpse "of another spiritual dimension, in which the dead associate with the living, in which the inner eyes see what is hidden from human eyes" (*Sviatye matushki* 2010, 380). And, alternatively, in the hagiographer's imagination blindness is correlated with the idea of holy ignorance:

> The holy mother [*matushka*] [. . .] became blind at the age of six. [. . .] She lived for seventy years in child-like innocence, not seeing the filth of the surrounding world. [. . .] For this innocence the Lord bestowed exceptional insight on the mother, which astounded all who came to her. (*Sviatye matushki* 2010, 382–83)

People who spend their whole life lying in bed or not seeing the wide world are involuntarily associated with the world of death and evoke not only pity but also horror. In fact, a little line in the portrait of the blind female elder Poliushka of Riazan arouses exactly these feelings in the reader: "She was small in height, very plump, with a little kerchief on her head, and eyes with no pupils" (Evsin 2001). Is this not similar to a still from the film *The Walking Dead*? And when one re-

13. It should be noted that the correlation between sainthood and blindness in hagiographical narratives represents quite a new phenomenon, explained by the following circumstance: although in world culture the image of the blind seer has been widely disseminated, in Eastern Christian hagiography before this point there had not been blind saints or their sainthood was not linked to this attribute. In fact, the Christian discursive tradition draws a very close connection between the concepts of blindness and unbelief, error, and atheism (Matthew 15:14, Luke 6:39, John 9:39–41), which until relatively recent times "blocked" the appearance of hagiographical images such as these.

calls that only someone who has died can become a saint in the fullest sense, it will not be surprising that hagiographers readily, although perhaps not always consciously, resort to "the code of death" in order to signify the special status of their protagonists as living saints.

It is entirely to be expected that the classic theory of Victor Turner should come to mind at this point, according to which the status of an individual temporarily excluded from the system of normal social relations is represented through the symbols of death — dying and resurrection (Turner 2011). In other words, a person existing in a liminal state is endowed with the qualities of the deceased: "liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon" (Turner 2011, 169). And while the paradigmatic youths from aboriginal tribes experience this situation during initiation rites as temporary and linked to the transition to a new social phase, for certain social groups or roles liminality is permanent.

The semiotic dimension of death always has distinct cultural, morphological, and functional characteristics, and as we have seen in the case of our living saints this dimension is usually symbolized through a lack of vision and mobility. We have already had to write of blindness and ailments connected to impaired motor skills as telling signs of their possessors' belonging to the world of death (Shtyrkov 2012; on blindness see pp. 137–41; on motor function disabilities see pp. 64–66). According to folk tales of the miraculous punishments of blasphemers, those who chop up icons or throw bells down from a parish church's bell tower are inevitably brought low by paralysis. The morally depraved who attack a saint or a shrine are punished with blindness: Saul, a persecutor of Christians who was struck blind, serves as an archetypal example of this; he obtained his sight again after repenting, accepting Holy Baptism, and taking a new name. Thus, in the Orthodox narrative tradition these symbols are familiar and easily understandable, although depending on the context they may be used with opposite meanings. To be sure, in the context of contemporary hagiographical writings the use of this semantic code seems rather archaic, folkloric, or, to use the expression of the well-known religious publicist Fr. Andrei Kuraev, "too human" to someone accustomed to traditional hagiographical literature. This is not only a matter of the signs of liminality through which the image of the living saint comes to light, but also of the special "corporeality," the material tangibility of the saint's holiness, the description of which gives a distinctive coloration to hagiographical stories of the "blessed female elders."

"Your old man reeks"

The olfactory code of sainthood is traditional in hagiographical literature. Saints' lives repeatedly point to a special unearthly fragrance that comes from relics and especially from saints who have just passed away. A breakdown in this topos results in the unbalancing of the whole hagiological system (something that F. M. Dostoevsky employed in *The Brothers Karamazov*, having his protagonists react bitterly to the appearance of the smell of corruption from the body of a deceased man of God). (For an interpretation of this episode, see Bogdanov 2010, 121–26.)

Blessed female elders are the kind of saints that give off a smell while living. A strong, heavy odor serves as a kind of "footprint of the holy fool" in the hagiography of contemporary female elders (recall Old Russian holy fools' custom of sleeping in manure). One female forerunner of these elders, who lived in the early nineteenth century in the Serpukhovsky Vladychny monastery, a former lady-in-waiting, the "fool Evfrosinia,"

> never cleaned [. . .] her wretched cell. [. . .] The floor was littered with the remains of food for the animals that fed out of a special trough that stood on the floor right there in the cell. [. . .] The air in the cell was terribly oppressive. It was difficult for an ordinary person to breathe in this room. (*Bezumiem mnimym* 2005, 214–15)

In answer to a question from a female visitor about the ghastly air and the animals in her living quarters the blessed woman replied: "For me this replaces the perfume I used to use so much at court" (*Bezumiem mnimym* 2005, 215). In contrast to the female elders of the twentieth century Evfrosinia did not have bodily defects; she was able to move herself and consciously made a decision about the cleanliness of her quarters — this was one of her spiritual feats as a holy fool. The odors in her "cell" speak of the holy fool's intentional infringement of the rules and of the blurring of the border between the clean and the unclean, in this case — between the human and the animal, the home and the barnyard.

On the whole, direct mentions of female elders giving off a smell while alive are quite rare; the sole instance known to us is that of the blessed Natalia, who smelled of goats (Belov 2011, 59). But even for a reader not possessing a powerful imagination it is not difficult to imagine the odors that filled the living quarters of Evdokia of Diveevo, for

example, who "for many years lay on a bed among uneaten scraps and matted rags. The bread had gone green, heaps of crackers mounted up on the bed, where cockroach antennae and mouse tails flitted about" (Il'inskaia 1994, 116). Naturally, all of this did not keep the saint from burning with love for the Lord and for the visitors who sought a meeting with her. Curiously, St. Serafim of Vyritsa prophesied the coming of the blessed Natalia, according to her hagiography: "When Serafim of Vyritsa was going to be with the Lord [. . .] he said: After me there will be a woman, who will give off a smell" (Belov 2011, 59), as if he were passing on the mantle of eldership to a new generation, to someone having a smell (according to accounts of his life, he himself did not give off strong odors).

But, of course, the "chief" aroma of a female elder arises after her departure into eternal life, when instead of the natural smell of death her flesh and even her possessions begin to emit a fragrance, as happens in the Orthodox world with relics and especially with wonderworking icons.

> "And do you know, Valentin Nikolaevich" — wrote one of the devotees of the blessed Natalia (who in life smelled of goats) to the author of her hagiography — "that the mother's jacket, which remained with us from her, gave off fragrance during prayer? And especially when you pray not alone but with someone. We place candles, light the icon lamps, pray, and right away the jacket begins to give off a fragrance, meaning that Natalia Mikhailovna is here and hears our prayers." (Belov 2011, 45)

By extension, fragrance also arises from photographs of female elders, from oil blessed at their graves, and the like.[14] This fragrance (sometimes thought to be the scent of roses, for example) provides indisputable proof of the sainthood of the departed. One can cast doubt on the stories of a person's Christian spiritual feats, but how can one argue with a scent?

The posthumous fragrance of a female elder serves as a logical part of the narrative that while having unmistakable signs of death during her life, conversely after death she preserves — or even ac-

14. "The flow of myrrh from photographs of the Mother [*Matushka*] began almost at once after her righteous passing. In Diveevo in Vera Lapkova's home a photo of Maria Ivanovna emitted myrrh and fragrance in the spring of 2000. [. . .] The nun Elisaveta from Samara has a modest little album with photographs of the Mother that to this day is wondrously fragrant. [. . .] The nun Evgenia has intensely fragrant oil, blessed at the female Elder's grave, and things that belonged to her" (*Sviatye matushki* 2010, 185).

quires — marks of eternal life. Truly, it is as if living saints refuse to die. Their hagiographies convey the absence of physiological indications of death: "Despite the warm season, the deceased lay in the coffin as if alive: there were no noticeable signs of decay, and a fragrance arose from the coffin; the devoutly peaceful face of the zealous woman of faith reflected heavenly bliss" (Il'inskaia 1994, 30). One can sense the *presence* of these saints not only through the aroma of grace; female elders invite their devotees and spiritual children to come to them at their graves and confide to them their troubles, to speak with them as if they were alive. Matrona of Moscow instructed her followers to come to her in the Danilovsky cemetery in Moscow:

> If something happens to you, come to my little grave, bend down, ask for what you need — I shall give you my advice. And always go to the cemetery, when you have any need or anything. Ask with your soul, and I shall help. As I used to receive people, so I will also continue to receive them. Talk with me, tell me all your troubles, I shall see and hear you; what I say to your soul, do. (Il'inskaia 1994, 149)

Conclusion

The saturation of a hagiographical text with indications of the corporeality of the saint, the heightened naturalism of hagiographical images, has at least two sources. The first is readily apparent — Russian Orthodox literature has evolved in company with secular literature, in which naturalism of description became an important artistic technique. Everyone remembers that Alyosha Karamazov began his difficult path of doubt and seeking in response to the odor of decay from the body of his deceased spiritual mentor, the elder Zosima. However one interprets this episode, it is evident that the smell of a dead body in the cell of the recently deceased revered elder was unseemly not only in itself, but also — to Dostoevsky this was important to emphasize — as a basis for judgments about the righteousness or unrighteousness of the deceased.

The second source is linked to the logic of the hagiographical genre's development over the last century and a half, that is, the attempt to create images of widespread popular piety rooted in the national soil, and, correspondingly, images of popular saints. Hence the numerous attempts to find (or create) and legitimize a "popular" version of Orthodox spiritual heroism. Note the popular incident in the

hagiography of Matrona of Moscow, when the righteous St. John of Kronstadt saw a very young little Matrona in the crowd of worshippers and pointed to her as to his successor. A film about Matrona gives the following commentary on this story:

> New times were at hand. The holy and righteous John of Kronstadt warned repeatedly about coming upheaval. [. . .] It may be that at that moment in church it was revealed to the great pastor that Russia would need not spiritual giants but those who were simple, pure souls, like little Matrona. In the twentieth century they would be Russia's spiritual support. (Shevchenko 2006)

At a certain point, however, what became important was the image of popular saints who were appealing not only to their creators but also to the audience for popular hagiographic works. To achieve this aim, an especially urgent one in the context of Orthodox communities' existence in the hostile, atheistic environment of the Soviet state, it was necessary to democratize the narrative genre, to fill it with images, themes, and indications of the extra-textual realities of religious life that were if not familiar, then at least understandable, to the "people." In this way images of new saints have been established as pious women of God of common birth, using dialectical forms in their speech, typically discussing the scheming of sorcerers, and helping people in the situations of daily life. In addition, at times the authors of saints' lives have become so carried away that they have created literary icons of saints that not only do not fit the established hagiology and contain implicit criticism of the ecclesiastical elite and of canonical forms of Orthodox custom, but also simply seem bizarre to learned representatives of the Church's intellectual elite.

At times these dissonances have been so egregious that the authors of saints' lives have had to introduce significant revisions into the image of a saint. For example, the portraits of Matrona of Moscow and Pelagia of Riazan were substantially changed to adhere more closely to a well-defined standard. This standard involves fidelity to the fundamental forms of church discipline celebrated in the hagiographies of the righteous and adherence to fixed social position.[15] Accordingly,

15. The spread of materials about the life and utterances of Pelagia of Riazan, which are replete with "folkloric" and anticlerical images and themes, became a serious obstacle to the popularization and official recognition of her cult. For more on this, see Sibireva 2006, 163–65; Kormina 2010, 9–10. For an attempt to "rehabilitate" the female elder Pelagia one may consult the already-cited booklet by Igor Evsin and his more re-

later (and official) versions of the life of St. Matrona of Moscow emphasize the "canonicity" of her activity and her lack of pretensions to roles inaccesible to her because of her position: "The holy mother did not preach, did not teach" (this assertion, by the way, does not correspond to many incidents included in this very text). "Matrona warned her followers not to run from confessor to confessor in search of 'elders' or 'seers,'" and finally, "On the whole, there is nothing in Matrona's exhortations that would contravene the teaching of the holy fathers" (*Sviatye matushki* 135–36). Obviously, these assertions look like attempts to justify and defend the writers' saint from severe allegations by Church "authorities."

Successive attempts to produce literary icons of the new saints have resulted in these saints coming to resemble simple mortals. Hagiographers, deciding to violate the genre's conventions, permit their protagonists to be ordinary people at times. And so Matrona, who according to a legend rejected by her canonizers was not afraid even of all-powerful Stalin, feared death. This fear and her down-to-earth, non-hagiographical restlessness when awaiting the end of her earthly journey make Matrona not a shining light of the coming eternal bliss of the righteous but a mere mortal (though, to be sure, one who bore the signs of belonging to the world of the dead her entire life). For some reason she experienced childlike agitation before the most important event in life. It is therefore possible that her last words could easily be included in a children's book without fear that they might frighten a young Orthodox reader.

> Dear Matrona feared death, just as all people do. Anxious, she asked the priest who came to give her communion whether her hands were folded in the right way. The priest was sincerely surprised:
> — Really, mother, do you find it terrible to die?
> — Terrible — the blessed elder answered meekly. (Mikhailova 2013, 18)

For its part, this carefully constructed simplicity produces an image of a popular saint who conveys an experience of Orthodoxy as a religion rooted in national tradition, simple, and understandable to all.

cent work (Evsin 2012). The well-known Moscow priest, Archpriest Artemy Vladimirov, served as the editor and authored the foreword to this edition. In a special interview with the publisher Zerna, Evsin presented the arguments and rhetoric of the champions for the reclamation of Poliushka's reputation, accusing the author of the "false hagiography" of "spiritual deception" or mental deficiency (Nikol'skii 2012).

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Mikhail Maizuls

The Punishment of Saints as Pious Blasphemy in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period

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This article is devoted to the wide set of practices of coercion and punishment of saints via their images that are well documented in the Catholic world from the early Middle Ages to the Early Modern period. According to the basic historiographical narrative, the humiliation of saints officially practiced by medieval monks and canons was prohibited by the Second Council of Lyon in 1274, leading to the gradual marginalization of this devotional "instrument." Nevertheless, exempla that presented the coercion of saints as a legitimate (although radical) method of communication with supernatural powers continued to appear in collections for preachers even in the Counter-Reformation period. At the same time, by the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern period, these practices had been gradually reinterpreted as superstition and/or blasphemy (sacrilege). This transformation is due to two interdependent agendas: the growing delegitimization and even demonization of popular religion by Church intellectuals and prelates, and the Protestant iconoclasm of the 16th and 17th centuries, which made the ecclesiastical authorities, who were anxious to protect the core of the traditional faith, much more sensitive to any form of irreverence or deviance toward statues or other images of saints.

Keywords: cult of images, blasphemy, sacrilege, iconoclasm, hagiography, exempla, canon law, Second Council of Lyon, Council of Trent.

In his memoirs, the Spanish director Luis Buñuel recalled rumors spreading through Madrid in 1936, following the start of the Civil War, to the effect that the mother superior of a certain monastery had used a hammer and chisel to chip the figure of Jesus off their statue of the Virgin Mary, and declared to the Queen of Heaven that she would only return him when "we [the nationalists — M. M.] win the war" (Buñuel 1985; Bel'ting 2002).

As Clausewitz famously put it, war is the continuation of politics by other means. In precisely the same way, violence against sacred objects sometimes serves as a radical form of prayer; communion with higher powers sometimes leads to raised voices. Before attacking a Polish castle in Lyakhavichy in 1660, Russian voivode Ivan Khovansky hoisted an icon of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker up onto his shoulder. When the assault failed, however, he ordered that it be slashed "into splinters" with a whip (Bulychev 2005). In 1690, thirty years later and on the other side of the world, a woman in the Mexican town of Cocula lost a Chinese porcelain cup. Terribly angry, she threw a statue of the Virgin Mary to the floor, called her an "Indian harlot," and threatened to leave her there if she did not return the lost object (Gruzinski 1994).

Neither the Orthodox voivode nor the Catholic lady from a colonial town was an iconoclast, and it is unlikely that they believed they were engaging in some form of blasphemy or sacrilege. They had put their faith in the intercession of Saint Nicholas and the Virgin Mary, only to be let down, betrayed, and left to their plight. In ordering that the icon be broken or throwing a statuette on the floor, they, unlike their Protestant contemporaries or (non-)religious freethinkers, were not denying the power of those images, but were rather appealing to that power through violence; they were punishing the higher powers for abandoning them in their time of need, and/or were attempting to coerce them to come to their aid.

It is obvious that punishment/blackmail directed toward saints through their images (and sometimes through their relics) in the Catholic world of the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period was a relatively widespread practice, not just an unusual deviation.[1] It had

1. The inquisitorial archives of colonial Mexico in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have preserved the majority of cases dealing with routine violence against images of saints. Some of them were associated with punishment or blackmail. As the French historian Serge Gruzinski notes, images "were threatened and blackmailed, as if they could be forced to meet the demands of their owner. . . . They were also insulted, flogged, scratched, slapped, burned with a candle, broken, torn, stamped on,

a collective dimension as well as an individual one. In the individual dimension, someone in a fit of rage against the higher powers settles the score with images, whether they belong to him or they are kept in a Church and he simply regards them with special reverence. In the collective dimension, punishment or blackmail directed against saints translates into group action, which is often ritualistic in nature, intended to avert some sort of general misfortune; for example, during a drought, the faithful rushed to the riverbank and threw in a statue of their patron saint. While the resident of Cocula decided to retaliate against the Virgin Mary over a broken cup, the Catholic hierarchy and Church intellectuals unequivocally classified punishment/blackmail directed against saints as impermissible.

Several centuries before, however, monks and canons engaged in similar practices with full official sanction, and the "books of miracles" (*libri miraculorum*) compiled at various pilgrimage sites included miracles performed by local saints (or images of them) in response to blackmail. Furthermore, these were not miracles associated with punishment, which are so common in accounts of church robbers and iconoclasts, but rather "positive miracles," a gracious reply to the supplicant's "forceful" prayer. As is well known, ritualistic humiliation of relics and images was officially banned in 1274 at the Second Council of Lyon. It is obvious, however, that this decision, which involved only one type of practice and only applied to the clergy, did not put an end to the story of punishment/blackmail directed against heavenly patrons.

In the last years of the seventeenth century, soon after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which had granted a range of freedoms to the Protestant minority of France, an illustrated pamphlet exposing the vices of Catholic monks was published in Amsterdam. One of the most prominent monks in this satirical gallery of gluttons, drunkards, fornicators, crooks, and money-grubbers is a certain "Portuguese father." In the engraving, a monstrous Franciscan monk lashes a statue of Saint Anthony of Padua with a whip, demanding that he perform a miracle (fig. 1).

stabbed, pierced, cut into strips with scissors, tied to horses' tails and covered with red paint or even human excrement (Gruzinski 1995, 67–68). See also Corteguera 2016.

Fig. 1. A Franciscan monk beats a statue of Saint Anthony of Padua (*Renversement de la morale chrétienne par les désordres du monachisme*. 2e partie. Amsterdam, 1695).

In this article, I will trace how various practices of punishing/blackmailing religious images were legitimized in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, how they were later officially reclassified as superstition and/or sacrilege (blasphemy), and how violence toward sacred images could serve diametrically opposed goals.

Legitimate Abuse

Patrick Geary noted that the ritualistic humiliation of relics and sacred images was officially incorporated into the liturgical practice of many monasteries and communities of canons in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries (Geary 1979; cf. Little 1979; Schmitt 2005). They most often resorted to this measure during the course of conflicts with secular seigneurs who were encroaching on Church lands or attempting to put pressure on the clergy in other ways. When the confrontation reached an impasse and there were no other forms of resistance available, the brothers would denounce the wrongdoer during the mass and call

out to God for intercession (a "clamor"). In addition to their invocations, the clerics would sometimes take reliquaries, crucifixes, statues of saints and the Gospels down from the altar. They would them lay them on the floor and cover them with thorns (they would do the same to the altar, saints' graves, etc.). A similar ritual of humiliation could also be built into the mass or unfold separately, though it would still be part of the religious service. In some cases, the holy items would be returned to their places after the *clamor* was concluded; in others, they would be left where they were until the brothers got what they wanted.[2] In the latter case, the monks or canons would stop performing religious services and deny laypeople access to the relics or barricade the entrance to the church entirely.

These measures were regulated by liturgical rules and compilations of "customs" (*consuetudines*) of particular communities, and were intended to put pressure on both the wrongdoer himself and the patron saint. The former, because the brothers, by halting services and announcing their humiliation to all, compelled him to reconsider and ultimately give in. The latter, since he had left his children without aid and therefore had to experience the same humiliation to which the brothers had been condemned. Although the liturgical texts did not say so directly, such measures were intended to prompt and coerce heavenly protectors to intervene, to awaken their power.

Obviously, the threat that the saints would lose the honor appropriate to them was used as a way to get something out of them long before the era Geary described. For example, in the sixth century, Gregory of Tours's book *Glory of the Confessors* (chapter 70, "The Confessor Mitrias of Aix") described how a certain Childeric, an important figure in the court of King Sigebert, took a villa in Aix away from the Church. The local bishop, Franco, went to the tomb of Saint Mitrias, said his prayers and then threatened him: "Most glorious saint, no more lights will be lit here, no more melodies of psalms will be sung, until you first avenge your servants from their enemies and restore to the holy church the properties that have been violently taken from you." The bishop went on to cover the grave with thorns and bar the doors of the church. The wrongdoer fell ill soon after, spent a year in

2. For example, in the mid-eleventh century, the monks of the abbey of St. Medard in Soissons entered into a conflict with Duke Gothelo of Lotharingia, since King Henry I had transferred the village of Donchery to him, despite the fact that the monks regarded it as theirs. In order to win the duke over, they kept the reliquary of their patron saint on the floor of the church for an entire year until he reconsidered (Geary 1979, 39).

torment and realizing his guilt, commanded that the villa be returned to the Church, along with 600 gold coins; nonetheless, he drew his last breath soon after (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 1885, 339; Van Dam 2004, 51).

The question of the legitimacy of these practices was raised at the Thirteenth Council of Toledo, held in Visigothic Spain in 683. They condemned clerics and other churchmen who would grow so angry and resentful toward someone that they dared to rip the cloths from altars and cover them with funeral cloth instead, put out candles, and halt services. If they did not receive forgiveness from the clerics above them in the hierarchy, they were meant to be stripped of their offices for this offense. This ban, however, was softened by a significant exception. In justifiable circumstances, when the clerics resorted to these methods in order to oppose their enemies or stave off a threat to the faith, their actions were driven by humility rather than impudence, and were therefore acceptable (Mansi 1765, 1069–70).

Naturally, in the West, this Early Medieval practice of reverential threats was, as a rule, directed toward the relics of saints rather than images of them. It was the relics that constituted the presence of heavenly patrons in this world and served as the main conduits of their power (*virtus*). It was only after 1000, or, depending on the dating system, the late twelfth to thirteenth century, after two- and three-dimensional images broadly acquired the status of repositories of *virtus* and also began to play the role of intermediaries between man and higher powers, that believers also began to apply pressure to manmade images (Shmitt 2002, 79–104; Vauchez 1999, 81, 84–85). The church practices that Geary describes officially entailed symbolic, rather than physical, action against reliquaries or crucifixes. They were denied the honor properly due to them or were covered with thorns, but never struck, or, in the event that they were struck, those techniques were not part of the legitimate framework of the ritual, and were not recorded by the sources, since they were regarded as unbecoming of clerics.

It is important to note, however, that it was not only monks and canons who resorted to forceful pressure against holy objects, but laypeople as well. The range of measures that they regarded as permissible were also apparently much broader, even from the point of view of the clergy. For example, the eighth book of "The Miracles of St. Benedict" (8:6), complied by Raoul of Tourtier (Rodulfus Tortarius, died 1122), describes Adelard, the manager of a distant property

of Fleury Abbey. Rather than protecting the local peasants, Adelard was oppressing them in a wide variety of ways. At one point, one of the women sought to bring him to justice, so she resorted to extreme measures. She went to the church, pulled the cloth from the altar and proceeded to lash the stone as if it was the saint himself (*increpans quasi praesentem patrem Benedictum*): "decrepit Benedict, sleeping laggard, what do think you're doing? Are you really sleeping? Why do you subject your servants to such injustice?" (De Certain 1858, 282–84; Geary 1979, 38).[3] This "forceful" prayer worked, and God chastised Adelard. One day, when he was escaping from his enemies on horseback, he accidentally stabbed himself in the throat with his own lance. As in the case of monks or canons humiliating their own holy items and appealing to their patrons, this story (and similar ones) describe laypeople in need of help turning to their "natural" heavenly protector (Saint Benedict, in this case, since they lived on his lands). Unlike practitioners of ritualized and largely symbolic humiliation of holy items, they applied direct physical force, demanding that the saint awaken from his sleep and come to their aid. In this context, it is highly illustrative that Raoul of Tourtier does not pass judgment on the actions of this despairing peasant woman who demanded relief rather than meekly awaiting it.

The Catalyst for a Miracle

If you go into Notre Dame Cathedral in Chartres through the western door and then deeper into the nave and look up at one of the stained-glass windows, you will see a scene at the very top of a man in a red tunic and green cap whipping a golden statue of a saint resting on a short column. If you go even farther, into one of the chapels of the deambulatory, this story will appear again, but now it is not a three-dimensional image, but a flat one, an "icon" (fig. 2) (Harris 2008, 119–42; fig. 1-2 [463–64]; fig. 3 [465]).

3. A similar story can be found in "The Miracles of St. Carilefus of Anisole" (*Miracula sancti Carilefi*, 1–2). The serfs living on the monastery's property were abused by the local baron. They entered the Church of their protector and proceeded to say tearful prayers to him; they then tore off the altar cloth and began to whip the altar itself, berating their patron for sleeping and forgetting to protect them (*Cur hic obdormiscens nostri oblivisceris*). The guard heard the noise and drove them from the church. The saint did help them, though; soon after, the evildoer who had been oppressing them fell from his horse and broke his neck (*Acta sanctorum* 1719, 651).

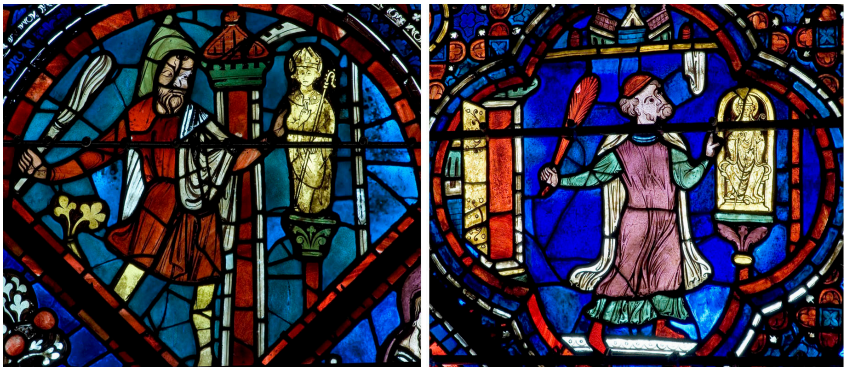

Fig. 2. A Jew beats an image of Saint Nicolas. Stained-glass image in the nave (left) and deabumlatory (right) of Chartres Cathedral, 1210–1235.

These scenes of beating the saint, created in 1210–1235, resemble the countless medieval images in which the apostles, monks, or bishops smash the gods of other religions ("idols"). In this case, however, the roles have been assigned in a fundamentally different way. The man with the lash is an adherent of a different faith, a Jew, and the statue or "icon" he is beating is an image of Nicholas of Myra, one of the most popular Christian saints. This beating is not a crime for which a wrathful Nicholas should, according to the rules of the hagiographical genre, have instantly chastised the evildoer, but rather the prologue to a miracle of an entirely different sort.

These two stained-glass images in Chartres illustrate a famous legend about the icon/statue of Saint Nicholas (*Iconia sancti Nicolai*).[4] This legend appeared among the Orthodox Greeks who populated southern Italy in the tenth century, and then spread to the Catholic West, where it became widespread in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries (more specifically, it was included in "bestselling" hagiographies such as the *Golden Legend* by Jacobus da Varagine [circa 1260]). According to the ancient Latin version (from a life of Saint Nicholas written circa 890 by John, the deacon of Naples), the main character is not a Jew, but a pagan (a barbarian/Vandal). He found an icon (*tabula*) of Saint Nicholas, and learning about the power of this sanctifier from the Christians, left it to guard his treasures. While he

4. In addition to Chartres, a whipping of Saint Nicholas producing positive results appears in a stained-glass window of the Church of Saint-Julien-du-Verdon in Burgundy (Camille 1989). See also the miniature painting from the Flemish book of hours in the early sixteenth century, where a Jew in a pointed "Jewish cap" whips a gilded statue of Saint Nicholas on an altar: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Douce 112, Fol. 160.

was gone, his home was ransacked. Enraged that the "icon" had let him down, he gave it a lashing and threated to throw it in the fire if the saint did not help him. As if he had suffered the lashing himself (*nimia miseratione ductus super achonam suam ac si ipse flagellis caederetur*), Saint Nicholas appeared to the thieves and reproached them for how badly he had been beaten on their account (*et ideo pro vestro scelere ego innocens quam graviter flagellis caesus sum*), and then threatened that if then did not return what they had stolen, they would be punished by death. That same night, the criminals secretly returned what they had stolen, and the pagan owner, finally convinced of the power of the Christian saint, soon received baptism (Brunet and Quentin 1910, 306–7; Choffari 2012, 212). In later versions of the story, such as the one in the *Golden Legend*, the icon was replaced with a statue (a more familiar cultic image in the West) and the main character was transformed from a barbarian/Vandal into a Jew (or occasionally a Saracen) (Graesse 1850, 27–28; Voraginskii 2017, 56–57; Camille 1989, 127–35; Vauchez 1999, 82–83; Sansterre 1989, 128–29). Pagan, Jew, or Muslim, this character was always an outsider.

There would have been nothing unusual about this legend (a miracle as an instrument leading followers of other religions to receive baptism and Christian sinners to seek redemption), if it were not for the moment when the character lashes the icon. Saint Nicholas's complaint is not against the one who has done him wrong, but rather against the thieves who "betrayed" him, leading to his being punished. In the oldest Latin version, the barbarian/Vandal, having applied the first type of pressure (lashing), blackmails the icon/saint with fire, and immediately St. Nicholas appears to those who caused his distress. In the *Golden Legend* version, the motive behind the act of blackmail is not directly expressed (the Jew's actions are referred to as *ultio,* "vengeance,") but the meaning and consequences of what he does remain the same.

The blackmail/punishment directed toward Saint Nicholas through a material image of him is not presented as sacrilege, but rather as a "pretext" for a miracle leading a follower of another religion to salvation. There are numerous medieval stories of Jews attempting to force Christ to undergo the Passion once again, supposedly torturing or crucifying crucifixes stolen from Christians or specially prepared wax figurines. They too often end with miracles (the image usually begins to bleed) and the conversion of (some) torturers. Unlike the lashing of Saint Nicholas, however, any aggression

against images of Christ in these narratives was unambiguously interpreted as a crime committed out of hatred for the Savior and the Christian faith.[5] Here, however, a follower of another religion lashes an image of the saint because it failed to meet his expectations, and what awaits him is not punishment, but a two-fold reward: Saint Nicholas returns his stolen treasure and he receives baptism, receiving a chance to save his soul.

The initial goal of the follower of another religion (either paganism or Judaism) as a character in the story is to protect his possessions. The goal of the story itself, as a single miracle constituting part of the life of Saint Nicholas or an image in a stained-glass window in a cathedral, is to glorify the power of a Christian image, to show that the saint acting through it is even prepared to descend to the level of those who do not (yet) believe in him, though he trusts him to guard his property, and to demonstrate the triumph of Christianity over any other religion by leading him to receive baptism. The finale of the story *a posteriori* justifies the radical measures that the main character takes against the icon/statue.

Image as Hostage

It is extremely important that more and more instances of this story began to appear in thirteenth-century Church teachings, in which coercion humbly inflicted on religious images in the hope that they would produce a miracle is presented as a legitimate method of acting on (images of) saints, not only for followers of other religions, but also for Christians themselves.

In 1219–1223, the Cistercian monk Caesarius compiled a "Dialogue on Miracles" for the novices he was responsible for instruct-

5. Early medieval stories of miracles (primarily bleeding) and manifestations associated with religious images in response to aggression by followers of other religions (most often Jews) or iconoclasts, were rare in the West, compared to Byzantium. They began to become widespread in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, when a tremendous expansion of the cult of images occurred in the Catholic world north of the Alps, and went on to draw closer to saints' remains and other relics in terms of their sacred status. At the same time, tension in Jewish-Christian relations led to the formation of a whole range of accusations associated with torturing the body of Christ: through images of it, through the bodies of Christian infants (the "blood libel") and through the Host (see Sansterre 1999). It is important to note that the miracles performed by religious images in response to aggression by Jews, heretics, or Catholic blasphemers were not solely promulgated for the sake of polemics against Judaism or heresy. Just as they did in the East, they served as a catalyst for reverence toward particular religious images and were regarded as foundational to the cult of images as a whole.

ing at Heisterbach Monastery, near Cologne. This book was an immense collection of *exempla*, illustrating the fundamental provisions of Church doctrine. In addition to dozens of times that Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the saints appeared, provided healing, or inflicted punishments through images, he also narrated an instance of successful blackmail (7:45).

In the chapel of Veldenz castle, there was a wooden statue of the Virgin Mary with the Infant Christ, crudely made, but endowed with great power (*virtus*). A lady named Jutta who lived in the castle passionately revered it. Once, when her three-year-old daughter who lived with her wet nurse in a neighboring village went out to play, a wolf carried her off into the forest. When she found out what had happened, Jutta ran to the chapel, took the infant Christ away from the Madonna, and tearfully shouted: "My lady, you will not get your child back until you return mine to me!" The girl was soon found alive, and Jutta gratefully returned the Virgin Mary's infant (Strange 1851, 2:62–64; Baschet and Dittmar 2015, 167–76; Sansterre 2010, 171–73). According to Caesarius, he heard this story from Herman, the abbot of the Marienstatt Monastery, who heard it directly from Jutta herself.

The despairing mother removes the figure of Jesus from the statue of the Virgin Mother (by breaking it off, perhaps?), not because she wishes to punish the image or deny its power, but rather to activate that power and force the Madonna to answer her prayer. It is highly illustrative that Caesarius presents this story immediately after an account of another lady from the same castle who mocked the statue as ugly and was punished by the Virgin Mother for doing so. The woman's son took all her property and threw her out of the house, forcing her to resort to begging to avoid dying of starvation. Pious blackmail is permissible, impious mockery is not.

Several versions of this story of the Virgin Mary being blackmailed through the figure of her infant can be found in compilations of thirteenth- to fifteenth-century *exempla*. In these texts, Jesus is seized by a pious but despairing mother whose son has been taken captive by enemies or even hanged for some kind of crime. Thanks to the mercy of the Virgin Mother, the prisoner returns at once, or the executed man is resurrected (Tubach 1969; Vaucher 1999).[6]

6. This story appears in another thirteenth-century compilation, produced by Caesarius von Heisterbach (*Dialogus miraculorum*), the *Epilogum in gesta sanctorum* by the Dominican Bartholomew of Trent, the *Golden Legend* by Jacobus da Varagine, the *Canticles of Saint Mary* by Catholic king Alfonso X, etc. In the fourteenth century, it can

This story was periodically transposed into the realm of iconography. For example, it can be seen in the magnificent manuscript "The Miracles of Our Lady" by Jean Miélot, which was created in 1456 for Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy. The illuminator Jean Le Tavernier depicted a woman reverently taking the infant Christ from the statue of the Virgin Mary on the altar without a hint of discretion, in full view of the other worshippers (fig. 3).[7] It is noteworthy that when the *exemplum* of the despairing mother first appeared in the Russian literary tradition in the seventeenth century, the statue of the Virgin Mary, which was uncommon in Orthodox cultic practices, was replaced with an icon in both texts and miniature paintings. The "abduction" of an infant painted in his mother's arms ought to be regarded as a miracle in and of itself, however; unlike a figure carved from wood or stone, it could not simply be removed. Nonetheless, the Russian adaptation of this story does not offer any commentary on this point, or attempt to explain it. For example, in the miniature paintings in an Old Believer compilation from the eighteenth century, one can see the despairing mother whose son has been thrown into the dungeon on false charges, holding the infant Christ (who was just sitting in the Virgin Mother's lap) (fig. 4), and then carrying it home with her to hide it in a chest.[8]

It was not only the Virgin Mary who became the object of this form of blackmail. For example, the *Chronica majora* by British chronicler Matthew Paris describes an abbess deciding to coerce the apostle Paul to come to her aid, but does not pass judgment on her. In 1224, the Norman knight Falkes de Breauté, seeking to reinforce his castle in Bedford, destroyed a church dedicated to that saint. When she learned

be found in the *De introductione loquendi* by the Dominican Filippa da Ferrara, the *Alphabetum narrationum,* by Arnold of Liège, also a Dominican, in a compilation known as *Ci nous dit*, and in the fifteenth century in "The Miracles of the Virgin Mary" by Jean Miélot. The story can be found in the Thesaurus Exemplorum Medii Aevi (http://gahom.huma-num.fr/thema/) database (entry 1024 in the index of the Tubach fond).

7. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Français 9198, fol. 137v. Two versions of this same story can be found in the miniature paintings in the Parisian manuscript, "The Miracles of the Virgin Mary" by Gautier de Coincy: The Hague, Koninklijke bibliotheek, Ms. 71 A 24, fol. 123v, 174.

8. The description of the mechanism of the abduction and later return of the infant to the icon presented in the text is extremely brief; "lay your hand on the image of the Virgin Mother" (Saint Petersburg, Library of the National Academy of Sciences, 32.3.15, ll. 113, 116). This miracle can also be found in the illuminated manuscript "The Brightest Star," created in 1686 in the Novodevichy Convent: BAN P. I. A. no. 58, l. 151ob.–152.

Fig. 3. Woman removes the Virgin Mary's son from her statue. Illustration from "The Miracles of Our Lady" by Jean Miélot, 1456 (Paris. Bibliothèque nationale de France. Ms. Français 9198. Fol. 137v).

that his crime had gone unpunished, the abbess of the neighboring monastery ordered that the sword be removed from their statue of Saint Paul until revenge had been taken for Falkes's deed. That castle in Bedford ultimately fell (Luard 1976, 3:87; Sansterre 2013, 72). The abbess's actions follow the same logic as the ritualized humiliation of crucifixes and images of the saints that would be discussed at the Second Council of Lyon fifty years later. The only difference, judging by Matthew Paris's description, is that her "forceful" appeal to the apostle Paul was not accompanied by a suspension of services, and that his statue was not humiliated by removing it from the altar and covering it with thorns, but rather directly blackmailed by removing its main iconographic attribute, the sword.

In such stories, blackmail is presented as an effective and fully legitimate (i.e., legitimized by the fact that it proves effective and leads to a miracle) method of interacting with higher powers. If the narrator judges that the petitioner's aim is noble, and his attitude to the image is respectful, then almost anything is permissible. In another context, however, (for example, if the Jew who whipped Saint Nicholas was not

Fig. 4. The Orthodox version of the story: an inconsolable mother removes the infant from an icon of the Theotokos (Saint Petersburg, Library of the Academy of Sciences, 32.3.15., l. 113.

baptized thereafter, and the infant Christ was taken away with blasphemous curses by a heretic) the same act would have been interpreted as sacrilege. There are countless such examples.

Quasi-violence

Successful blackmail against higher powers creates the impression that the saints are dependent on man, that by creating images from wood or stone people took their heavenly patrons hostage and could manipulate them as they pleased. Seemingly seeking to divert the reader from potentially dangerous interpretations, Caesarius von Heisterbach wrote that the Virgin Mary ordered the wolf to return the child "as if" (*quasi*) she was afraid that Jutta would not give Jesus back. In other words, blackmail only proved effective because the Madonna showed mercy to a pious woman, not because the Queen of Heaven can actually be coerced by abducting the infant from one of the countless statues of her.[9] The story of the Jew and Saint Nicolas, as presented in the

9. When he recounted the same story in the fifteenth century in his *Promptuarium de miraculis Beatae Virginis* (no. 15), Johann Herolt emphasized that the weeping,

Golden Legend, is also analogous; the saint "appeared to the thieves just as if he himself [*tamquam in se*] had suffered blows" and rebuked them: "look, my body is covered in wounds . . . which the Jew inflicted upon me because you stole his treasure" (Graesse 1850, 27–28; Voroginskii 2017, 57; Sansterre 2009, 54n32). Although Saint Nicholas both voices complaints about the wounds that he bore due to his punishment and paints them in the most physiological light possible, the text uses the qualification *tamquam in se* to emphasize that the saint, who abides in the heavens, cannot experience physical pain, and partially removes the danger that identifying the image with what might be called the "prototype" or "preimage" underlying it would present from the perspective of dogma, despite the fact that this identification is the basis on which the idea of punishment or blackmail against a saint is built.[10]

Church texts often (but far from always) explain that "forceful" prayer only proves effective due to mercy shown by higher powers. This, however, does not remotely mean that actual blackmailers also imagined a "mechanism" of coercion in a strictly orthodox sense. The cultural (if not psychological) roots of the practice of punishment/blackmail are deeper than the Christian cult of saints and the Christian theory of images. They rest on an ancient intuition that what is depicted in an image is present in that image (different cultures explain this in different ways), and that actions performed on the image are somehow transferred to what it depicts. Theologians have explained that images of saints do not have any inherent power (God simply creates miracles through them) and that Christians who appeal to two- or three-dimensional images are using those material ob-

despairing mother took the infant Christ, and the Virgin Mary took pity on her bitterness, *as if* she was afraid of losing her son if she did not return the woman's daughter to her (*quasi timeret filio suo carere*): (Herolt 1606, 8–9). In describing the miracles that occurred in response to pious blackmail, writers often emphasize that before taking action, the petitioner would pray and weep. Regardless of how accurately this detail reflected real practices, it undoubtedly served as a rhetorical alibi that clearly distinguished between pious and willful sacrilege.

10. The Latin word *quasi* and analogous words in other languages occur regularly in church texts describing religious images that miraculously "come to life." Without ever casting doubt on these miracles, they remind the reader that their external forms are signs of reality, rather than reality itself (Sansterre 2015, 160, 168). Similar formulations are also often used in Catholic descriptions of "torture" or "executions" Protestant iconoclasts inflicted on crucifixes or figures of saints, *as if* they were tormenting not images made of stone or wood, but those depicted by those images (Christin 1991, 133, 137). The Catholics were apparently also "returning" the iconoclasts' rebuke for expecting miracles from pieces of wood or stone.

jects to direct their prayers to their invisible prototypes. In the consciousness of many believers, however, the most important thing by far was probably a simple feeling: the statue or icon really was the saint, experienced through sensation. This is not grounds to conclude that they had fully blended the image and its prototype; it is simply that for them, the power of their heavenly patron was embodied in a specific image with which they were familiar (see Baschet 2008, 39–44). Since an image can receive honor and prayers, it follows that it can also accept dishonor and punishment.

It is, however, worth noting that in those cases of blackmail against saints that church authors present as a legitimate practice, the harm inflicted on the images is invariably temporary and reversible. The barbarian/Jew/Saracen subjects the icon or statue of Saint Nicholas to flagellation or threatens to burn it if it does not come to his aid, but he never actually burns it, of course. Pious blackmailers removing the infant from a statue of the Virgin Mary or the sword from a statue of the apostle Paul return them as soon as they receive what they want. After lengthy prayers, despairing mothers respectfully remove the wood or stone infant from the Virgin Mary, take it home, carefully wrap it in cloth and lock it in a chest, pleased that they now have collateral or a hostage (*obses* in Latin or *ostage/gaige* in French) that will return their own son to them.[11] The most irreverent method (and the one closest in form to what would typically be interpreted as sacrilege) was used by the main character of *Iconia sancti Nicolai*, who is a follower another religion (a pagan, Jew, or Muslim). None of the Christian petitioners/blackmailers in similar *exempla* manhandled the statue. Furthermore, it is important to note that these stories invariably conclude by establishing or restoring the relationship between the viewer and the sacred person whose help they demanded in such an unusual fashion, due to an "overabundance" of faith and hope, not a deficit.[12]

11. For example, see the *Golden Legend* (Graesse 1850, 591–92) or the eighth book of the *Dialogus miraculorum* by Caesarius von Heisterbach (Meister 1901, 205–6). In the Franciscan compilation of *exempla* from the 1270s, published by A. G. Little, the despairing mother did not even manage to take the divine infant away from the Virgin Mary. As soon as she threatened to do so and extended her hand toward the statue of the Virgin Mother, her son appeared instantly and shamed her; "What are you doing, mother? Look, the Virgin Mother has returned me to you!" (Little 1908, 30).

12. Obviously, many other stories, which do not conclude with the believer "reconciling" with the saint, were simply classified by Church authors as sacrilege, or remain completely unknown, since they did not have educational value, and were therefore never recorded.

This is likely why the story of the despairing mother continued to wind its way through compilations of *exempla*, even in the post-Tridentine period, when the Catholic Church charted a course toward purging the cult of images of everything that suggested folk superstition (see below), drew dangerously close to magical practices, smacked of irreverence toward the saints, or blurred the boundary between image and prototype. In 1603, the Jesuit Jean Major published a hefty tome in Douai entitled *Magnum speculum exemplorum*. In the section dedicated to the Virgin Mary (B. Maria Virgo, no. 32), he includes a reference to the *Golden Legend* and offers the "example" of the act of blackmail against her statue. It is, however, suggestive that the introduction of the story characterizes the mother's actions as an example of "pious simplicity" (*pia simplitas*) (Major 1633, 541). By that time, punishment or blackmail directed against saints was already most often considered impious, a superstition and/or sacrilege (blasphemy). Nonetheless, the narratives of such methods, insofar as they were sanctified by the authority of tradition and legitimized by the appearance of a miracle in response, were not fully discredited.

Inviolable Sacred Objects

The turning point in the official history of punishment/blackmail directed against saints was the Second Council of Lyon, convened by Pope Gregory X in 1274. The Church hierarchs assembled there demanded that the canons not suspend public services (*cessatio a divinis*) without providing canonical justification for their right to do so, and informing the person against whom this measure was directed of their plans in writing. At the same time, the humiliation of crucifixes was flatly prohibited as dishonorable abuse (*detestabilem abusum horrendae indevotionis*) (Mansi 1780, 24:92).[13] Patrick Geary primarily connects this sea change with the administrative centralization of the Catholic Church and the hierarchy's attempt to deny the clergy such a powerful (and, more to the point, unregulated) in-

13. In the late thirteenth century, Guillaume Durant, the bishop of Mende, wrote in his liturgical summa *Rationale divinorum officiorum* (1:13) that the Thirteenth Council of Toledo once permitted clerics to remove the cloth coverings from altars and religious images and cover them with dark (funerary) cloth or thorns, in the event that they were doing it in defense of the rights of the Church. That was in the ancient past, however. In his own time, the Second Council of Lyon had already passed judgment against the practice (Durand 1614, 1:12; Thibodeau 2007, 31).

strument as blackmailing sacred objects (Geary 1979; Shmitt 2002, 110–11).

It is not advisable, however, to lose sight of the ideological dimension of this problem. As early as the twelfth century, removing the cloths from altars and other methods of humiliating the higher powers were mentioned by Gratian in his monumental code of canon law, *Concordia discordantium canonum*, or *Decretum* (2.27.5.12–13). In his text, they are presented as an instrument of pernicious witchcraft (*maleficia nequissima*) that clerics occasionally indulge in. Gratian casts judgment on priests who inflict harm on their enemies by uncovering altars, putting out candles, and then holding funeral masses for them (Friedberg 1959, 1031–32).[14] For many thirteenth-century theologians, the boundary between reverent coercion against sacred objects and sacrilege/blasphemy had begun to seem too ambiguous. The decision of the Second Council of Lyon formally only applied to canons, and the only method of humiliation that figured in it consisted of dropping sacred objects onto the floor and covering them with thorns. In 1289, Raimond de Calmont d'Olt, the bishop of Rodez, released synodal statutes in which the list of forbidden practices was expanded. In addition to *cessatio a divinis*, he mentioned that certain clerics would respond to heat waves or thunderstorms by abusing sacred images, and that crosses or statues were not simply humiliated, but also subjected to flagellation, broken, pierced, or submerged in water (Martène 1717, 4:633, statute 20).

Numerous accounts that have survived from the late Middle Ages and early modern period suggest that people in various parts of Europe would respond to droughts or excessively strong rains by throwing or dipping relics or images of saints into rivers, streams, fountains, or wells. This method, based on the principles of sympathetic magic, was meant to either summon or stop rainfall (water attracts or repels other water). The origins of such practices can certainly be found in numerous pre-Christian cults, but the question of how they emerged

14. This fragment of the *Decretum* consists of quotations taken from two ancient texts dedicated to completely different questions. The first is a decree of the Seventeenth Council of Toledo (694), regulating cessations of services and humiliation of relics during the course of personal conflicts and shared disasters, and the second is a decision by the Thirteenth Council of Toldedo, which condemns saying prayers of remembrance for the living (Mansi 1766, 12:99, see cap. 5). Gratian's thirteenth-century text, condemning the removal of cloths from altars as an element of magical masses, copies or paraphrases other lawyers and theologians, such as Raymond of Penyafort (*Summa juris canonici*) and Vincent of Beauvais (*Speculum doctrinale*). See Barnum 2004, 2:67; Montesano 2000, 42:2.

and were "Christianized" falls outside the scope of this article (Santyves 1933, 144–92). The salient point is that, according to the Rodez statutes, it was not only laypeople who submerged relics in water, but also clerics, and that it was not merely "forceful" personal prayer, but a collective ritual.[15]

In the late fifteenth century, this question was investigated in great detail in a tract entitled "On Superstitions," which was compiled by Martinus de Arles y Andosilla (Martin of Arles), a canon from Pamplona.[16] It belongs to a long sequence of texts dedicated to debunking superstitions, which began to appear on a large scale throughout Europe in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. Although criticism of *superstitio* (this category covered both remnants of paganism and illegitimate distortions of legitimate church practices) was an important part of the discourse of clerics in the early centuries of Christianity, it acquired special urgency in the late Middle Ages, as Michael Bailey demonstrates. In many ways, this is connected with the fact that Church preaching, with its mission of religious acculturation, was penetrating into the vast world of the peasantry more and more actively. Long before the Counter-Reformation, the authors of tracts on superstation (university theologians or practicing pastors) set the goal of uprooting or correcting the numerous forms of folk religion that did not fit into the framework of official piety and were often based on appropriating elements of Church rituals for magical purposes (Bailey 2009, 633–64, 657; see also Ankarloo, Clark, and Monter 2002, 4:105–21). It is not surprising that by the mid-fifteenth century, the radical demonization of magical practices led to the formation of a cumulative concept of sorcery, which became the ideological foundation of witch hunting.[17]

15. There is ample evidence to suggest that this method of summoning or halting rain, as well as punishing saints for various climatic disasters was alive and well as late as the nineteenth century. For example, on September 6, 1815, after a long drought, the clergy of Périgueux went to the spring of Saint Sabina to throw in a cross, and circa 1830, the residents of Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, near Paris, threw a statue of their patron saint into the Seine or one of the smaller nearby rivers, because their vineyards suffered frost damage (Santyves 1933, 162–63, 179).

16. This text was first published in Lyon in 1510, and then republished several times: in Paris in 1517, in Rome in 1559, in Frankfurt in 1581, and in Vienna in 1584. See Gaztambide 1971, 249–66; Bailey 2009, 636n21, 637, 644, 649–50.

17. See Schmitt, 2002, 131–49. Martín de Andosilla (Martin of Arles) also dedicated several pages to witches flying to their nighttime gatherings, but he believed, according to the old fashion, that witches were not transported there in reality, but only *mentaliter et fantastice* (Gaztambide 1971, 276–77).

If in the Rodez statutes, which repeat the formulation used by the Second Council of Lyon, whipping or submerging sacred images was characterized as "horrible abuse" (*abusum detestabilem*), Martin of Arles explains such practices as both superstition and sacrilege. Furthermore, his tract dedicated to criticism of superstition (from divination and love spells to belief in auspicious and inauspicious days), begins by discussing (and passing judgment on) blackmail against a statue of Saint Peter. According to this canon from Pamplona, the reason he put pen to paper at all was to dispel the doubts of his colleague, the archdeacon of the village of Usun, in Navarre, who described an old custom to him. When a drought occurred, the clergy and the citizens would organize a procession to the Church of Saint Peter. Once the mass had been performed, they would say prayers as they removed the image of their heavenly patron from the altar and then carried it to the river. One of those present would appeal to him: "Saint Peter, help us in this time of need, implore God to give us rain." They would repeat this process for a second and then a third time. When they received no answer, the people would begin to shout for the image of Saint Peter to be submerged in the water, if he would not intercede on their behalf and alleviate their misfortune. Then a prominent local (*primatibus*) would answer that that wouldn't do, but Peter was the good shepherd, and he would implore God to give them what they wanted. The residents insisted that there had never been a time when they were betrayed and their expectations were not met; rain would always come within a day (Gaztambide 1971, 271–72).

It is highly illustrative that the algorithm for action taken toward an image and its prototype described by Martin of Arles based on the account from the archdeacon of Usun is so close to the pragmatics typical for iconoclastic rituals. In numerous descriptions of solitary and collective attacks on Catholic "idols" that occurred in different parts of Europe during the Reformation, the same scenario regularly recurs. Before "executing" an image by breaking it into pieces, shooting it with harquebuses, or throwing it in a fire, an iconoclast would address it as if it were a living person, demanding that it speak, offer resistance, save itself, or begin to bleed. When this address went unanswered and no miracle occurred, he would "gouge out" its eyes, break it apart, or throw it in a fire, as if enraged by the graven image's silence. By (deceptively) demanding that dead "idols" show signs of life, the iconoclast parodies the actions of Catholic "idolaters" and strives to demonstrate to onlookers (and perhaps to himself?)

that graven images are powerless, to show (and confirm?) that they are incapable of defending themselves, and are therefore empty and dead, that they are merely the product of human hands, objects that do not contain any kind of subject (Scribner 1987, 110–14; Christin 1991, 131–38; Maizuls forthcoming). Bruce Lincoln once called this process "profanophany" (in contrast to "theophany"), that is, the appearance of emptiness, the non-divinity of another's holy image (Lincoln 1989, 103–27).

A provocative/playful address to an "idol" is a polysemous gesture. Its meaning fluctuates between testing the power of an image and ritualistically demonstrating its powerlessness; it is directed toward viewers (former or current "idolaters"), but it can simultaneously serve an autosuggestive function. Mustering sufficient resolve to physically attack a religious image (which you revered as recently as yesterday, which others still revere, and which represent religious and political order) requires using mockery to overcome one's fear of them and/or the ensuing violence that prevents one from going back. The similar ritual performed in Usun, with its series of addresses to an image (which ultimately remains silent and does not immediately perform a miracle) is intended not to demonstrate the powerlessness of the statue, but rather to activate its power with a threat. Rituals of "profanophany" such as those practiced by Protestant iconoclasts in the sixteenth century reject the Catholic cult of images by taking its most radical forms to their logical limit.

Martin of Arles condemns blackmail against Saint Peter as simultaneously: (1) superstition; (2) sacrilege; (3) an attempt to tempt God by checking or testing his power; and (4) a sinful enticement, a "scandal." It is a superstition because rather than praying to the Lord for rain, the residents of Usun demanded that their request be fulfilled not by the Creator, but a creation (the statue). By immersing it in water, even when accompanied by Church hymns and chanting, they had gone beyond what is permissible in the realm or reverence toward (images of) saints and actually inflicted an outrage on them (*iniuriam sanctorum*). This same gesture is sacrilege. After all, according to the definition presented by Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica* (2.2.99.1), a physical attack against images of the saints, as well as other holy items, transfers this dishonor from the image to its prototype. Why then does blackmail prove effective, and cause heaven to grant the much-needed rain? Because that rain has been arranged (with God's sanction) by the devil, in order to seduce the people. After all, demons are capable of acting upon bodies and natural

elements, and they often perform pseudo-miracles (Gaztambide 1971, 274–75, 304–14).[18]

If punishment/blackmail directed against saints is sacrilege, then violence engendered by (superstitious) faith in the power of the image belongs in the same category as attacks by followers of other religions, heretic iconoclasts, or Catholic freethinkers, who struck out at images of sacred persons, denying their power or at least attempting to challenge it. Theoretically, sacrilege engendered by an "overabundance" of faith was subject to the same punishment as that engendered by a "deficit." In practice, however, a demonstrative challenge to the entire cult of images (and, through it, a challenge to the power of the clergy, and the practices of salvation on which that power was based) probably provoked a sterner punishment than superstitious "excesses." In an analogous fashion, after the emergence of Protestant iconoclasm, those committed to the struggle against Catholic "idols" who destroyed religious images were punished as heretics, while drunken gamblers who threatened figures of the saints "in the old way" without any accomplices or ideological motives for their actions could count on gentler treatment (see Christin 1999, 18–22). In the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern periods, Catholic Europe did not have a single scale of punishment for physical aggression against religious images. Depending on local laws, the political context, and the social status and reputation of the criminal himself, as well as potential mitigating circumstances (like intoxication), punishments might include Church penances, a monetary fine, wearing a mitre of shame, a public flogging, or even execution by hanging or burning at the stake (see Konnell and Konstebl [Connell and Constable] 2010, 65–69, 77–93).

As has already been shown, the essence of such a crime could be classified as either sacrilege (*sacrilegium*) or blasphemy (*blasphemium*), and the boundary between these concepts was unstable (Konnell and Konstebl [Connell and Constable] 2010, 77–78n3, 90; Christin 1994, 43–64). For example, the legislative code *Las siete partidas* (7, 28, 4–5), created in 1256–1263 during the reign of the king of Castile, Alfonso X the Wise, which was still in effect in Spanish colonies in the New World as late as the Modern Era, characterized physical

18. The idea that any magical procedures (i.e., procedures that are illegitimate, even if they involve the use of Church texts and objects) cannot be effective in and of themselves, but they do "get the job done," that is only thanks to the intervention of demons and an implicit or explicit pact with them, can be found in many demonology tracts from the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods (Ankarloo et al. 2002, 117).

attacks against holy images, from spitting at them, throwing rocks at them or striking them with a knife, as blasphemy. Furthermore, blasphemy in deed was to be punished more directly than verbal insults against sacred persons and objects. Verbal blasphemy by a person who had some kind of property would lead to the confiscation of a fourth of it for a first offense and exile from the city for a third, or, in the case of a person with nothing to take, fifty lashes for a first offense and the severance of his tongue for a third, while the prescribed punishment for blasphemy in deed was exile for a first offense in the case of person with property or the amputation of a hand in the case of a person with nothing to take (Lopez 1843, 4:670; Burns 2001, 5:1448–50).[19] In the sixteenth century, the French jurist Nicolas de Bohier (Boerius) (1469–1539), in his treatise *Decisiones aureae*, refers to those who insult God *de facto*, by spitting or throwing rocks at images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, or the saints, guilty of blasphemy, rather than sacrilege (Bohier 1576, 615–18 [2:245 — On Sacrilege], 749–55 [2:301 — On Blasphemy]). It is no accident that the chapter of Sebastian Brant's satire *The Ship of Fools* (*Das Narrenschiff*, first published in Basel in 1494), which is dedicated to blasphemers, opens with an engraving by Albrecht Dürer, depicting a jester attacking a crucifix with a trident (fig. 5).

It is important to note that the works of both Martin of Arles and the majority of other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors, theologians, and demonologists do not simply condemn blackmail/punishment directed against the saints as superstition and/or blasphemy (sacrilege); they place it in the same category as outright demonic magical practices.[20] For example, Jean Bodin's famous tract "Of the Demon-

19. For more on blasphemers and how they were persecuted in colonial Mexico, see Villa-Flores 2006. The system of different punishments based on the socioeconomic class of the offender was also maintained by the Synods of Florence in 1516–1517. If someone was moved by demonic malevolence to physically threaten an image of Christ or the Virgin Mary and he was a noble, he would have to pay a fine, whereas a common person would be put in chains and forced to wear a "mitre" of shame for three years. In the same situation, a cleric would be forbidden from performing services and suffer a loss of benefices (Konnell and Konstebel [Connell and Constable] 2010, 90).

20. Fifteenth- through seventeenth-century sources, from demonology tracts or texts on superstitions to court records and reports by missionaries, provide many examples of images of saints being appropriated for various magical purposes. For example, the authors of *The Hammer of Witches* (1486) describe how crucifixes would be broken into pieces in order to heal or protect various parts of the body: "Thus, if one wishes to be protected against wounds or blows to the head, he removes the head from an image of

Fig. 5. A symbol of blasphemy: A jester attacks a crucifix. Illustration by Albrecht Dürer to a poem by Sebastian Brant, *The Ship of Fools* (Basel, 1494).

mania of the Sorcerers" (1580) offers several examples of such abuses. The first was drawn from Giovanni Pontano's *History of the Neapolitan War* (1499) (Pontano 1509, book 5). During the conflict (1459–1465) between Neapolitan king Ferdinand I and rebel barons seeking to place John II of Anjou on the throne, royal troops besieged the village of Sessa, which was guarded by the French. Since terrible heat had set in, the besieged people were suffering from a lack of water. The priests (Bodin distorts Pontano's text and calls them "sorcerer-priests") took a crucifix to the shore under the cover of darkness and blasphemously threw it in the water. Furthermore, they fed the consecrated Host to a donkey and buried it alive at the threshold of the Church.[21] Just then,

Christ. One who wishes to protect his neck from wounds takes that same part of the body from the crucifix. One who wishes to have his arm protected rips away the image of the arm from the crucifix, and so on. [. . .] As such, not one of the dozens of images of Christ standing at crossroads is whole" (Shprenger and Institoris 2001, 292, part 2, chapter 16).

21. In France, images of donkeys with the Host in their mouths (or devouring it) often appeared in the modillions of Romanesque churches. Kenaan-Kedar links this story with the Feast of the Ass *(festa asinaria)*, in which the low-ranking clergy held a "mock

a rainstorm began, such a deluge that the Spaniards were forced to lift the siege. According to Bodin, similar practices also existed in France. In 1557, he personally saw children in Toulouse attempting to summon rain by dragging crucifixes and statues to the river at midday; some then dropped holy items down a well. He believed that these simple people had learned this magical practice from sorcerers who were deliberately spreading their pernicious science (Bodin 1586, 193–94).

During the Counter-Reformation, the Catholic Church, faced with Protestant iconophobia and iconoclasm, set about "purging" its cult of images of narratives and practices that were dubious in terms of dogma or morality. The primary ideological guidelines were formulated in 1563 at the twenty-fifth session of the Council of Trent (See *Canones et decreta* 1856, 173–76). This brief outline still had to be developed into a coherent doctrine that would have distinguished genuine (and salvific) images from harmful, heretical ones, and legitimate practices from illegitimate ones. Louvain-based theologian Joannes van der Meulen (Molanus) and Gabriele Paleotti, the archbishop of Bologna, took on this task.

In his treatise *De picturis et imaginibus sacris* (1570), Molanus assigns punishment/blackmail directed against saints to the category of superstition, along with "drowning" religious images (of Saints Peter, Paul, and Urban) or relics (of Saint Felicitas) in order to summon or stop rain, the humiliation of crucifixes and statues during suspensions of services, and the usurpation of church images by sorcerers and witches (Molanus 1570, 57–59. Also see Freedberg 1982, 133–53). In his unfinished text *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre et profane* (1582), Gabriele Paleotti also condemned punishment/blackmail directed against saints as superstition (2:8) and incorporates it into a detailed taxonomy of impermissible images and associated practices. In his system, superstitions are a half-step between contentious images that merely have the potential to lead the viewer to incorrect beliefs, and openly heretical images that propagate false doctrines.[22]

mass" in honor of the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt and selected a Bishop of Fools for the duration of the festival (Kenaan-Kedar 1986, 314, 317–18, 330, fig. 1). According to another, more credible version of the story, the donkey (or, occasionally some kind of monster) with the Host symbolizes those who take communion without believing that it is the body of Christ, and thereby commit blasphemy (Weir 1999, 92, fig. 37a).

22. Paleotti distinguishes (2:3–9) between several types of dubious images: (1) *challenging* (*temerariis*) — when something merely possible is passed off as provably known, although the Church has not given it the stamp of approval (for example, in depictions of the Last Judgment, more priests than monks appear among the righteous); (2) *scandalous* (*scandalosae*) — when heretics who are incapable of refuting Church dogma attack the morals of its clergy and emphasize only the darkest and lowest

Early Modern Catholic intellectuals saw punishment/blackmail directed against saints as one of the excesses of popular religion, as one of the points where the superstitions of simple Christians (who, in their view, were often Christians in name only) blended with the practices of pagans (who had yet to convert to Christianity).[23] In the 1580s, the Jesuit missionary Alessandro Valignano relied on information brought from China by Matteo Ricci, a fellow member of his order, to write that the mandarins did not show very much respect for their idols; the common people, however, prayed to them in temples and in their own homes, but nonetheless insulted them (*y les dizen muchas iniurias*) and even beat (*açotar*) them when they did not answer their requests (*Monumenta Xaveriana* 1899–1900, 1:185–86; Reinders 2004, 195–96; App 2012, 91). An analogous instrumental approach has been attributed to Native Americans. Pierre de Lancre, a theorist and practitioner of witch hunting, wrote in his tract *Tableau de l'inconstance des mauvais anges et démons* (1612) (with a reference to Spanish scholar and missionary José de Acosta) that the Native Americans worshipped their Gods (i.e., demons) devoutly. If their graven images did not answer their prayers, however, they proceeded to beat them, and then fall to their knees and ask for forgiveness (De Lancre 1613, 16). This cycle, from an unanswered request to striking the idol, and from striking it to atonement, is also quite applicable to many descriptions of punishment/blackmail directed against saints by Catholics.

Violence against Images: Between Belief and Unbelief

Historians writing about punishment/blackmail directed against religious images (Richard Trexler used materials from fifteenth- to sixteenth-century Florence, Serge Gruzinski from sixteenth- to seventeenth-century colonial Mexico, Boris Uspensky and Andrei Bulychev from Muscovy in the same period, Elena Smilyanskaya from the eight-

elements of them (by depicting priests with concubines, for example); (3) *erronious* (*erroneae*) — depending on the nature of the error, they can be *monstrous, apocryphal, superstitious,* etc.; (4) *suspect* (*suspectis*) — when, for example, a demon in priestly vestments is baptizing an infant, the viewer might think that a baptism performed by an unsuitable priest is invalid; (5) *heretical* (*haereticis*) — when they uncritically depict objects and practices that are directly condemned by the Catholic Church (a woman performing a mass, someone wrecking sacred images, etc.). See Paleotti 1594, 146–65 (for more on punishment/blackmail — 161); Prodi 2012, 160–72.

23. For example, Michel Le Nobletz (1577–1652), one of the most active missionaries of the French Counter-Reformation, encountered the practice of beating statues of saints when preaching in western Brittany. See Verjus 1666, 184. For more on Catholic discourses associated with internal and external missionary activities in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, see Wanegffelen 2007, 1:259–76.

eenth-century Russian Empire) unanimously indicate that this kind of violence against holy items and intense reverence for them are two sides of the same coin. As Trexler wrote, this violence was based on devoted "friendship." A person invests so much time, money, hope, and self-denial into an image he reveres, only to have it fail to hear him at a difficult moment. He is left disappointed and enraged that "his" Christ, "his" Virgin Mary, or "his" saint did not answer his prayer, did not come to his aid, did not rescue him from his plight, and therefore failed to meet their obligations. As such, he does not take vengeance against *every* Christ or Saint Anthony, but only his own, the one he "knows," the one that let him down. His Christ or Saint Anthony is indissolubly identified with a specific image and its prototype, which acts through that image to accept people's prayers and reveal its power to them (Trexler 1972, 26–29; Gruzinski 1994, 67–68).

Elena Smilyanskya describes this exact phenomenon, but does so on the basis of material from eighteenth-century Russia. According to her, despite Church sermonizing against deifying icons and prohibitions against calling them "gods," "in the consciousness of the common people, the concept of the 'Godhead' was cognized in a purely material sense, most often embodied in an icon." In 1736, soldier Phillip Mandykhin, complaining about the weather, said "yesterday, where God was, it was dry, but now it's wet; I'd like to take God [i.e., the icon — M.M.] and lash him with a whip!" This lack of piety did not stem from doubts about the omnipotence of God, but rather "from the typical, everyday consciousness of the convergence of the sacred with the earthly and the transference of earthly relationships to relationships with the Most High" (Smilyanskaia 2003, 218–19).[24]

Nonetheless, while examining such cases, one must not forget several debatable points. Firstly, blackmail, which entails not only specific demands, but also the hope that they will be met, is sometimes indistinguishable in form from impotent threats or mere outbursts of

24. People pray to icons passionately, humiliate them, or smash them into pieces. This explosive mixture of hope and violence is sometimes presented as a unique feature of (folk) Orthodoxy, with its particular attitude toward images and "deification" of icons. Some trace this unique feature of Orthodoxy back to Byzantine theology, others to ancient Slavic paganism (Uspenskii 1982, 182, 114–15; Bulychev 2005, 167, 170, 172; see Tarasov 1995, 76). This unique feature of (folk) Orthodoxy is, however, clearly greatly exaggerated. As we shall see, analogous or even identical practices also existed in the Catholic world for centuries. The main difference was that, as far as I have been able to determine, these practices of punishment/blackmail directed against icons were never directly legitimized by the Church in medieval Russia.

anger.[25] For some people, threats directed against saints could clearly have been a kind of blasphemous flourish. For example, Count Mario Tolomeo Nerucci, who was denounced to the Spanish Inquisition in 1685, was famously fond of saying "Saint Peter, I will pull out your beard!" at the card table (Barberato 2012, 78).

Secondly, not every threat against a statue or fresco should be taken as evidence of a breach of trust or "argument" with the saint they depict. An identical gesture — (public) humiliation, damage, or destruction inflicted on the figure of a saint — could hide competing and sometimes mutually exclusive feelings. Let us consider three stories:

No. 1. In 1501, a certain Antonio Rinaldeschi was hanged in Florence. His crime was as follows: he lost at dice and despairingly threw a piece of dung at a fresco depicting the Annunciation against the backdrop of a little chapel not far from the taverna where fortune had failed him. After committing his crime, he fled, and when he was finally tracked down and facing arrest, he unsuccessfully attempted to stab himself with a knife. He was ultimately sentenced to death because he had committed several crimes (games of chances, sacrilege, and attempted suicide) and because it would serve as a warning to other evildoers. Rinaldeschi had a nasty reputation, was not known for showing any particular reverence for the Virgin Mary, and committed his act of blasphemy in a fit of anger because he lost at dice (See Konnell and Konstebl [Connell and Constable] 2010; Holmes 2013).

No 2. In 1520, a certain Uli Anders in the village of Utznach in the Canton of Zurich broke a small carved crucifix and threw it out the window. He declared that "there is no sense in idols and that they cannot help with anything." The only thing known about Anders is that he had previously laughed at a cardinal's attendant, telling witnesses that they should revere God in heaven, and not "the body of the lord," that is, he apparently attacked the Catholic doctrine of the mass. The city council of Zurich sentenced him to death for blasphemy. It is unknown if Anders had ever heard the teachings of Martin Luther and

25. Smilyanskya refers to a case involving junior clerk Vassily Gustyshev. He once got drunk with his guests, and when two soldiers appeared to summon him for his service, he flew into a rage, looked at an icon in a metal frame, and proceeded to curse. Different witnesses presented different versions of his words: "if you don't take pity on me, I'll peel you [i.e., remove you from the frame — M.M.] and throw you in a pile of shit!" or "ever since I hung you up, I've known no happiness, and if you don't take pity on me, I'll peel you and smash you to pieces!" (Smilianskaia 2003, 215). It is not always possible to draw a clear line between blackmail and cursing (especially when they clearly blend together in the speaker's own consciousness). Therefore, it is important to know whether the threat remained on the level of words or was actually translated into action.

Ulrich Zwingli, the fathers of the Reformation, but his sacrilegious gesture was probably intended to expose the Catholic cult of images as idolatry (Wandel 2012, 485–86, 488, 495–97).

No. 3. In 1569, the wife of a tailor in Bologna named Andrea Montanari yielded to appeals from her confessor and denounced her husband to the Inquisition. According to her, whenever he was working and a thread broke, he would instantly explode with filthy blasphemy. At one point, when yet another needle failed him, he ripped a paper image of the Madonna from the wall and threw it in the fire, and then shredded and burned another paper icon depicting Christ on the cross with the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene nearby. He threatened that if the thread broke again, he would wipe his ass with the Virgin Mary. He also threatened that he wanted to buy [an image of] Christ and bake it in the oven like a pretzel. According to her testimony, Andrea never once went to confession or took the sacraments during the sixteen years of their marriage (Scaramella 2007, 55–70).

An ideologically motivated Protestant iconoclast breaks a Catholic crucifix or a statue of one of the saints in order to demonstrate the emptiness and powerlessness of the "idol," while a Catholic who does so is enraged by the fact that the higher powers have not helped him and he hopes to take revenge against the power contained in that image. The first strives to destroy the system at its foundation; for him, the Catholic cult of images is idolatry. The second recognizes that system and is simply angry that it did not work in his particular case. Is it not, however, those who are still not convinced of the power of the saints or the effectiveness of images who are prone to this practice of punishment?

There is certainly a boundary between a moment of vexation at a lack of help from a heavenly patron and doubts regarding their power as such, between situational non-belief in the power of one particular statue and a rejection of the cult of images, but it is sometimes fluid. After all, believing in the saints, like believing in God, simultaneously means believing that they exist and believing in them in the sense of investing one's hope in them. One can believe in the reality of heavenly patrons, but lose faith in the idea that they care for people; entertain the idea that they are benevolent toward others but lose personal hope in them; stop praying to them and decide that they do not exist; assert that they do not exist in the hope that they will make their presence felt; worship while feeling (knowing, fearing . . .) that one's requests are disappearing into the void, and so on. Some individuals, such as freethinkers and religious nonconformists, attack altars and

statues not out of hostility against particular heavenly protectors, but to go through them to settle accounts with the Church and its clergy, whose power over people is based on holy items and the redemptive practices structured around them.

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Andrey Shishkov

Two Ecumenisms: Conservative Christian Alliances as a New Form of Ecumenical Cooperation

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An upsurge in Orthodox anti-ecumenical criticism in 2016 has raised the question of the current state of ecumenism. Examining this topic, the author describes a new form of ecumenical activity associated with the emergence of conservative Christian alliances in defense of traditional values. This "conservative ecumenism," or "Ecumenism 2.0," differs from the "classical ecumenism" that arose in the early twentieth century and that continues to be represented today by the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical institutions. The author considers the phenomenon of "ecumenical consciousness" and demonstrates that it can be found in both types of ecumenism. Some of the Orthodox anti-ecumenists who attack classical ecumenism, however, may eagerly opt for this new, conservative "Ecumenism 2.0." This article discusses the possible competition between the two types of ecumenisms.

Keywords: anti-ecumenism, conservatism, conservative Christian alliances, ecumenical movement, Russian Orthodox Church, traditional values, World Council of Churches, the Christian Right, World Congress of Families.

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Eastern Orthodox Anti-Ecumenism in 2016

In the Orthodox Church, the first half of 2016 was noteworthy for an upsurge in anti-ecumenical fervor that was unprecedented in scope. In late January and early February of 2016, the Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Church published pre-conciliar documents, which they intended to be reviewed and confirmed at the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, scheduled to be held in June 2016, at Pentecost (Holy and Great Council 2016a). This publication — primarily the document "Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World" — served as the impetus for the critical anti-ecumenical declarations (Holy and Great Council 2016b).

The Orthodox hierarchy did not expect such anti-ecumenical declarations in the first half of 2016. During the course of the official, pan-Orthodox, pre-conciliar process, the attitudes toward ecumenism and toward the non-Orthodox were some of the least contentious issues. The project for formulating the document "Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World" was not considered problematic, and it was one of the first documents unanimously approved at the Fifth Pan-Orthodox Pre-conciliar Conference in October 2015.[1] The following February, the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church familiarized itself with the pre-conciliar documents and stated that in their current form, they "do not violate the purity of the Orthodox faith and do not deviate from the canonical tradition of the Church" (Bishops' Council, 2016).

Subsequent anti-ecumenical statements came from believers (not only clerics and laity, but also several bishops) in various regions of the Orthodox *oikoumene* — Russia, Ukraine, Moldavia, Greece, Georgia, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania. The intensity of the criticism mounted as the date of the pan-Orthodox Council's opening session drew near. In some local Orthodox churches, anti-ecumenical declarations influenced the official position with respect to the Council's documents and became one of the arguments (though not the primary argument) brought forward by ecclesiastical leaders of those churches for their withdrawal from the Council.[2]

1. The participants at the Fifth Pan-Orthodox Pre-conciliar Conference did not reach immediate consensus on the following documents: "The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today's World," "The Orthodox Diaspora," and "The Sacrament of Marriage and Its Impediments." The Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Church only passed these documents at the end of January 2016, the latter document without unanimity (see Gusev 2016).
2. In the two weeks preceding the Pan-Orthodox Council, five out of the fourteen local Orthodox churches refused to participate in the Council: the Bulgarian Patriarchate

At the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, which was held in Crete on June 18–27, 2016, and in which only ten of the fourteen autocephalous local churches ultimately participated, a discussion ensued concerning the document on the Orthodox Church's relationship with the rest of the Christian world. As a result of that discussion, they inserted into the document substantial amendments that took anti-ecumenical criticisms into account. Yet, the newly inserted amendments still did not satisfy a segment of the bishops participating in the Council. Twenty-one of the 161 bishops present did not sign the document. Although Serbian Patriarch Irinej signed the document, seventeen of the twenty-five Serbian bishops (a full 68 percent of the Serbian Church's delegation) did not sign the document (Holy and Great Council 2016c).[3] After the Council, some well-regarded Orthodox bishops hastened to explain why they chose not to sign the "ecumenical document."[4] Thus, the anti-ecumenical mood exerted an influence on conciliar decisions.

Patriarch Kirill's "first-in-history" meeting with Pope Francis in Havana, Cuba, which resulted in a joint declaration signed by the primates of the two churches in February 2016, became an additional factor that heightened an anti-ecumenical mood in the Russian Orthodox Church (Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill 2016). Some believers deemed the meeting tantamount to apostasy, an inroad into ecclesiastical fellowship with a heretic, and finally, a betrayal of the Orthodox Church.[5] The situation repeated itself in October 2016, when Patriarch Kirill met with Justin Welby, the archbishop of Canterbury (Semenko

(June 1, 2016); the Antiochian Patriarchate (June 6); the Serbian Patriarchate (June 9); the Georgian Patriarchate (June 10); and the Moscow Patriarchate (June 13). Yet, the Serbian Church changed its decision on June 15, 2016, and its representatives did actually participate in the Council. Criticism of the Council's document on relations with the remaining Christian world is present in the written decisions of the Bulgarian Synod, the Antiochian Synod, the Georgian Synod, and the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church. For a chronicle of the preparations for the Council and critical commentary on all documents, see the special project of the "Rublev Portal" (2016).

3. The fact that the majority of the episcopal members of the Serbian delegation spoke out against the document calls into question the Serbian delegation's approval of the document. This, therefore, places the Council's confirmation of this document into doubt, since the Council's documents should have been unanimously approved.

4. See, for example, the texts of Irinej Bulović, bishop of Bačka (2016), and Hierotheos (Vlachos), metropolitan of Nafpaktos and Agios Vlasios (2016).

5. Father Dmitrii Nenarokov (2016) provided a characteristic example of a reaction to the meeting: "They [those at the Moscow Patriarchate] have openly betrayed us. They have given us over, like a dumb flock, to the papist heretics, to the disfavored and spiritually helpless whom the powers of Mammon have exclusively guided and led for a millennia. They have given us over to prison." See also Boiko-Velikii and Khomiakov (2016).

2016). In addition, it is highly possible that the pressure of anti-ecumenical criticism led to the cancellation of the World Summit in Defense of the Persecuted Church (to be discussed further below), originally scheduled to have taken place in Moscow in October 2016.

The upsurge in Orthodox anti-ecumenism has again raised the question of the Orthodox Church's rationale and objectives for interconfessional ecumenical cooperation. Such a strident reaction to ecumenism among a portion of Orthodox believers testifies to the fact that the ecumenical paradigm of cooperation between churches has ceased to be convincing, thereby requiring a new explanation for the reasons the Orthodox Church is entering into cooperative relations with other Christian communities.

Classical Ecumenism

Attacks on the part of anti-ecumenists are related to a particular phenomenon that arose in the early twentieth century and exists to this day: *the ecumenical movement*. Today, the ecumenical movement is represented primarily by the activity of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and regional ecumenical organizations (e.g., the Conference of European Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches, and the All Africa Conference of Churches), as well as by ecclesiastical institutions and foundations that are affiliated with these ecumenical organizations and that work for social justice and the defense of human rights. In this article, I will call the entire complex of these entities *classical ecumenism*.

The innovation and revolutionary nature of the ecumenical movement as a form of interconfessional cooperation is linked with the turn toward an acknowledgment of Christians' commonality, whatever their confessional affiliation. On principle, ecumenism has rejected the language that defined Christians of other confessions with the negative terms of "heresies" and "schisms," countering this with the language of Christians' positive recognition of one another and of the proclamation of the necessity for Christian unity. This new mutual openness of Christians has ruled out proselytism — that is, the particular form of missionary activity connected with concerted efforts toward the conversion of a Christian from one confession to another. The idea of openness has also led to the advent of a particular ecumenical form of Christian universalism, which understands universality not through one's belonging to "the true church" (as in Catholicism and Orthodoxy), but through one's belonging to a trans-confessional community that shares common positions on Christian faith. The turn toward openness and to-

ward the recognition of one another has produced the phenomenon of an "ecumenical consciousness," whose proponents have actively participated in the movement for the unification of Christians and promoted the ecumenical cause within their confessional communities.

The World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910 is traditionally considered the beginning of the ecumenical movement (Kinnamon and Cope 1997, 1), but separate "proto-ecumenical" initiatives had taken place even earlier (Oldstone-Moore 2001). Since a rich body of literature is dedicated to the history of the ecumenical movement (Rouse and Neill 1993; 2004; Briggs, Oduyoye, and Tsetsis 2004), there is no need to cover these events in detail here. Ecumenism emerged out of separate initiatives whose participants originally pursued different objectives, but then came to a united framework and ideology. In 1992, Konrad Raiser, the WCC's fifth general secretary, described this process as follows:

> The ecumenical movement came into being at the start of this century because a few people had a vision of the future of church and society. This vision was expressed in different terms. John R. Mott was guided by the goal of the evangelization of the world in this generation;[6] Nathan Söderblom was inspired by the belief in the universal character of the church and sought to establish international friendship through evangelical catholicity;[7] Archbishop Germanos spoke of the need to supplement the emerging League of Nations by a league (*koinonia*) of the churches;[8] and lastly, Bishop Brent envisioned the possibility of achieving unity among the separate churches through careful theological dialogue.[9] The movement did not gain its full momentum, however, until they discovered that these were only different expressions of one integrated vision concerning the calling of the whole church to bring the whole gospel to the whole world. (Raiser [1992] 1997, 71)

6. John Raleigh Mott (1865–1955) was the long-term leader of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the founder and general secretary of the World Student Christian Federation, and the president of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946.
7. Nathan Söderblom (1866–1931), the archbishop of Uppsala, was the founder of the Life and Work Movement. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1930.
8. Germanos Strinopoulos (1872–1951), the metropolitan of Thyateira, was exarch of Western and Central Europe for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the likely author of the 1920 Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.
9. Charles Henry Brent (1862–1929), the bishop of the Episcopal Church's Diocese of Western New York, was one of the founders of the Faith and Order Movement and the chairman of the 1927 Faith and Order Conference in Lausanne.

Raiser's summary indicates two basic impulses that were present at the beginning of classical ecumenism: (1) the movement toward the union of Christian churches, and (2) the pursuit of the transformation of the world on the basis of gospel witness.

The ecumenical movement arose out of the need for demonstrated Christian unity and for coordinated efforts in the face of a modern secular world. At the Edinburgh conference, participants were already actively discussing the theme of the criticism addressed against Christianity in relation to the fierce competitive battle "for souls" then underway between Christian churches in non-Christian countries, that is, on the mission field. In the ensuing years, two world wars, the spread of communism and fascism in Europe, a worldwide economic crisis, colonial expansion followed by rapid decolonization, the Cold War and its adversarial blocs, secularism and atheism, and so forth, became further challenges to world Christianity (Kinnamon and Cope 1997, 3).[10] All of these events demanded a Christian response, each in turn addressing its dependence upon another objective — the union of churches[11] (see the classical texts of the founders of the ecumenical movement: Mott [1910] 1997, 10–11; Söderblom [1925] 1997, 15–17; Temple [1937] 1997, 17–21). Without ecclesiastical unity, consensus-based Christian activity is impossible. What is more, classical ecumenism understands the union of churches to be a restoration of the *visible* unity of the faith, of sacramental life, and of a witness to the world concerning Christianity (Fitzgerald 2004, 1; World Council of Churches 2013).

The ecumenical movement has considered the union of churches and the active transformation of the world to be aspects of a common, two-fold objective. In the early stages of the development of ecumenism, separate movements were able to focus their activity on one of these aspects, while not forgetting about the second. Thus, the Faith and Order Movement primarily conducted studies on the theological conditions for unification, whereas the Life and Work Movement stud-

10. Eugene Carson Blake ([1965] 1997, 37–38), who was appointed general secretary of the WCC in 1966, said: "How easy it is for all of us to turn our backs upon the door to Christian unity and to busy ourselves with our denominational games, nourished by our past prejudices, and at a moment when the divisions of the beleaguered church militant are crying for the unified command of Jesus Christ to withstand the forces of atheism, skepticism, hatred, and confusion with which the church is faced."

11. This phrase can also be translated "the unification of churches," which seems to be a somewhat common translation of the phrase among Orthodox commentators. Since the wider ecumenical movement seems to utilize the phrase "union of churches" more frequently, however, the translator has chosen to render this phrase as such. In the rest of the article, the term "unification" is occasionally still used, based upon context. –Translator

ied issues of cooperative social responsibility. After the merger of the separate ecumenical initiatives into the World Council of Churches in 1948, both aspects of this dual objective have continued to exist basically unchanged within its agenda.

Danish scholar Peter Lodberg (1999, 529) calls ecumenism a modernist project, namely "a Christian expression of Modernism." The ecumenical movement seeks to overcome the particularism of separate traditions and to become a genuinely universal "represent[ation of] the whole world (the *oikoumene*)" (Lodberg 1999, 528, emphasis modified). At various historical stages, the participants in the movement have understood this universalism in various ways. According to Raiser ([1992] 1997, 71), classical ecumenism initially "focused on the assumption that Christian culture and Christian values could be extended throughout the world." The events of the 1930s and the Second World War, in which "the Christian 'civilized' parts of humanity" took part, forced the founders of classical ecumenism to reevaluate this viewpoint. Raiser ([1992] 1997, 71) continued, "It was progressively replaced by the notion of salvation history as the inner meaning of world history." An ideational "transition from international order based on Christian values to universal history centred in Christ" then took place (Raiser [1992] 1997, 71). According to Raiser ([1992] 1997, 71), the WCC's 1968 General Assembly in Uppsala, Sweden, "with its underlying 'motif' of the unity of the church and the unity of humankind, mark[ed] the culmination" of this idea.

As the ecumenical movement spread to the South and to the East (i.e., to the countries of Africa and Asia), elements of post-colonialism began to make their way into classical ecumenism. The admission of new members into the movement was accompanied by a recognition of the value of each new member's distinctive character. Ecumenism became more and more pluralistic and inclusive in its essential tenets. According to Michael Kinnamon and Brian E. Cope (1997, 4), ecumenism has been under the powerful influence of accumulated pluralistic experience since 1968: "Until 1968 (or thereabouts), diversity was seen more as a problem to be resolved than as a characteristic of genuine unity." This pluralistic experience found its expression in the idea of "unity in diversity," which became an integral part of classical ecumenism by the 1970s and 1980s.

Aside from regional diversity, ecumenism also began to recognize a diversity of social groups, such as women, sexual minorities, ethnic minorities, and so on. Feminist theology, black theology, queer theology, as well as other types of theology found support within the confines of the ecumenical movement. From the perspective of Lodberg

(1999, 529), following Hans Küng, the inclusion of such "theologies of particularity" within the ecumenical movement involves the return to a particularism that undermines the initial universalistic ecumenical ideal. Consequently, the pluralistic approach expressed through the principle of "unity in diversity" concomitantly becomes a form of postmodern criticism of the modern ecumenical project that had reached the peak of its development in the 1960s.

In ecumenical methodology, the affirmation of the idea of "unity in diversity" has provoked a crisis of understanding for ecclesiastical unity. How possible is unity in the context of the ever-increasing growth of pluralism and inclusivity? "The decisive move from the static concept of unity to the dynamic notion of communion/koinonia" has become an alternative for overcoming this crisis (Raiser [1992] 1997, 70). In the early 1990s, the WCC's Faith and Order Commission initiated an ecclesiological study of this topic, with its final results presented in 2013 at the Tenth General Assembly in Busan, South Korea, in the document "The Church: Towards a Common Vision" (World Council of Churches 2013; on the history of this document, see Mateus 2015). As before, the document declares the goal of a visible union of churches, but the actual unity of "the Church as Communion" is described in increasingly eschatological terms (World Council of Churches 2013). This document also brings up the problem of defining the boundaries of "legitimate diversity," but it does not suggest any kind of resolution (World Council of Churches 2013, 16–17).

As for the social aspect of classical ecumenism, the idea of "unity in diversity" has led to a significant liberalization of the ecumenical movement's agenda. The WCC's principal areas of focus now include the struggle for social justice, the opposition to various forms of discrimination, and the defense of minority rights.[12]

Orthodox Christians in the Ecumenical Movement

It would be wrong to call the project of classical ecumenism "uniform." A conservative wing — in which Orthodox Christians, who have participated in the ecumenical movement from the very beginning, have played a key role — has always existed alongside the modernistic core.[13] The Orthodox position has always differed from the ecumeni-

12. See, for example, the section "What we do" on the WCC's official website (https://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do).

13. Non-Chalcedonians (or Oriental Orthodox) and Roman Catholics (in those capacities in which they participate) are also conservatives in the ecumenical movement.

cal mainstream in both its approach to the union of churches and its attitude toward the modern world.

At the 1927 World Conference on Faith and Order in Lausanne, Switzerland, Orthodox delegates formulated the basic principles of participation in the Faith and Order Movement.[14] Evaluating the ecumenical initiative largely positively, Orthodox participants, in a separate statement, set forth the impossibility of compromise on issues of faith and unification on the grounds of unity in secondary matters:

> We cannot entertain the idea of a reunion that is confined to a few common points of verbal statement; for according to the Orthodox Church where the totality of faith is absent there can be no *communio in sacris*. Nor can we here apply the principle of *economy,* which in the past the Orthodox Church has applied under quite other circumstances in the case of those who came to her with a view to union with her. (Ecumenical Patriarchate [1927] 1994, 13–14; see also Bulgakov 1928)

Throughout the entire history of Orthodox Christians' participation in the ecumenical movement, they have viewed the question of the union of churches through the prism of "the most speedy and objective clarification possible of the whole ecclesiological question, and most especially of their more general teachings on [the] sacraments, grace, [the] priesthood, and apostolic succession" (Holy and Great Council 2016c).[15] They regard the method of union alternatively, as well. Since it is permissible from the Orthodox point of view to call only the Orthodox Church "the Church," in the strictest sense of the word, the union of churches must be understood as reunion with the Orthodox

14. Nikolai Arsen'ev (1888–1977), a participant in the Lausanne Conference, wrote: "The following people represented the Orthodox Church: Metropolitan Germanos of Thyateira and three other individuals from the Ecumenical Patriarchate; the Archbishop of Leontopolis and the Metropolitan of Nubia from the Alexandrian Patriarchate; the Metropolitan of Nafpaktos and three professors from the Department of Theology at the University of Athens, from the Churches of Greece and Cyprus; the Archbishop of Chernivtsi from the Romanian Orthodox Church; the Bishop of Novi Sad from the Serbian Church; Metropolitan Stefan of Sofia (a great ally to Russia and the Russian Church); the Proto-deacon and Professor Father Tsankov and Professor Glubokovskii from the Bulgarian Church; Metropolitan Dionysius of Warsaw and Archpriest Turkevich from the Orthodox Church of Poland. No representatives were able to represent the Russian Church, per se, but Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris, Father Sergius Bulgakov, and the one writing this text [Nikolai Arsen'ev] were co-opted into the Organizing Committee" (Arsen'ev 1928, 101–2).

15. The basic elements of this position are evident throughout the entire history of Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement.

Church. That being said, those Orthodox Christians who are engaged in the ecumenical movement acknowledge the commonality of Christians and the necessity for union, reject proselytism, and refuse to employ the language of "heresies and schisms."[16] In this sense, they are clearly bearers of an ecumenical consciousness.

Keeping in mind the Orthodox position and taking into account the prospect of incorporating the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement, the WCC adopted the document "The Church, the Churches, and the World Council of Churches" at its Central Committee meeting in Toronto in 1950. In particular, the Toronto statement asserted that "no church need fear that by entering into the World Council it is in danger of denying its heritage,"[17] and that "membership [in the WCC] does not imply that each church must regard the other member churches as churches in the true and full sense of the word" (World Council of Churches [1950] 1997, 468, 467). Given how frequently Orthodox bishops quote these statements in their presentations and how copiously they have been included within all key Orthodox documents concerning the stance toward the non-Orthodox and the ecumenical movement, one could claim that, to this day, the Orthodox churches persist in 1950s positions with respect to questions of the union of churches.[18]

That notwithstanding, one must distinguish the position of local Orthodox churches from that of the Orthodox theologians "professionally" engaged in the work of ecumenical institutions, some of whose contributions have been quite substantial. For example, in many respects, the concept of "unity in diversity" relies on the theology of John Zizioulas, the metropolitan of Pergamon under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, whose speech "Church as Communion" at the Fifth World Conference for the WCC's Faith and Order Commission exemplifies this perspective (Zizioulas [1993] 2010).

16. In its language, the ecumenical document "Basic Principles of [the Russian Orthodox Church's] Attitude to the Non-Orthodox" employed the terms "heresy" or "schism" in the context of the history of the ancient Church without referring to any specific "heretical" or "schismatic" communities (Russian Orthodox Church 2000). The Pan-Orthodox Council's document on relations with the rest of the Christian world did not use these terms at all (Holy and Great Council 2016b).

17. The official Russian translation of this phrase is rendered: "Upon entering into the WCC, no church is required to change its ecclesiology." –Translator

18. For example, one encounters citations from this part of the Toronto statement in the Pan-Orthodox Council's ecumenical document (Holy and Great Council 2016b), as well as in an appendix of the Russian Orthodox Church's document on relations to the non-Orthodox (Russian Orthodox Church 2000).

As for the modern world, the Orthodox position also seems rather conservative. In their early texts, one encounters a motif of opposition to the antagonistic modern world that was threatening "the very foundations of the Christian faith and the very essence of Christian life and society" (Ecumenical Patriarchate [1920] 1997, 13). The increasing activity of the WCC and its affiliated institutions in socio-political issues has constantly elicited dismay among Orthodox Christians (see, for example, Metropolitan Nikolai [1958] 1999; Metropolitan Nikodim [1968] 1978; Ecumenical Patriarchate [1973] 1994). In addition, Orthodox Christians regard the ever-growing pluralism and inclusiveness in the WCC as a manifestation of liberalism.

An ever-increasing tension has arisen between the Orthodox members with their characteristic conservatism and the Protestant members who constitute the core of the liberally minded movement, especially in moral questions. The Georgian Orthodox Church and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church withdrew from the World Council of Churches in 1997 and 1998, respectively. A skepticism concerning the objectives for participation in the ecumenical movement is fueling an anti-ecumenical mood within a greater portion of the Orthodox Church.

A Shifting Objective: From Union to Cooperation

The spread of ecumenical experience has led to the formulation of an ecumenical consciousness, not only among "professionals" engaged in the activity of ecumenical institutions and among activists who support the ecumenical ideal, but also among simple believers in congregations, parishes, and dioceses, as well as in universities and seminaries. This ecumenical consciousness has expressed itself particularly in the organization of collaborative activity concerning social issues, in collective prayer campaigns, in joint asceticism, and so on. In the university environment, projects that draw together theologians of various confessions have begun to emerge. The Catholic Church's pivot toward ecumenism after the Second Vatican Council played a huge role in the "trickle down" of ecumenical ideas to the grassroots level. In many European countries, the Catholics actually became the main partners for ecumenically minded Protestants in interconfessional cooperation at the parish and diocesan level. The recognition of each other as Christians and the refusal to proselytize or to employ the language of "heresies and schisms" became the basis for this ecumenical collaboration.

Meanwhile, with the widening of ecumenical cooperation, the initial and main objective established by the ecumenical movement —

the union of Churches — has gradually begun to recede into the background or to disappear altogether. Several factors explain this. Participants in "grassroots" ecumenical initiatives could not set unifying goals for themselves, since such goals fall within the purview of the leadership of the institutional churches whose representatives have participated in bilateral or multilateral theological dialogues in order to clarify conditions for union, rather than within the purview of parish- or diocesan-level ecclesiastical superiors. Correspondingly, inter-parish and inter-diocesan ecumenical cooperation has centered on altogether different questions. The Catholic Church has made its own contribution to the relativization of the unifying ideal. On the one hand, it was actively involved in ecumenical collaboration from the late 1960s. On the other hand, it has not become a member of the WCC and maintains a distinctive position on questions of unification.[19]

Additional reasons elucidate the fading of the unifying ideal into the background. For some, the union of churches has ceased to be relevant, since the ecumenical experience of recognizing the commonality of Christians has allowed them to take communion together, which in and of itself already testifies to the realization of unification (as in the case of the participants of the Hartford meetings, to be discussed further below). Conversely, having observed the crisis of the ecumenical movement in the 1980s and 1990s, others have become disenchanted with the possibility of a true union of churches, but have still continued their work on interconfessional cooperation concerning other issues that are not tied to the topic of unification.

In 1989, at the height of the crisis of classical ecumenism, the American Lutheran theologian George Lindbeck (1989) published an article in which he observed the emergence of a form of ecumenism that did not concern itself with the objective of the union of churches. He called this ecumenism "interdenominational," in contrast with

19. Initially, the Roman Catholic Church related rather coldly to the ecumenical movement. However, the *aggiornamento* of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) changed the situation. In 1964, the Second Vatican Council approved the decree on ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio* (Vatican 1964a). In 1969, Pope John VI visited the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, where he gave a speech. Yet, the Roman Catholic Church did not become a member of the WCC; its representatives sit on the Council only as observers. In particular, the Catholic documents on ecclesiology — the dogmatic constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* (Vatican 1964b) and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's declaration *Dominus Iesus* (Vatican 2000) — testify clearly that, despite its openness to the ecumenical movement, the Catholic Church understands ecumenism as a reunion of Christian churches and communities with the Catholic Church. Catholic universalism runs counter to the WCC's universalism in which Catholics are merely one part of the Christian world and the "Worldwide Church."

"unitive" ecumenism. Lindbeck claims that these two forms of ecumenism run counter to one another in all spheres of church life. What is more, in his opinion (as expressed in the late 1980s), "interdenominational" ecumenism was then making progress, while "unitive" ecumenism was on the wane (Lindbeck 1989, 647).

Classical ecumenism's transition from a paradigm of static "unity as union" to a paradigm of dynamic "unity as communion (*koinonia*)" at the end of the 1980s could be perceived as an attempt to preserve the unifying objective in the absence of any prospects for true unification in the foreseeable future. Given that ecumenical documents today describe *koinonia* primarily in eschatological terms (in other words, it has been relegated beyond human history), one could assert that a true union of churches remains merely a stated objective in the ecumenical movement.

The Hartford Appeal for Theological Affirmation

One significant ecumenical project that took place outside the confines of the official ecumenical movement was the "Appeal for Theological Affirmation" (1975) a document drawn up in Hartford, Connecticut (USA), and signed by twenty-five American Christian intellectuals in 1975. The Hartford Appeal is significant, because in a certain sense it is the forerunner for the current conservative ecumenical initiative, to be discussed further below. The American sociologist of religion and Lutheran theologian, Peter Berger (b. 1929), and the priest and theologian Richard John Neuhaus (1936–2009) initiated the Hartford Appeal.[20] Among the signatories were Avery Dulles (1918–2008, later a Catholic cardinal), George Lindbeck (b. 1923), Stanley Hauerwas (b. 1940), Richard Mouw (b. 1940), George Forell (1919–2011), and others. In addition, Orthodox Christians — including priests Alexander Schmemann (1921–1983) and Thomas Hopko (1939–2015), as well as Dr. Ileana Marculescu — also signed the Hartford Appeal ("Appeal" 1975, 41).[21]

The appeal stated its objective as "the renewal of Christian witness and mission" ("Appeal" 1975, 39). The document presented thirteen "pervasive themes" formulated in a secular key which, according to the authors of the declaration, "are superficially attractive, but

20. At the time of the Hartford Appeal, Neuhaus was a Lutheran pastor. In 1990, he converted to Catholicism, and he became a Catholic priest in 1991.

21. Of the Orthodox signatories, only Schmemann participated in all face-to-face meetings in discussion of the Appeal's text.

upon closer examination we find these themes false and debilitating to the Church's life and work" ("Appeal" 1975, 39). Responses to these themes were then given in the form of refutations, such as:

> ***Theme 3****: Religious language refers to human experience and nothing else, God being humanity's noblest creation.*
> Religion is also a set of symbols and even of human projections. We repudiate the assumption that it is nothing but that. What is here at stake is nothing less than the reality of God: *We did not invent God; God invented us* ("Appeal" 1975, 39).
> . . .
> ***Theme 6****: To realize one's potential and to be true to oneself is the whole meaning of salvation.*
> Salvation contains a promise of human fulfillment, but to identify salvation with human fulfillment can trivialize the promise. We affirm that salvation cannot be found apart from God ("Appeal" 1975, 40).

The appeal became a response not only to secularists, but also to Christian theologians who took a radical modernist position (in the spirit of "death of God" theology or of Harvey Cox's *Secular City*). In this sense, the Hartford Appeal was a conservative Christian manifesto. According to Schmemann (1976, 132), the Appeal was a reaction to "the alarming surrender of religion to culture, to the pervasive secularism of the modern world, and, as a consequence of that surrender, to the 'loss of transcendence.'"

The Hartford Appeal's preamble states, "Today an apparent loss of a sense of the transcendent is undermining the Church's ability to address with clarity and courage the urgent tasks to which God calls it in the world" ("Appeal" 1975, 39). According to Schmemann (2011, 573), the Appeal's authors, who were not official representatives of their churches, nevertheless understood their work as a proposal directed to the whole Church, regardless of confessional differences. Schmemann (1976, 128–32) identified his own experience participating in the Hartford meetings as ecumenical, comparing it to his experience in the official ecumenical movement.[22]

Significantly, the Hartford Appeal, as an ecumenical initiative, completely ignores the issue of the division or union of churches. It is ful-

22. In addition to Schmemann, fellow signatory George Lindbeck also had experience in "classical ecumenism" as a member of the Joint Lutheran-Roman Catholic Study Commission since 1968.

ly focused on collaboration between Christians as a response to the threat from the modern secular world. This absence of the "classical" ecumenical problematic troubled Schmemann greatly. Since he was a "classical ecumenist" with nearly thirty years of service in events held by the WCC and its affiliated institutions (beginning in 1948), Schmemann (1976, 128) felt "an inner distance" and "a certain inner *dédoublement*" at Hartford. In his article within a collection of personal reflections of the Appeal's participants, Schmemann (1976) constantly returns to the question of division/union. By all accounts, other participants considered this problem completely irrelevant and, in a certain sense, already resolved. (It would be better to say that they simply removed the issue from the agenda.) The participants in the Hartford meetings not only prayed together during the liturgy, but they even took communion together, despite the fact that they belonged to different confessions.[23] It is nonetheless significant that the vast majority of them were conservatives.[24]

The Hartford initiative bore fruit. In 1990, Neuhaus founded the Institute on Religion and Public Life, which began to publish the journal *First Things*. This journal would become one of the most authoritative conservative Christian publications in the United States. The stated objective for the Institute and the journal is "to confront the ideology of secularism."[25] Some participants in the Hartford Appeal, as well as representatives of other confessions who have come together by way of shared conservative values, are frequent contributors to *First Things*.[26]

Conservative Christian Alliances as "Ecumenism 2.0"

Scholars of religion today are paying more and more attention to the theme of "conservative Christian alliances" that are forming around

23. In Alexander Schmemann's (2002, 85–86) journal entry on September 7, 1975, he writes: "I spent two days in meetings with the Hartford Group. This morning there was a Mass, at which all eighteen participants took communion, except me. Most of the eighteen are conservative Christians from other confessions. Then what is the division of the churches and what other unity do they seek?" Father Avery Dulles conducted the Mass.

24. According to Richard Mouw (2015), one of the signatories of the Hartford Appeal, William Sloane Coffin (1924–2006) "later repudiated it," which reportedly did not surprise the other participants. Coffin, a long-time peace activist, later became a defender of rights for sexual minorities.

25. "About *First Things*," *First Things*: https://www.firstthings.com/about/ (accessed March 13, 2017).

26. For example, Peter Berger frequently writes for *First Things*, including the well-known article, "Secularization Falsified" (Berger 2008).

the fight for "traditional values."[27] These alliances amount to a different sort of ecumenical cooperation, with "the goal of conservative Christian political domination" by way of advocating for common "traditional values" (Stroop 2016, 21).[28] In its very conception, such interconfessional cooperation is ecumenical, in that it is built upon its participants' mutual recognition of Christian commonality and relies upon accumulated ecumenical experience. Conservative Christian alliances have absolutely no connection with the classical ecumenism of the World Council of Churches (which one might call a "liberal Christian alliance" by analogy, in view of the particular nature of the approach toward questions here being examined) and propose a parallel ecumenical network, allowing us to designate it as "Ecumenism 2.0."

The fight for "traditional values" is associated with "a shift away from a situation where certain aspects of social life are unquestioned (the heterosexual definition of marriage, the simultaneous worldly and religious meaning of Christmas) to a situation where these aspects undergo re-evaluation" (Stoeckl 2016, 103). Conservative religious actors define this shift as an attack on religion from global secularism and liberalism. The agenda of conservative ecumenism includes the questions of the traditional family (anti-LGBT), the sanctity of life (against abortion, euthanasia, and in vitro fertilization), and religious liberty (for religious symbolism in public spaces) (Stoeckl 2016, 104). The interconfessional partnership between various pro-life movements and the activity of such organizations as the World Congress of Families (WCF) constitute institutionalized forms of conservative ecumenical cooperation.[29]

The WCF is a non-governmental organization that works to defend the traditional family. As American scholars Doris Buss and Didi Herman (2003, xxix) point out, although the WCF does not emphasize its Christian background, it is intimately connected with the Christian Right in the USA, particularly with the Howard Center for Family, Religion, and Society, whose president Allan Carlson founded the WCF in 1997. Buss and Herman (2003, xviii) define the Christian Right as "a broad range of American organizations that have tended to form co-

27. Of particular note is the five-year research project "Postsecular Conflicts," which an international group of scholars is carrying out under the direction of Kristina Stoeckl at the University of Innsbruck in Austria. Stoeckl (2016) gave a lecture at the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, where she provided an informal description of this project.

28. In my opinion, Chris Stroop's use of the term "bad ecumenism" is too judgmental and does not adequately assess this phenomenon.

29. On the establishment of the pro-life movement in the USA, see Maxwell (2002).

alitions, both domestic and international, around an orthodox Christian vision and a defense of the traditional nuclear family formation," which they refer to as the "natural family."

The activity of the WCF and of pro-life movements are organizationally reminiscent of the ecumenical movement in the early twentieth century, such as the "Faith and Order Commission" and the "Life and Work Commission," which also held joint conferences and public demonstrations, such as joint declarations and petitions and prayer campaigns in which representatives of various Christian confessions participated. In contrast to classical ecumenism, however, one can hardly expect a unification of all conservative ecumenical movements into one organization along the lines of the World Council of Churches, since conservatives do not have a unifying objective. Like the ecumenical movement in the early twentieth century, organizations for the defense of traditional values have emerged as private initiatives, rather than as projects of institutional churches. Moreover, these conservative organizations and movements (much like their ecumenical counterparts in the early twentieth century) seek to recruit church leaders to their cause. For example, the WCF invited the head of the Georgian Orthodox Church — the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Ilia II — to its international conference held in Tbilisi, Georgia, in May 2016 (Gessen 2017). In Russia, the All-Russian Program "Sanctity of Motherhood" (for which the WCF is a partner organization) regularly brings in the Moscow Patriarchate's Commission on the Family and the Protection of Motherhood and Childhood as a co-organizer for its events. In 2014, Patriarch Kirill opened a forum on "the multi-child family and the future of humanity" (Moscow Patriarchate 2014). At the end of 2016, he publicly supported an anti-abortion petition by the pro-life movement "*Za zhizn'*" [For life] by signing its petition (RIA-Novosti 2016). And Brian Brown (WCF president) and Vladimir Legoida (a representative of the Moscow Patriarchate's Synodal Department for the Church's Relations with Society and the Mass Media) held negotiations for partnership in February 2017 in Moscow (Legoida 2017; see also TASS 2017).

A shining example of a conservative ecumenical project is the Manhattan Declaration (2009), a document dubbed as "A Call to Christian Conscience" and dedicated to the defense of "traditional Christian values." The main text of the Declaration begins with some of the following statements:

> We, as Orthodox, Catholic, and Evangelical Christians, have gathered, beginning in New York on September 28, 2009, to make the following

> declaration, which we sign as individuals, not on behalf of our organizations, but speaking to and from our communities. . . . We are Christians who have joined together across historic lines of ecclesial differences to affirm our right — and, more importantly, *to embrace our obligation* — to speak and act in defense of these truths. We pledge to each other, and to our fellow believers, that no power on earth, be it cultural or political, will intimidate us into silence or acquiescence. ("Manhattan Declaration" 2009, 2)

The Declaration's signatories not only identify themselves as a collective of sorts ("We are Christians . . ."), but they also speak about unification. Albeit, they are not talking about institutional unity, as in classical ecumenism expressing itself via visible fellowship around the sacraments, but about a unity toward the "defense of truths," where they do not require any steps in the direction of institutionalization. One could call this unity "ideological" in the sense that it is expressed not in terms of sacramental praxis, but in terms of a common conservative vision that touches on those issues to which the Declaration is dedicated.

The Manhattan Declaration's structure reflects the suite of basic "traditional values" they are trying to defend. Its section headings are: "Life" (against abortion and euthanasia), "Marriage" (against sexual immorality and against same-sex and polyamorous marriages), and "Religious Liberty" (for the right to stand up for their convictions, including those set forth in the previous two sections of the Declaration) ("Manhattan Declaration" 2009, 3, 4, 7). With the presence of the word "values" in the Declaration, its authors direct the reader's attention to the claim that "in recent decades a growing body of case law has paralleled the decline in respect for religious values in the media, the academy and political leadership, resulting in restrictions on the free exercise of religion" ("Manhattan Declaration" 2009, 8).

Within two months, 150,000 people had signed the Manhattan Declaration, including more than one hundred Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant leaders (Kwon 2009).[30] The Declaration evoked a positive reaction within the Russian Orthodox Church. Archpriest Vladimir Vigilianskii, the head of the Moscow Patriarchate's press service, and Archpriest Maksim Kozlov, the head priest at Moscow State University's Church of Saint Tatiana, noted a correspondence between the

30. The organizers of the Manhattan Declaration claimed that nearly 532,000 people had signed by 2012. A list of the Christian leaders who signed the Declaration is available at its main website: http://manhattandeclaration.org/man_dec_resources/list_of_religious_leaders.pdf.

Manhattan Declaration and the Russian Orthodox Church's statement, "The Basis of the Social Concept" (Editors of *Pravoslavie i Mir* 2009; Russian Orthodox Church 2000). They particularly mentioned the point concerning disobedience to state authorities if their demands were to contradict Christian commandments (Editors of *Pravoslavie i Mir* 2009). Kozlov further cited the ecumenical nature of the Manhattan Declaration: "Such unity of Christians on the same side is more productive than previous ecumenical dialogues and conversations. It's all about what really unifies [Christians], about that inner, fundamental unity in following the Gospel and its truth" (Editors of *Pravoslavie i Mir* 2009). The Orthodox publicist Andrei Desnitskii (2011, 221) wrote along similar lines: "The important thing in this instance is that Christians from various confessions, while not forgetting the differences between them, were able to name the values they all had in common and to unite in defense of these values."

Nearly eight years after the Manhattan Declaration, Rod Dreher, an American conservative journalist and popular Orthodox author, came out in favor of conservative ecumenical partnerships in his bestseller, *The Benedict Option*. In it, Dreher (2017, 136) argues for the necessity of traditionalists to create "a 'common front' against atheism and secularism." He continues by stating that "the different churches should not compromise their distinct doctrines, but they should nevertheless seize every opportunity to form friendships and strategic alliances in defense of the faith and the faithful" (Dreher 2017, 136). He follows Richard John Neuhaus and Chuck Colson in naming such an alliance an "ecumenism of the trenches" and calls upon his sympathizers to "reach across church boundaries to build relationships" (Dreher 2017, 136).

The collaboration between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) is yet another example of "Ecumenism 2.0." At the end of March 2016, they announced a joint initiative to hold a World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians in October of 2016 (Moscow Patriarchate 2016c). A visit by BGEA's president, Franklin Graham, to Moscow in October 2015, when he met with Patriarch Kirill, preceded this initiative (Moscow Patriarchate 2015a). In the joint press release, they stated the motive for convening the summit as "the mass persecution of Christians of the Middle East, Africa and other regions in the world, unprecedented in modern history" (Moscow Patriarchate 2016c).

The organizers of the summit were likely including Western nations within the "other regions of the world." For example, Patriarch Kirill, in his October 2015 meeting with Franklin Graham, spoke of Western

Christians who opposed the legalization of same-sex marriage and stood for "Christian moral values" as "confessors of the faith living under various kinds of pressure" (Moscow Patriarchate 2015a). In response to Patriarch Kirill's words, Franklin Graham reportedly said, "In the West, we see a moral decay of churches. This seriously concerns us. We see congregations of different confessions who are giving up their positions under pressure from proponents of secularism and liberalism" (Moscow Patriarchate 2015b).[31] The patriarch noted the role and significance of conservative evangelicals in the United States, and particularly of the Billy Graham Association, "as their position gives us an opportunity to continue our dialogue with Christians in America" (Moscow Patriarchate 2015a). In March 2016, Franklin Graham announced the World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians, citing a statement made by Patriarch Kirill on February 16, 2016: "I strongly believe that we should work together in order to save our society from de-Christianization — because, while facing increasing atheistic pressure, which has become quite aggressive in some countries, Christians are being squeezed out of public life" (Graham 2016a; Moscow Patriarchate 2016b).

In this collaboration, one can clearly detect an ecclesiological base upon which a kind of ecumenism with respective sides recognizing one another as fellow Christians and as part of "a single Christian civilization" is being built. Thus, Patriarch Kirill, while discussing ecumenical relations during the Cold War, claimed that despite being different churches that had experienced historical divisions, "Our relations were based on the understanding of our belonging to one and the same Christian civilization and our confession of common Christian moral values" (Moscow Patriarchate 2015a).

All of the main conservative Christian leaders — not only Orthodox and conservative Evangelical leaders, but also Catholic, conservative Anglican, and non-Chalcedonian (Oriental Orthodox) leaders — were supposed to have gathered at the World Summit in Defense of Persecuted Christians, which was originally scheduled to take place in Moscow in October 2016. The Summit, however, did not take place in Moscow. One can only speculate about the reasons for the cancellation of the Moscow event. In a May 2016 interview, Yuri Sipko (2016), the former president of the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, said he thought the Moscow Patriarchate cancelled the Summit under pressure from anti-ecumenical critics (see also Woods 2016).

31. This is a translation of Franklin's words as reported on the Russian website for the Moscow Patriarchate. — Translator.

In August 2016, Franklin Graham announced the rescheduling of the Summit to May 10–13, 2017, in Washington, DC. In his announcement, he referred to the Russian Federation's July 2016 passage of the Yarovaya Law that included "anti-evangelism" or "anti-missionary" provisions (Religious Freedom Institute 2016), all but stating that the persecution of Christians takes place even in Russia: "We were looking forward to this significant event being held in Russia because no one knows modern Christian persecution better than the church that suffered under communist rule. However, just a few weeks ago Russia passed a law that severely limits Christians' freedoms" (Graham 2016b). The relocated Summit did take place in Washington, DC, as rescheduled and drew more than 800 participants from 136 countries. Hilarion (Alfeyev), the metropolitan of Volokolamsk and the chair of the Department of External Church Relations, headed the Russian Orthodox Church's delegation to the Summit.

A proposal of the World Russian People's Council (WRPC), a social organization headed by Patriarch Kirill that has representation at the UN, is an example of a Russian conservative ecumenical initiative. The WRPC's Expert Center prepared an analytical report entitled "Global Challenges: Religion and Secularism in the Modern World," which reflects the basic contours of such a project:

> There are serious reasons to expect that the Christian congregations of Western Europe and North America will support this strategy of global development, as do the worldly proponents of classical European culture, and will form a united front of traditional religions opposing the onslaught of [secularist] "anti-civilization." . . . Various religions incorporate systems of values among which can be found such common values as love, unity, and justice. In order to have a fruitful interreligious dialogue, it is necessary to search for common values and to jointly defend them. Yet the idea of the unification of active churches and religious communities into some integrated "mega-religion" has not won serious support in any modern society. . . . We must acknowledge that the formation of international systems of legal and ethical frameworks reliant upon the common values inherent in the great world religions is a much more promising approach. (Vsemirnyi Russkii Narodnyi Sobor 2016, sections 2.10–2.11)

This text makes it clear that the WRPC's Expert Center proposes not merely an ecumenical project, but rather a super-ecumenical conservative project that goes beyond cooperation between Christians toward interreligious cooperation.

One also encounters hybrid forms of ecumenism that combine both kinds of ecumenism examined above. The conservative agenda occupies a significant portion of the joint declaration signed by Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis (2016, sections 8–23, 28) at their February 2016 meeting in Havana, Cuba. Yet, to designate this document wholly as "Ecumenism 2.0" would be a mistake, since the "classical" ecumenical formula of church unity also exists within the declaration (Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill 2016, sections 1, 4–6, 24–25). In this sense, one could call the Havana Declaration a hybrid ecumenical document. This "hybridity" has led to two approaches to reading this text among anti-ecumenists. Some positively evaluated the "conservative" portion, having ignored the portion that speaks of the division/union of churches (see, for example, Dushenov 2016). In contrast, others have emphasized the "unification" portion, thereby evaluating the entire document negatively (see, for example, Vasilik 2016).

A Competition of Ecumenisms

The existence of two ideologically disparate ecumenical networks — classical ecumenism associated with the World Council of Churches and conservative ecumenism — unavoidably raises the question of their competition in "the religious market." Classical ecumenism presents itself as a liberal project (by way of the ideals of pluralism, inclusivity, and "unity in diversity"). In particular, it supports minorities, including sexual minorities, in their fight for equal rights. Conservative ecumenism, or "Ecumenism 2.0," is coalescing around the fight for "traditional values" and is broadly anti-secularist and anti-liberal.

Individual believers and groups of believers, as well as entire churches that exercise their choice through the representation of their institutional leadership, act as the "consumers" for whom the two ecumenisms are battling. For example, the Russian Orthodox Church is currently participating in both ecumenical networks, while giving more and more preference to conservative ecumenism. Church leaders now interpret even their participation in classical ecumenism in the spirit of the fight for "traditional values." In early November 2016, for example, Patriarch Kirill spoke about this at a World Russian People's Council meeting:

> As you know, our Church has actively participated in the so-called ecumenical movement. It has been a dialogue with Western Christians. And why did this dialogue become possible? Because, we saw Western Chris-

> tians as people who hold similar views to us, first and foremost due to their ethical position. We saw that, without a doubt, the Western Christian world shared the very same values concerning the human person; the family; and the relationship to God, nature, and humanity. And this created the preconditions for dialogue. Today, that common values-based platform has been destroyed, because a significant part of Western Christianity is reevaluating fundamental, moral, gospel positions in accommodation to the powers of this world. Thus, the dialogue has stalled, with the exception of our relationship with the Catholic Church, because despite extensive pressure on the side of the external world, the Catholic Church has maintained faithfulness to gospel values — and God grant that it may always be so. Today, for all intents and purposes, our external inter-church, inter-Christian relations do not include a true dialogue with Western Protestantism.[32] This testifies to the fact that new dividing lines — not only of an interconfessional nature, but also of a clearly civilizational nature — have emerged. (Moscow Patriarchate 2016a)

The 2016 Pan-Orthodox Council in Crete demonstrated yet another example of a departure from the classical ecumenical paradigm. As mentioned above, under the influence of anti-ecumenical criticism, participants changed the thrust of the document "Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World." For instance, in section 17 of the document, they shifted the discussion of local Orthodox churches operating within the World Council of Churches from the sphere of "contributing to the witness of truth and [the] promotion of unity" (as stated in the pre-conciliar version: Holy and Great Council 2016b) to the sphere of "contributing . . . to the advancement of peaceful coexistence and cooperation in the major socio-political challenges" (as stated in the official version: Holy and Great Council 2016c).

Given the "natural" conservatism of the Orthodox churches, the active development of conservative ecumenical networks, and the global "conservative turn" in worldwide politics, it would be fair to claim that classical ecumenism risks suffering a defeat in the competitive fight for Eastern Orthodoxy. Skepticism concerning Orthodox participation in the old form of the ecumenical movement will increase. In the final analysis, this could lead to a number of local Orthodox churches choosing to withdraw from membership in the World Council of Church-

32. By "Western Protestantism" here, Patriarch Kirill likely meant those Protestant churches who participate in the ecumenical movement. Evangelicals never became part of the WCC.

es. The exodus of Orthodox churches from the ecumenical movement would subsequently provoke a chain reaction; other churches who hold conservative positions on moral issues and who share ardor in the fight for "traditional values" would join in the exodus.

Conversely, in the event of the creation of a coalition of states headed by conservative governments, the "capitalization" of conservative ecumenism in the "religious market" would continue to grow. Conservatism, which rests on the idea of national sovereignty, does not allow its proponents to elucidate universal conservative values, since American, French, and Russian "sovereign" national values have proven to be heterogeneous, of course.[33] Yet, for the majority of European and American conservatives, Christianity is an integral part of their conservative identity. Thus, conservative Christian universalism could still become the foundation for the establishment of an international conservative coalition.

Conclusion

The issue examined in this article is only a preliminary reinterpretation of the phenomenon of ecumenism. In my proposed analytical framework, this phenomenon proves to be multidimensional. A conservative "Ecumenism 2.0" represented by the activity of various movements and organizations committed to the defense of "traditional values" exists concurrently with the ecumenical network associated with the activity of the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical institutions. Moreover, conservative ecumenism is truly ecumenism, in the sense that it depends on the experience acquired by the classical ecumenical movement. As with classical ecumenists, conservative ecumenists are also the bearers of an ecumenical consciousness. They share such "ecumenical values" as the recognition of the commonality of Christians, a refusal to proselytize, and a refusal to use the language of "heresies and schisms." Nevertheless, since the various ecumenisms' perceptions of "Christian commonality" do not necessarily coincide, the above statement must be qualified. For example, conservative ecumenists do not necessarily recognize liberal Christians who support same-sex marriage as true Christians. Yet,

33. According to the author(s) of the report "Konservatizm kak faktor miagkoi sily Rossii" (Institutsiia national'noi strategii 2014, 106), one aspect of Russian conservatism is "the historical experience of the USSR, which embodied a widespread and complex alternative to the Western world order." American conservatism, however, was and continues to be anti-Soviet.

within conservative ecumenism, relations between Christians are being forged according to the ecumenical principle.

This "duplication" of ecumenism also raises a question concerning anti-ecumenical criticism. Some Orthodox anti-ecumenists specifically attack classical ecumenism for its unifying objective and its liberalism, while loyally responding to interconfessional cooperation in defense of "traditional values." Thus, they only conditionally qualify as anti-ecumenists, since their recognition of conservative ecumenism makes them bearers of an ecumenical consciousness.[34] With this in mind, only those who reject the possibility of any contacts with those from other faith traditions (i.e., those who hold consistently isolationist positions) remain the genuine anti-ecumenists. Such anti-ecumenists are opponents of both classical and conservative ecumenism.

One can describe the relations between classical ecumenism and conservative ecumenism as a competition that, admittedly, could escalate into a veritable feud, as one element in the global "culture wars." The ideological polarization of the two ecumenisms along liberal and conservative lines has created the preconditions for such a feud. What is more, conservative "Ecumenism 2.0," by its mere existence, subverts the universalism of the traditional ecumenical movement. If classical ecumenism still aspires to be inclusive and universal, its proponents will be forced to seek ways to incorporate the issue of "traditional values" into its agenda. This, however, will require that both sides be prepared to conduct a responsible dialogue and to hear each other's arguments. Today, it is difficult to say whether the World Council of Churches will become a "parliament" of sorts, wherein the entire ideological spectrum would be represented, or whether it will continue to occupy a liberal niche.

In many ways, the development of conservative ecumenical initiatives is reminiscent of the process of establishing classical ecumenism. It is fair to assume that the formation of a conservative ecumenical consciousness will at one point require the formulation of a single "symbol of faith," which would not necessarily touch on questions of dogma or be limited by moral teaching. This further raises a question concerning the ecclesiological bases for "Ecumenism 2.0."

34. Even on the website of radical Russian anti-ecumenists from the "Opposition to a New World Order" movement, one encounters the republication of material about the "persecution of Christians" in the West. See, for example, "V Kanade massovye repressii khristian: Petitsiia" [In Canada, Christians are experiencing mass repression] (Soprotivlenie Novomu Mirovomu Poriadku 2016).

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What Kind of Religious Persons Were Invited to the USSR, and Who Was Allowed to Go Abroad (1943–1985)

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This article explores the history of official "religious" travels to and from the USSR in the period of 1943 to 1985. The main sources are the documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. The study analyzes how the trips were prepared and realized, how and why people from various religious confessions were sent abroad and invited to the Soviet Union, and other related issues. The author distinguishes the following types of official missions: diplomatic, recreational, educational, religious-functional, and pilgrimage. There were three key political objectives — propaganda, information, and recruitment. These trips played an important role as they established a systematic form of communication, which sometimes served as an alternative to official diplomacy.

Keywords: Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Council for Religious Affairs, the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, Moscow Patriarchate, Soviet diplomacy.

THE goal of this article is to demonstrate the role and significance of trips along religious lines during the years of the Cold War. It will analyze only those official trips abroad by religious figures from the USSR and trips by representatives of foreign religious institutions to the Soviet Union that were discussed and approved by the highest leadership of the country, the CC RCP(b)/CPSU.[1] The study of such official travel can help expand our conception of how the Soviet leader-

1. The Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)/Communist Party of the Soviet Union — Trans.

ship used religious institutions in conditions of ideological confrontation in a bipolar world, and allow us to better understand how religious communication was effected between the Soviet Union and the outside world.

Researchers have repeatedly addressed the history of international church relations during the years of the Cold War.[2] The most extensive analysis of official church travel is presented in the works of V. A. Akhmadulin (2013a; 2013b), O. Iu. Vasil'eva (2000, 2004), T. V. Volokitina (2003), V. A. Livtsov (2000, 2008), I. I. Maslova (2005a; 2005b), S. V. Petrov (2014), T. A. Chumachenko (1999; 2007a; 2007b; 2008a; 2008b; 2010; 2014; 2015a; 2015b), I. V. Shkuratov (2005), and V. N. Iakunin (2002a; 2002b). Certain aspects of church trips have been described in works by Iu. V. Danilets and V. V. Mishchalkin (2013), N. I. Egorova (2005), W. Sawatsky (1981), I. V. Levchenko (2001), M. I. Odintsov (1994), and D. V. Pospelovskii (1995). General works by E. Gorsuch (2011) and I. V. Orlov and A. D. Popov (2016) contain important analyses of organizational-legal questions concerning travel abroad; however, the authors' main focus was not official, but tourist travel. Despite significant historiographical groundwork, the authors devoted most of their attention to journeys by representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church during the period of "Late Stalinism" and "Khrushchev's decade." In doing so, they neither described nor analyzed organizational questions of departure abroad and the reception of foreign representatives; there are still no reasonably accurate data on the number of religious trips. The history of the foreign contacts of practically all non-Orthodox faiths has remained in the background of the historiography. But most importantly, the overwhelming majority of studies are based on material from the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) (GARF f. R-6991), and much more rarely on sources from the archive of the Foreign Ministry. Only sporadically do publications use documents of the higher party organs.

The documents of the Central Committee apparat, in the broadest sense of the word, were key sources for this article. They included not only the departments and divisions directly supervising religious organizations, but also the Politburo (Presidium) and the Secretariat of the Central Committee. Plans for undertaking trips and upcoming invitations were the most important documents for this article, as well as records of the results of these activities. Thanks to the official record file of the General Department of the CPSU Central Committee it has prov-

2. The main historiographical problems of the external activities of the ROC can be found reflected in Korol 2013, 144–52.

en possible to ascertain the dynamics of the number of trips for religious purposes. Unfortunately, not all sources are available to researchers today (so, for example, the data on the number of trips to the USSR can be studied only until 1980). However, an analysis of available documents allows for a much better understanding of the political meaning that the Soviet leadership attached to such international contacts.

Before the Second World War, international religious contacts in the RSFSR/USSR were practically nonexistent. The leaders of the party only considered the question of sending clergy abroad twice during the 1920s and 1930s.[3] And in both cases the trip never took place. Before the war not a single resolution about an official invitation for foreign religious figures was approved. The only visits that might be related to religious travel were those undertaken by the representatives of the "Congress of the International of Proletarian Freethinkers" and the "Council of the Union of Atheists." During the second half of the 1920s and the first half of the 1930s, "atheists" regularly traveled abroad and came to the USSR.

In the war years the atheistic onslaught significantly weakened, and a gradual revival of church institutions began in Soviet society. It was at this time that the first official church visit to the USSR took place. Metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia Nicholas (Iarushevich) initiated it. In September 1942, while in Kuibyshev in a state of evacuation, he met with Buckley, the British ambassador's assistant, and proposed an exchange of delegations between the Russian Orthodox and Anglican churches. It is unknown whether it was an impromptu gesture of the metropolitan or proposals developed by Moscow were behind it. But in March 1943 British Ambassador Archibald Clark Kerr sent a note to V. M. Molotov with a request to accept a delegation from the Anglican church in the USSR. Six months later, in September, a small group of representatives of the Anglican Church, headed by Archbishop of York C. F. Garbett, visited Moscow. Metropolitan Nicholas represented the Orthodox Church at the meeting. This trip had extremely important implications for foreign policy. The fact of the arrival of the delegation

3. This issue was discussed for the first time at a meeting of the Politburo on September 29, 1921. Then the head of the Central Executive Committee and concurrently chairman of the Pomgol Central Committee, Kalinin announced the necessity of sending representatives of Soviet clergy to the London Congress of the Clergy. The second time the question of travel was addressed was ten years later. In the beginning of 1931, the chairman of the Standing Committee on the Question of Cults of the Central Executive Committee, P. G. Smidovich, sent I. V. Stalin a memorandum, in which he proposed sending an Orthodox delegation to London to take part in the work of the "Dogmatics Commission" in October 1931 and to the pan-Orthodox meeting on Mt. Athos in June 1932.

to Moscow was sanctioned by a small mention in the newspaper *Izvestiia* — an event that was unprecedented for that time (*Izvestiia* no. 223, September 21, 1943).

Subsequently, the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC), established in September 1943, and the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (CARC), formed in May 1944, oversaw questions of Church diplomacy. However, the normative documents of these councils lacked any kind of regulation to govern the foreign activities of Church organizations.[4] The head of the CAROC, G. G. Karpov, had already turned his attention to this situation by 1946. In a memorandum addressed to I. V. Stalin, he wrote:

> Almost three years of practice in the work of the Council on the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Council of Ministers of the USSR has shown that its role, functions, and volume of work has significantly exceeded the limits provided for in the Statute on the Council. If in its first period the Council's activities were directed mainly toward the organizational apparatus of the Russian Orthodox Church, the expansion of its Church-patriotic activities among believers and the normalization of relations between the Church and the state, then in the subsequent period, and particularly after the end of the Great Fatherland War, the Council directed its particular attention to foreign policy work, which entailed the expansion of its spheres of activity and the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church abroad and the strengthening of its authority and relations with other autocephalous Orthodox churches around the world. (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 1, l. 17)

In Karpov's opinion, it was necessary to strengthen the "exploitation of the Orthodox Church in the political interests of the Soviet Union" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 1, l. 18). Foreign trips and invitations to the Soviet Union through the Moscow Patriarchate were meant to be effective instruments for the unmasking of the "slanderous fabrications on the position of both religion and the church in the USSR" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 1, l. 17) that were spreading in the West and also to work on strengthening Soviet foreign expansion in the countries of Eastern Europe. Karpov suggested allocating the following areas of foreign policy to the Moscow Patriarchate (MP): to exercise influence on the ecumenical movement (mainly on the Anglican Church, and the Meth-

4. Most often, religious foreign policy measures emerged from the normative administrative order. For example, in the spring of 1945, V. M. Molotov directed the CAROC to develop a range of foreign policy objectives for the Russian Orthodox Church. See Murashko and Odintsov 2003, 308–11.

odist and Baptist organizations in the USA); to oppose the policy of the Vatican in the international arena (primarily dealing with the Uniate Church); to enhance work with the Evangelical Church of Germany, and finally, to overcome the "Karlovatsky Schism."[5]

After the meeting of the heads and representatives of the autocephalous Orthodox churches in Moscow in July 1948, in connection with the celebration of the 500-year anniversary of the autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Church, the foreign policy thrust of the Moscow Patriarchate shifted again. Now the Vatican was not the only major enemy of the Moscow Patriarchate; it was joined by the ecumenical movement in the form of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Karpov indicated the new foreign policy vectors even more clearly in a memo composed for Stalin on the results of the meeting:

> Taking into consideration the positive achievement of the assigned tasks by representatives of the Church who traveled abroad in 1945–1948, and not overestimating the role and significance of the Church, the Council believes that it is possible to employ the foreign activity of the church more widely in the interests of the state. Above all it is necessary to maintain, reinforce, and implement in practice complete isolation from the West for the Orthodox churches of the countries of the people's democracy,[6] securing support for the Russian church's line on their end. (Chumachenko 2008a, 68–69)

The 1955 note from the chairman of the Committee of Information of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the deputy minister of foreign affairs Andrei Gromyko was the first document outlining the new trends in Church diplomacy in Khrushchev's time (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 29, l. 44). In it, the future minister of foreign affairs proposed that the Moscow Patriarchate not simply resume relations with the ecumenical movement,

5. The "Karlovatsky Schism" was a consequence of the decisions made at the Karlovatsky Sobor (a council of bishops at Sremski-Karlovatsky in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes) in 1921. The Council adopted the text of an appeal, "To the Children of the Russian Orthodox Church Existing in Diaspora and Exile" on the necessity of restoring the monarchy and the reigning House of Romanov in Russia, and sending an appeal to the International Peace Conference in Genoa not to recognize the Bolshevik government. Patriarch Tikhon, the Synod, and the Supreme Church Council adopted a resolution condemning the decision taken at the Council, and announced the abolition of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration Abroad (VTsUZ). The foreign bishops felt that Patriarch Tikhon's decisions had been dictated by Bolshevik pressure and refused to immediately liquidate VTsUZ. See Veniamin and Tishagin 2000, 10:106–8.

6. I.e., Eastern Europe — Trans.

but become a full member of the WCC. After this note, endorsed by the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU, dialogue actually began between the Moscow Patriarchate and the World Council of Churches. In 1956 the leadership of the WCC informed Metropolitan Nicholas of their unanimous decision to accept the Russian Orthodox Church into membership in the organization (Chumachenko 2010, 114). Another important document — a 1958 note from the chairman of the CARC, A. A. Puzin — proposed a significant increase in foreign trips by Muslim clergy to strengthen Soviet influence in the countries of the East. On the basis of this note, the Central Committee's Commission on Culture, Ideology, and International Party Ties adopted a resolution, "On the Expansion of Connections between Religious Organizations of the USSR and Religious Figures and Organizations of the Countries of the Near and Middle East." The state now allowed the spiritual administrations of Soviet Muslims not only to invite more representatives from Arab countries, but also to take part more actively in international Islamic gatherings. Later, the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists and the Estonian and Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church received the right to more actively engage in foreign political activity.

Finally, yet another document that defined the development of the foreign activities of religious organizations during Khrushchev's time was a 1960 note by the KGB. The document proposed intensifying the ideological struggle with the Vatican, because in the opinion of the committee's leaders, the papal throne "keeps Western diplomacy on a Cold-War footing by every means possible and interferes with the alleviation of tension in international relations" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 29, l. 44). The note proposed to undermine the authority of the Vatican by strengthening the role and significance of the Prague Christian Peace Conference, to engage the Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran churches in its work, and to improve relations with the Ecumenical, Alexandria, and Jerusalem patriarchs. It also proposed facilitating the organization of meetings and conferences of religious associations in various countries of the world in every way possible, at which they would concurrently discuss questions of peace and the friendship of peoples, and develop anti-Vatican sentiment. The KGB's note was the basis for the Presidium of the Central Committee's top-secret decree (it was stamped "special folder"), "On Strengthening the Work against the Vatican and Expanding the External Activities of the Religious Centers of the USSR in the Struggle for Peace," which reflected all the proposals of the KGB.

The resolution of the Secretariat of the Central Committee, "On the Development of Relations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the

Churches of Africa" was the first of Brezhnev's initiatives, adopted in May 1965. After the merger of the councils into a single Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) in late 1965, the leading role of the new entity in the organization of the external activities of church institutions was finally fixed in its legal statute. Beginning in 1967, the Council generated and submitted plans to the Secretariat of the CC CPSU for trips and invitations along religious lines.[7] Now only unscheduled trips were separately approved in the CC, and the number of these was insignificant. This was the practice until 1990. After 1990, the CC CPSU ceased regulating all foreign travel and visits to the USSR.

Meetings of the Secretariat of the CC and/or the Politburo (Presidium) of the CC reviewed and approved issues related to religious travel directly within the Central Committee. From 1959, the Commission of the Central Committee on Culture, Ideology, and International Party Ties, headed by M. A. Suslov, managed questions of travel. After its abolition in 1962 and up until 1990, the Secretariat of the CC approved all resolutions (with the exception of certain cases, such as the trip in 1983–1984 by the American Evangelical preacher Billy Graham, which the Politburo authorized).

Before they made it to the table of the Politburo members or the secretaries of the Central Committee, documents about trips abroad or invitations to the Soviet Union passed through a long process of approval.[8] Formally, all invitations to the USSR issued from religious organizations, the Soviet Committee in Defense of Peace or Soviet friendship societies. But it was the head of the CAROC, the CARC, or the CRA who dispatched the initiating memorandum to the CC (as a rule, with a draft of the CC resolution). After receiving the documents, employees of the Special Sector (from December 1952 to March 1953, part of the Office of the Presidium of the CC, from March 1953 to August 1991, part of the General Department of the Central Committee) forwarded them to multiple addresses. In 1944–1947, materials arrived at the Commission of the CC CPSU(b) on Trips Abroad, from 1947 to 1949 — at the Bureau on Trips Abroad and Entries into the USSR of the Committee of Information of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the work of which was directly supervised by L. P. Beria, in

7. The first plan for travel abroad and invitations to the USSR for religious purposes was approved under Stalin. In 1949 the Politburo approved a plan for 1950; however, this administrative innovation did not catch on, and travel planning ceased from 1951.

8. In 1959, the leaders of the CAROC and the CARC sent a proposal to the Central Committee for elaborating uniform principles for invitations and for sending clergy abroad. However, the secretariat of the CC did not approve the project.

those years a candidate member (from 1946, a member) of the Politburo and deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Corrections and recommendations from L. P Beria and I. V. Stalin are often found on accompanying notes and draft regulations prepared by the chairmen of the Councils, G. G. Karpov and I. V. Poliansky.

From 1949, the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) (from October 1952 to March 1953, the Commission of the CC CPSU on Relations with Foreign Communist Parties), headed by V. G. Grigorian, managed all foreign church contacts, along with the reestablished Commission on Trips Abroad of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)/CPSU.[9] V. M. Molotov supervised the activity of the commission from 1949 to 1953. At the same time, V. G. Grigorian and K. E. Voroshilov coordinated certain issues of religious trips abroad. After Stalin's death the Commission was abolished, and its functions were transferred to the Department of the Central Committee on Relations with Foreign Communist Parties. In February 1957 the department was split into the International Department on Relations with Communist Parties of the Capitalist Countries (from 1971, the International Division), and the Department of the CC CPSU on Relations with Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries. These two structural units also directly managed all church trips and visits to the USSR. Additionally, within the Central Committee the issue of travel might be considered by the Department of Administrative Organs, the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, or the Information Department, but the International Department and the Department on Socialist Countries retained the final say.

Besides the Central Committee, the question of travel had to be negotiated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From the 1950s, together with the departments of the ministry, the ambassador of the country to or from which a delegation was traveling presented his own opinion on specific issues. In very rare cases, the CAROC or CARC (CRA) invited religious figures to acquire additional information or a personal opinion from them. Some documents reflect all the bureaucratic peripeteia

9. In December 1962, the Commission was abolished and its functions transferred to the Department of Personnel for the Diplomatic and Foreign Trade Agencies of the Central Committee of the CPSU (from May 1965, the Department of Foreign Personnel of the CC CPSU). In January 1967, a Commission on Travel Abroad within the CC CPSU was again created based on the Sector for Travel Abroad of the Department. In March 1973, the Department and Commission were united in one structural division — the Department for Work with Foreign Personnel and Travel Abroad. This structure survived until 1990.

of preparing church travel. For example, in 1955 the Department of the CC on Relations with Foreign Communist Parties, the German sector of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Soviet embassy in the GDR and Metropolitan Nicholas (Iarushevich) all took part in the negotiation of a trip by a delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Rhineland.

The organs of state security were another key authority that made decisions on religious travel. In the period of late Stalinism the opinion of these organs was of decisive significance. For example, in 1948 the leadership of the CARC approved a visit of Soviet rabbis to Poland to take part in a commemoration of the five-year anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. However, the leadership of the MGB opposed the trip, and it was postponed (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 165). In 1952 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Policy Commission of the CC of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) insisted that during his trip to the Soviet Union, the head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hesse, Pastor Martin Niemöller, could familiarize himself with the life of German and Austrian prisoners of war and internees. The leadership of the MGB opposed this, since in the opinion of the security officers the prisoners of war might say unflattering things about the Soviet Union (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 128). The Politburo CC heeded this opinion and recommended insulating the German pastor from additional contacts.

Representatives of religious institutions most often traveled abroad as part of a delegation. Officers of the NKGB (MGB) and later the KGB accompanied church hierarchs in the guise of assistants, interpreters, and security guards. Their main task consisted of protecting the Soviet religious figures, since some trips presented real, mortal danger. For example, in the course of Patriarch Alexy's visit to Syria in 1945, armed clashes between Syrian rebels and French occupying forces suddenly broke out, and only thanks to the coordinated efforts of the NKGB officers were the patriarch and his entourage safely removed from the conflict zone. But along with protection, the officers of the security services collected information on the host country and most importantly attentively followed about what and to whom the Soviet church leaders spoke. For a short interval after the death of Stalin (until about the middle of the 1950s), they allowed religious figures to travel without an escort. When A. V. Karev, secretary of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (ACECB), went to Norway alone in 1954, the local religious leaders were surprised that there was no "translator-squealer" along with him. The Norwegians considered this an indication of political changes in the Soviet Union, but after

the creation of the KGB the trips with escorts resumed (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 28, l. 120).

Who was allowed to go abroad? Trusted religious leaders, whose loyalty to the Soviet Union was not in doubt. As a rule, they were Church administrators or direct leaders of churches (patriarchs, leaders of the ACECB and evangelists, heads of Muslim and Buddhist spiritual administrations, and so on), or those responsible for external relations. In the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarchs Alexy and Pimen, Metropolitan Nicholas (Iarushevich), Nikodim (Rotov), Alexy (Ridiger); in the ACECB, president of the council Ia. A. Kidkov, secretary of the council A. V. Karev; in the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Latvia and Estonia, Archbishop Jaan Kiivit and Gustav Tūrs; of the Muslims — the chairman of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Mufti Z. Babakhanov.

Loyalty to Soviet power was important, but was not always the determining criterion for the selection. No less important were diplomatic skills, and most important, oratorical abilities. This was particularly vital for church travel in the years during and immediately after the war. Metropolitan Nicholas (Iarushevich) was an outstanding diplomat and orator. He communicated easily both with representatives of the Western world and with the heads of the Eastern Orthodox churches. His sermons had a great influence on Russian emigrants in France, England, and Finland. In reports for Stalin about Metropolitan Nicholas's trips to Western Europe, G. G. Karpov said that he had been received enthusiastically in London by the princes Golitsyn and Obolensky, and in Paris by Grand Duke Andrei Vladimirovich, Prince P. A. Obolensky, and a number of Russian professors. His sermons were repeatedly interrupted by exclamations: "take us home with you to the motherland," "kiss our native earth," "bow to the earth for the Russian people" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 111). This is how Karpov described the atmosphere in one of the London Orthodox churches during the metropolitan's sermon: "Metropolitan Nicholas's address made a strong impression on those present in the church; they listened avidly, and many wept; departing from the church they shared impressions, embraced, and offered Eastertide congratulations; they said that many spoke of it as a revelation" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 101). Travel to Western countries was allowed for Metropolitan Nicholas, a journey that, particularly in Stalin's time, was closed even to Patriarch Alexy.

The state regulated visits of foreign religious figures to the USSR even more closely than trips abroad. Before he was given a permit for

entry into the Soviet Union, a detailed profile was compiled on the future guest that described his political views, writings, and private statements. The authorities collected and studied data on Muslims from Arab countries and Christian leaders from Western Europe and America with particular care. For decades the same trusted church leaders came to the Soviet Union — "friends of the Soviet regime." The foreign guests' schedule for their stay in the Soviet Union was carefully designed. In addition to interchurch fellowship (holding shared worship services) and the display of religious objects, tours showed the guests the secular achievements of the Soviet Union. Thus, upon first visiting the USSR, they showed the delegation of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church the State Historical Museum, the Museum of Serf Art at Ostankino, the Tretyakov Gallery, the Moscow Metro and the Moscow River Terminal, and also showed the play *Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich* at the Moscow Art Theater (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 30, l. 22).[10] Several delegations traveled to Leningrad, Kiev, Kazan, and Tbilisi in addition to Moscow. Sometimes the foreign guests themselves expressed the desire to visit secular premises. For example, during the visit of Serbian patriarch Vikentije II to the USSR in 1956, members of his delegation appealed to G. G. Karpov with the following request: "We also have many churches; we want to see one or two factories, hospitals and children's facilities, sovkhozes and kolkhozes, and your culture in Leningrad, Kiev, and Moscow" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 30, l. 102). During a return visit they promised to show the patriarch of Moscow a power station, a shipyard, and five to six factories. Sometimes the authorities organized formal dinners and receptions at the Council of Ministers or the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in honor of foreign delegations.

During these visits there was an exchange of gifts. For example, in accordance with a decree of the Soviet Council of Ministers, the state presented the patriarch of Antioch with a Palekh box with a view of the Kremlin and a silver liqueur service on the occasion of his visit to the USSR in 1951, and during a visit in 1954 the Antioch primate received a gift from the patriarch of Moscow on his saint's day — a box with ten thousand dollars (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 30, l. 38). The value of the gifts depended on the "value" of the guest. In 1956, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU decided to bestow gifts

10. The tradition of showing Soviet theatre to religious guests arose during the first trips. Canon F. House, who took part in the meeting of the representatives of the Anglican Church with the leaders of the Moscow Patriarchate in 1943, recalled that in the evening, after the official talks, the English delegation was invited to the opera *Eugene Onegin* (House 1983).

on the secretary of the Commission for Religious Affairs of Yugoslavia M. Dilparic and his family up to the value of two thousand rubles with the wording "taking into account the special nature of our relations with Yugoslavia" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 30, l. 102), while the Serb patriarch Vikentije, who formally headed the Yugoslav delegation, received "only" a gold panagia. In 1956, not only did the Soviets arrange an invited dinner for Metropolitan of Beirut Elias (Saliba), as he was one of the probable candidates for the post of patriarch of Antioch, but they also handed over fifteen thousand dollars in Lebanese currency as a gift (Chumachenko 2010, 111). Some guests brought gifts with them. For example, in 1951 the patriarch of Antioch gave G. G. Karpov a camel hair coat and a handworked cloth (RGANI, f. 3, op, 60, d. 30, l. 103), and in 1954 he awarded the chairman of the CAROC the Order of the Apostles Peter and Paul, the highest award of the Antiochian church.

The dynamics of the number of journeys by religious figures and their corresponding geography make it possible to draw conclusions about those who went abroad most often: representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church (an average of twenty trips per year), of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Latvia and Estonia (an average of six trips per year), of the ACECB (an average of five trips per year), and of the Armenian Apostolic Church (an average of four trips per year). The ROC was also a "record holder" by another metric: it was the only confession whose representatives went abroad annually throughout the Cold War. But representatives of Jewish organizations were the absolute "outsiders" with regard to trips abroad. The Secretariat of the CC twice adopted a resolution forbidding the departure of Moscow rabbis abroad (in 1948 and 1959), and over the course of forty years only once (in 1957) did it allow Soviet Jews to attend a foreign event.

On the whole, it is possible to suggest the following periodization for travels of Soviet religious figures abroad. The first period (1945–1953) falls during the time of "late Stalinism." During that time, they mainly sent abroad only representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church. The geography of these trips also did not vary in terms of latitude. If in 1945–1946 representatives of religious organizations in the USSR still undertook trips to Western countries (England, the USA, France), after 1947 this practice waned. The countries of Eastern Europe became the chief destinations. The second period (1953/1954 to the end of the 1950s) occurred in Khrushchev's first years, when the state allowed representatives of many more confessions to travel abroad. Under N. S. Khrushchev, representatives of non-Christian

faiths were sent abroad for the first time, although the geography of the host countries did not expand significantly. They went mainly to Eastern and Western Europe and the United States. The third period (the 1960s) was marked by a significant broadening of the geography of travel. Soviet religious figures "discovered" Africa for themselves, as well as Latin America and Asia. The number of trips significantly increased. The fourth period (the 1970s) fell during the period of "détente," and was marked by a quantitative increase in trips. For example, no fewer than between 36 and 48 delegations of the Russian Orthodox Church traveled yearly during this time. The fifth period (1980 to 1985) occurred during a new deterioration of relations with the West. The number of trips decreased, and religious figures began to travel less often to Western Europe and the United States.

The foreign religious figures who traveled most often to the USSR were representatives of the Anglican Church, of the patriarchate of Antioch, of the Baptist World Alliance, the Romanian and Serbian Orthodox Churches, Syrian Muslims, the World Council of Churches, and also the heads of the Secretariat (Department) for the Affairs of Religious Cults of the Council of Ministers of Czechoslovakia. Unlike with departures from the USSR, demonstrating a unified periodization in relation to travel to the USSR is practically impossible. However, it is clear that after the death of Stalin, the number of religious trips to the USSR significantly increased.

Foreign travel and visits to the USSR had diverse goals, and the religious element in them was far from the only one. The promotion of Soviet foreign policy was an important objective. Depending on the prevalence of political goals, it is possible to identify several types of official religious trips abroad — diplomatic, recreational, functional-religious, educational, and pilgrimage. The same types can be highlighted in relation to visits to the USSR by foreign religious figures. The exception is the absence of trips of the pilgrimage type among official trips to the Soviet Union. If visitors undertook pilgrimages in the Soviet Union, they did so in private. Only one such case has been identified, in which the Secretariat of the CC CPSU approved an invitation for a group of Catholic Latvian emigrant pilgrims in 1969.

The diplomatic type of official religious trip was the most common. Often these trips were quite secular in content. For example, during a trip in 1952, Pastor Martin Niemöller of the Evangelical Church in Germany attempted to solve the problem of German and Austrian prisoners of war and internees (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 30, l. 128), while in 1954 archbishop of Nigeria Lukos conducted talks with Soviet foreign policy

agencies on the formation of trade relations between Nigeria and the USSR (which at that time was still a British colony). The archbishop was able to reach an agreement on supplying African agricultural products to the Soviet market, including rubber, coffee, black pepper, ginger, peanut, cow hides, and cacao oil. These would be exchanged to procure Soviet industrial products such as cars and trucks, cots, men's and women's underwear, typewriters, medicine, glasswear, and so on (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 31, l. 24). They even bypassed Britain and established a firm to trade with the Soviet Union, with offices in London and Amsterdam.

Visitors conducted meetings and negotiations at the highest political level during the course of diplomatic visits. This practice developed during the very first trips abroad. For example, during his first trip to England in 1945, Metropolitan Nicholas met with King George, members of Parliament, and also with the wife of Winston Churchill. Also in 1945, during his Middle East tour, Patriarch Alexy communicated with King Farouk of Egypt, the Greek crown prince Paul and Prince Peter, the presidents of the Lebanese and Syrian republics, and a wide range of political and public figures. In Egypt the patriarch conversed with the former prime minister of Greece, Sofoklis Venizelos, who suggested that the patriarch act as mediator for the normalization of relations between Greece and the USSR (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 102–102ob.).

Under Stalin, foreign religious figures wanting to meet with Soviet officials could expect to communicate only with the chairmen of the CAROC or the CARC. The situation changed under Khrushchev, when the practice of negotiations between foreign church figures and senior Soviet state and party leaders developed. The first such meeting, between Serbian Patriarch Vikentije and the chairman of the Council of Ministers Nikolai Bulganin, took place in 1956 (Chumachenko 2010, 109). Its background is remarkable. In the course of preparing for a trip to the Soviet Union, the secretary of the Commission on Religious Affairs of the Federal Executive Veche M. Dilparic, in conversation with G. G. Karpov, asked which officials would receive Patriarch Vikentije. Hearing that it would be Karpov alone, Dilparic declared: "We have just now hosted the Greek archibishop Dorofei, and he was received by Tito, Ranković, etc. Will the government not receive our delegation?" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 30, l. 101). After this conversation Karpov sent a memorandum to the Central Committee, in which he suggested that one of the Soviet leaders meet with the patriarch. On the basis of this note, the Presidium of the Central Committee adopted a resolution on a meeting between Bulganin and Vikentije. Thereafter, chairmen of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and chairmen and

deputy chairmen of the Council of Ministers of the USSR met with the heads of churches.

In terms of character, goals, and objectives, recreational trips were similar to the diplomatic type, but unlike them, they were used to resolve the most delicate issues that were not widely publicized. For example, in 1951 S. K. Belyshev, the first deputy of the CAROC, went to Czechoslovakia for the final suppression of the Uniates and to develop additional measures for the creation of a Czechoslovak autocephalous Orthodox church. The state attached private status to the trip, which Belyshev ostensibly undertook to receive treatment at Karlovy Vary (Chumachenko 2008a, 72). When on holiday, the primate of the Church of Antioch regularly visited the patriarch of Moscow at his residence near Odessa.[11] Alexander III himself once characterized their trips to the Soviet Union for treatment thus: "At 82 years old, I'm not on vacation, and I do not need any special treatment, but I was required to propose treatment and a prolonged stay as a pretext, in order to obtain the Synod's approval to travel to the USSR" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 102). The first visit of the patriarch of Antioch occurred in 1951 and was complicated by a minor diplomatic scandal. Rich Orthodox Arabs had invited the patriarch to Brazil, along with his invitation to the USSR. Karpov and the staff of the MGB believed that the British intelligence services were behind this invitation. The Soviet mission in Lebanon had to exert considerable effort so that Alexander III would finally go to the USSR, not Brazil (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 77).

The second most common trips were those of the functional-religious type. To this category belonged trips connected with the provision of liturgical rites such as enthronement, the consecration of churches, and burial. For example, from the mid-1950s, representatives of foreign parishes of the Armenian church regularly traveled to the residence of the supreme patriarch and catholicos of all Armenians in Etchmiadzin (Vagharshapat) to take part in the rite of the preparation of chrism. As a rule, the preparation of chrism happened every seven years. The Council of Bishops of the Armenian Church, which deliberated and made decisions on major issues, occurred at the same time. For example, in 1954 the Council discussed and approved the new constitution for the Armenian Apostolic Church (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 20, l. 1).

Those who left for permanent or temporary service in foreign countries constituted a special category. These were primarily priests of the

11. From 1957, they even began to give him a personal dacha in Sochi along with special care and treatment.

Russian Orthodox or Armenian churches, or Orthodox monks bound for monasteries on Mount Athos or in Israel/Palestine. The priests were carefully chosen through consultation with advisors of the ambassador and the attaché for culture and religious ties of the country to which they were sent. For example, Soviet diplomats in Syria advised sending an archimandrite to the metochion of the Russian Church in Beirut who was fluent in French and "capable of providing for the maintenance of the prestige of the Russian Orthodox Church," that is, he needed to provide a car, expensive clothing, and spacious and opulent housing (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 28, l. 57). Until the end of the 1950s, the Russian Orthodox Church dispatched priests and their families to Europe and the Middle East for a period of five years or more. Due to financial considerations, from the beginning of the 1960s the Moscow Patriarchate began to send primarily priest-monks into service. As a rule, individual clerics were sent abroad, but there were also exceptions. For example, in 1956 the Patriarchate sent twenty-five Orthodox priests to Czechoslovakia at the same time for service in the Orthodox parishes of Slovakia and to counter the activities of the Uniates.

It was quite rare for foreign religious figures to visit the Soviet Union in order to conduct religious services. Most often it was Orthodox priest-emigrants who traveled and relocated to the USSR. The largest such move occurred in 1957, when after the Novo-Valaam Spaso-Preobrazhensky Monastery was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Finnish Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union, the Uspensky Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery relocated about ten monks. The adoption of compulsory Soviet citizenship accompanied all such transfers.[12] It is noteworthy that until the end of the 1950s, the Central Committee registered even short-term cases of residency by foreign religious figures in the Soviet Union. For example, when in December 1960 Bishop George Ernest Ingle arrived at the British Embassy to conduct the Christmas service, members of the Politburo were immediately briefed about this fact.

Educational trips were rarer than diplomatic or functional-religious ones. These included trips for study or to give lectures or academic seminars. Of Soviet religious organizations, those that most often sent their representatives for study abroad were the Muslim organizations — to the Academy of Islam in Cairo (1954, 1959); the ACECB — to the London Baptist College (1956, 1967); and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Latvia and Estonia — to the theological faculties of Oxford Universi-

12. I also do not consider the resettlement of Dukhobors from Canada to the USSR, which began in 1958, as travel.

ty (1958, 1959) and Göttingen University (1960). From 1966, the Moscow Patriarchate annually sent future priests to study at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey (the religious academic institution of the World Council of Churches). In 1969, the secretariat of the Central Committee adopted a resolution in accordance with which twenty-two people annually were to be sent for study from the Russian Orthodox Church, the ACECB, the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Latvia and Estonia, and the spiritual administrations of the Muslims and the Buddhists. Representatives of the Antioch Orthodox Church and the ancient Oriental (non-Chalcedonian) churches traveled to the Moscow Theological Seminary and Academy in the Soviet Union for study.

Finally, pilgrimage trips were the rarest type. The first pilgrimage approved by the Central Committee happened in 1953. It was the Muslim hajj on the holiday of Kurban Bayram (Eid al-Adha) in Mecca and Medina (Akhmadulin 2013b, 89–91). In subsequent years these trips became an annual event, and from 1968 Shi'ia Muslims began to travel each year to memorial events in Mashhad, Iran.[13] The possibility for Orthodox pilgrims to travel abroad developed only in 1964. At first Athos was the only place pilgrimage was allowed; then from 1970 Orthodox pilgrims were allowed to visit Rome. It wasn't until 1975 that the Moscow Patriarchate was able to send pilgrims to Jerusalem and other holy places in Israel/Palestine. Otherwise unremarkable pilgrimages sometimes played a very important political role. For example, the head of the CARC, A. A. Puzin, composed a note proposing to increase the number of foreign trips by Muslim clergy and to strengthen Soviet influence in the countries of the East based on data obtained in the course of pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina. But of all the pilgrimages, it is perhaps particularly worth highlighting the trip of a group of Soviet Catholics to Italy in 1957. This ordinary event was filled with important political content. The Presidium of the CC even adopted a resolution in connection with the trip, "On the Trip to Italy of a Group of Catholic Believers from among the Citizens of the USSR" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 29, l. 49). The trip was assigned an informal, private status, but its goal was to increase contacts with the Vatican. Therefore, it was organized through Intourist rather than through the CARC. All the participants were instructed how to behave abroad. They were only allowed to converse with Italian Catholics on the Soviet Union's pro-peace policy. They could respond positively about Pope Pius XII's message condemning war and the use of

13. The location of the shrine and mausoleum of Imam Reza, the eighth of the twelve Shi'ite imams. — Trans.

weapons of mass destruction, but to the question of the normalization of relations between the USSR and the Vatican, members of the group were to answer that they were only tourists, although they believed that it would be possible under certain conditions.

The representatives of the various churches who took part in religious trips abroad carried out the orders of the state. At minimum three key political objectives can be identified, namely agitation-propaganda (image-building), information-gathering, and recruitment. The formation of an attractive image of the USSR was the basis of the image-building objective. The entities that needed to be influenced changed depending on the goals of the trip and the direction of Soviet foreign policy. For example, in the first postwar years the Soviet Orthodox clergy paid particular attention to indoctrinating Russian emigrants. In one of his reports to the CAROC, G. G. Karpov disclosed that Russian clergy in particular played a prominent role in the adoption of Soviet citizenship by large numbers of former emigrants. At the turn of the 1960s–1970s, the number, and also the geographic scope of trips by representatives of the ACECB significantly increased. These trips were designed to create a "correct understanding" within the global Baptist movement of the actions of the Soviet authorities in connection with the effective defeat of the Council of Churches of Evangelical Christians-Baptists. From the beginning of the eighties, many more Muslims began to travel abroad, which was directly connected with the war in Afghanistan.

Trips to the USSR served to strengthen the authority of foreign church figures. The patriarch of Antioch repeatedly emphasized that each of his visits to the Soviet Union raised his standing not only in the eyes of his flock, but also among the local Arab population. The visits of Soviet church delegations at the invitation of foreign churches of one or another country can also be regarded as one of the ways to strengthen the authority of the church. Thus, after the Orthodox delegation's first trip to England in 1945, Karpov reported about the Anglican church:

> The mood of the leaders of the Anglican Church today: the solemnity and exceptional cordiality of the welcome extended to the Russian Church delegation, the complete absence of any hint of a patronizing attitude from the leaders of the Anglican Church toward the Russian Church in conversations with the delegation to some extent indicate that the Archbishop of Canterbury is now seeking support for himself and his church from the Russian Church, and that he wants to strengthen the influence of the Anglican Church at home through friendship with the Russian Church. (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 99)

The Soviet authorities interpreted similarly the 1955 request of the Evangelical Church of West Germany to send them a delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church. The leadership of the Department of the CC on Relations with Foreign Communist Parties considered the trip "of a delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church to West Germany advisable, since it will promote the strengthening of the position of the Evangelical Church in the struggle against the remilitarization of West Germany and against the division of Germany" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 28, l. 132).

The task of information-gathering included the collection of the most varied data, not only about religious institutions, but about the host country as a whole, and the political, economic, and social situation. Members of the delegation presented this material, as a rule already in summary form, in reports and accounts on the results of the visits. Accordingly, one of the first accounts to the CAROC reported: "In becoming acquainted with the church situation in the Middle East, Patriarch Alexy and those accompanying him were able to notice that the British are interested in the affairs of the Orthodox Church in the Middle East, and that they exert their influence on a number of figures from the Orthodox Church" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 27, l. 99). But the information about the leaders of the churches and the religious institutions in foreign states should be recognized as especially valuable. Here is but a small passage from the 1950 report, composed to summarize the visit of the Orthodox delegation to the Middle East, which presents a short, but sufficiently comprehensive, characterization of the leaders of the Antioch church:

> Head of the delegation Metropolitan Gregory and Protopresbyter N. F. Kolchinskii describe Metropolitan Athanasius (Arab), who at one time graduated from the Kiev Spiritual Academy, as dedicated to the Russian Church. However, Archbishop Germogen claims that Metropolitan Athanasius "will be unlikely to fight for us." . . . Metropolitan Ilya Karam (Arab) is characterized by the delegation as a zealous supporter of the Russian Church, but connected with Catholics and opponents of the Moscow Patriarchate, and when the delegation gave him a strong reprimand, he began to defend these connections of his as purely "out of Christian love." . . . Metropolitan Theodosius (Arab) is characterized as an intellectual and a highly educated man, who wavers between supporters and opponents of the Russian Church. . . . Metropolitan of Beirut Ilya Saliba (Arab) is known as a major landowner, indiscriminate in his actions, who has substantial connections in government circles, and who is referred to as an American intelligence

> operative. . . . Metropolitan Hamaskii Ignatius (Arab) of Aleppo and Iyla Maun (Arab) resided for a long time in America and are fierce opponents of the Russian Church. (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 28, l. 55)

We only have indirect sources at our disposal to show that the representatives of foreign church institutions engaged in collecting information while in the USSR. As a rule, these are briefing notes of the Soviet embassies about their conversations that were distributed among church figures after travel in the USSR, as well as the written comments of the members of the delegations. These documents describe positive or even enthusiastic impressions produced in foreigners by their trip to the Soviet Union. For example, the head of the Bulgarian church, Metropolitan Stefan, after a meeting of the heads and representatives of the autocephalous Orthodox churches in Moscow in 1948 and a trip to Georgia, shared these plans with his inner circle: "In Georgia, the idea came to me to write a book about Stalin. I have been nurturing this thought over these two days and I will absolutely write it as soon as possible. The theme of the book is this: Stalin is truly a genius and a beacon for all peoples searching for truth, peace, and true mutual brotherly love. Oh, this is a great idea!" (Chumachenko 2007b, 94). For the whole period under consideration, I have discovered only one negative comment recorded in the Soviet documents. After the Moscow meeting in 1948, Metropolitan Iosif Skopliansky of the Serbian church declared that all the secular postwar landmarks of Moscow were built on the blood and suffering of the people (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 28, l. 56).

Recruiting or soliciting foreign religious figures to cooperate was one of the most important objectives of the journey. Travelers tackled it by various means: through simple negotiations and through financial instruments. In the early postwar years, the Moscow Patriarchate provided financial help to practically all the autocephalous Eastern European Orthodox churches and Eastern patriarchs. The amounts of assistance required were negotiated during these bilateral trips, and sometimes Soviet religious figures brought the money with them. For example, in 1945 Metropolitan Nicholas tried to meet with Ecumenical Patriarch Maxim to give him a gift from Patriarch Alexy — 50,000 dollars. However, the Turkish authorities refused to grant a visa to the metropolitan (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 28, l. 58). Metropolitan Stefan of Sophia was one of the first to receive quite substantial financial support. In 1946, he appealed to Patriarch Alexy with a request to give him 30 million lev for a term of ten years. G. G. Karpov suggest-

ed granting about half the sum. Stalin saved the situation. In the margins of Karpov's note he made the following comment: "On the contrary. You can give even more than 30 million lev" (RGANI, f. 3, op. 60, d. 5, l. 115). In the end, the Bulgarian Church received 50 million lev (2.5 million rubles). Under Khrushchev (at least until the beginning of the 1960s), the Moscow Patriarchate transferred from ten to twenty thousand dollars annually to the patriarch of Alexandria, in accordance with the decision of the Presidium of the CC of the CPSU from May 9, 1955 (Chumachenko 2010, 109).[14] In 1957, I. A. Serov, the head of the KGB, suggested allotting 200,000 rubles to the locum tenens of the catholicate of Cilicia of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Archbishop Kh. Achapagian, to bribe influential people in Syria and to organize propaganda against the Dashnaks.[15] Such generous gifts doubtlessly contributed to the strengthening of ties between Soviet and foreign religious figures. It should be noted documentation concerning the recruitment of Soviet religious figures has not been discovered.

Severe ideological confrontation and limits on contact with the outside world, although they significantly complicated contact on a religious basis in the years of Soviet power, did not sever it entirely. On the contrary, from the end of the Second World War and throughout the Cold War, Soviet diplomacy consistently and rather pragmatically used the representatives of Soviet and foreign religious institutions in an information war against the bourgeois and capitalist world. Trips occupied a central place in the new religious diplomacy, thanks to which not only did the participation of the Soviet side in international religious organizations notably intensify, but also, a regular system of communication developed, which sometimes served as a sort of alternative to official Soviet diplomacy. However, during the course of the entire Cold War, not one of these Soviet religious figures showed themselves to be independent figures in the international arena. Foreign religious figures arriving in the USSR were, as a rule, limited in contacts and opportunities, since their trips proceeded under constant control. In general, official religious trips abroad or to the USSR should be acknowledged as a special kind of diplomatic tool, which the party-state leadership of the country used to attain their foreign policy objectives.

14. However, by 1957 the allocation of funds to the church of Alexandria was considered inappropriate. See Chumachenko 2010, 121.

15. An Armenian political party professing Armenian nationalism and democratic socialism. — Trans.

Appendices

Table 1. Number of trips abroad by representatives of religious organizations (1945–1985)

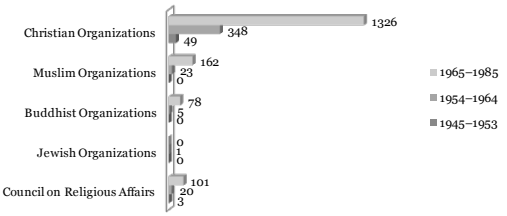


Table 2. Number of trips abroad by representatives of Christian denominations (1945–1985)

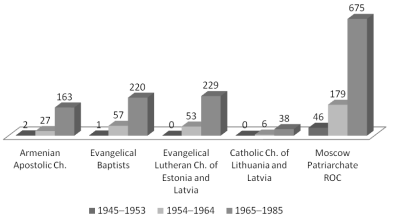


Table 3. Number of trips abroad by representatives of religious organizations (According to region of visit)

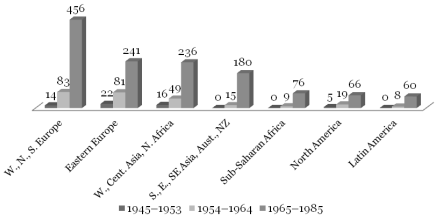
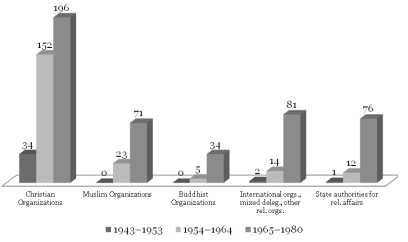


Table 4. Number of trips to the USSR by representatives of religious organizations (1943–1980)



Appendices compiled from the files of the General Department of the CPSU Central Committee, 1945–1985: (a) A thematic file of the Apparat of the Central Committee of the CPSU (category: "VIII: Main departments and other organizations of the Council of Ministers of the USSR," subsections: "the Council for Religious Affairs," "the Council for Affairs of Religious Cults," "the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church); (b) A thematic file of the secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU (categories: "Anti-religious propaganda: Church," "Council for Religious Affairs," "Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults," "Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church). Data have not been discovered for 1977, 1980, and 1981.

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Barbara Newman. 2013. *Medieval Crossover: Reading the Secular against the Sacred*. Conway Lectures in Medieval Studies. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. — 400 p.

American medievalist Barbara Newman is a professor at Northwestern University (Illinois), as well as a brilliant translator and prolific scholar. She is well known as the author of new translations and critical volumes of several significant medieval sources, including the correspondence between Abelard and Heloise (Newman 2016). In addition, she is known as a productive researcher of medieval Western Christianity, as well as of feminine themes and the role of women within Christianity. Her first monograph, *Sister of Wisdom* (1987), was dedicated to the feminine imagery in the teaching of Hildegard of Bingen, an influential abbess and mystic in the High Middle Ages. Her later book, *God and the Goddesses* (2003), on the female figures in the medieval Christian pantheon, according to Caroline Walker Bynum, "changed the face of scholarship and maybe even our understanding of Christianity itself," having shed light on its little-known and undervalued feminine dimension (Bynum 2006).

Newman's latest book has also garnered high praise from colleagues and critics for its conceptual innovation, as well as for the eloquence and refined style that characterize her as an author and translator (see Grange 2014; McDermott 2015). The book is dedicated to the relationship between the sacred and the secular in various genres of medieval literature. In the nature of the correlation between these two foundational categories, one sees the principal difference between the modern and the medieval worldviews. For us, the secular is the norm, but the sacred is the exception and the sphere of the Other, whereas in the Middle Ages, people presumably had the opposite perception and experience.

The theme of the correlation between the sacred and the secular in medieval studies, of course, is nothing new; yet, in recent decades, as Newman notes with regret, it has been studied very little,

with the exception of the "vernacular theology" in Nicholas Watson's use of English material and Jean Gerson's use of French material. Newman claims that scholars "left exegetics behind" and replaced it with the study of other topics, following the linguistic, feminist, and queer turns (3).

Newman contrasts D. W. Robertson Jr.'s approach with that of Jacques Ribard (1–3, 63, 69, 107, 170). Half a century ago, Robertson adopted an "exegetical" approach of decoding chivalric romances with the assistance of theological tracts in order to read the sacred in the profane, contrasting the one to the other. Conversely, Ribard understood the profane *as* the sacred and integrated the former into the latter through the reading of medieval texts. Newman, however, rejects both approaches. She sees the correlation between the sacred and the secular that is apparent within the medieval literature and mentality differently, as the starting point of analysis. She emphasizes the concept of "crossover" — the intersection, crossing, overlapping, and even the merger of the sacred and the secular in their various forms. Newman thus describes their relationship metaphorically: "[S]ometimes the sacred and the secular flow together like oil and water, layered but stubbornly distinct. At other times they merge like water and wine, an image dear to mystical writers, producing a blend that may or may not be inebriating" (7). Secular literary genres could be subjected to reinterpretations in sacred categories. For example, Marguerite Porete, the French Beguine, mystic, and female writer converts the profane and carnal love from *Le Roman de la Rose* into spiritual, sacrificial love toward God and the text itself into an esoteric mystical dialogue (144–65).[1] And conversely, sacred genres — lives of saints, hymns, *passiones* — and sacred topoi were frequently used in a secular context and were even parodied, as was the Passion of Christ, for instance, in *The Passion of the Jews of Prague* (201). If the allegorical view lifts a completely worldly narrative up to heaven, then the parodic view returns it back to the earth (262).

Newman stands against the hermeneutic of "wheat and chaff," which calls people to reject the external, secular meaning as a shell and to look everywhere for the sacred core. She argues against the assertion in the medievalist tradition to see in all Latin texts or at least in sacred genres like exegesis and hagiography a predictable, uninteresting, and orthodox norm, but in vernacular texts a rebellion against this norm. In addition, she

1. As a philologist, Newman insists on a philological perspective, in particular by calling her fellow scholars to consider Marguerite Porete and Julian of Norwich not only as female mystics, but also as writers.

stands against the adoption of any sort of single meaning. She calls scholars not to lose this duality, supposing its intentionality: "[D]ouble coding by writers required double judgment from readers" (259). The heated polemics regarding one or another "cultic" text, such as *Querelle de la belle dame sans merci* or *Querelle de la Rose* (245–47, 261–62), demonstrates the truth of Newman's argument that "if critics today cannot agree about the intentions of Andreas Capellanus or Chaucer [. . .], it is likely that medieval readers couldn't either" (261).

Elevating to a principle the medieval tendency toward paradox, Newman develops a hermeneutic of "both/and" in place of the hermeneutic of "wheat and chaff" (either/or). The clearest example of such an approach takes place when the author and the reader are in one and the same plot or the heroes know how to see both the profane and the sacred, both the low and the high, both the bad and the good simultaneously. This is the concept of *felix culpa*, or "fortunate fault," a transgression that leads to a pleasant result. It is this that makes heroes out of such sinners as Lancelot, Tristan, or "Saint Merlin" in the eyes of the readers. Another principle frequently utilized in anti-Judaic and supercessionist constructions is the principle of allegorical inversion, when Old Testament heroes are deemed prototypes of New Testament heroes, but they receive the completely opposite assessment. Thus, King David who sinned with Bathsheba and repented, "is a type of Christ," but Bathsheba's husband Urriah "signifies the Jewish people" who are to "return to [their] conscience, cleansing the filth of [their] evil deeds with the tears of penance and the water of baptism" (18–19).

The relationship of the sacred and the secular becomes more complex — or becomes richer — with the presence of the pre-Christian stratum. It would be a mistake to ignore medieval people's fascination with the pagan heritage, including the Celtic mythology that attracted them just as classical antiquity attracted the humanists of the Renaissance. Therefore, in many flawless chivalric romances, even in those that are the most theologically minded, magic ships float by and enchanted swords protrude from rocks. As Newman argues, "The dialectic of sacred and secular is not dual, but triple, for the sacred is itself constructed by a dialectic of Christian and pagan" (260).

Newman, having expounded upon the history of the question at hand and having formulated the principles and foundational concepts or her approach in the first theoretical chapter, uses the following chapters to delineate the various types of interplay between the sacred and the secular in both

canonical and little-known medieval texts. The second chapter is dedicated to "double coding," using the example of the remarkable cycle of prosaic chivalric romances on Lancelot and the Holy Grail. In these texts, Christian concepts are couched in pagan images, and sacred and worldly values are asserted simultaneously. The third chapter describes the "conversion" or "transformation" of the literature of courtly love into a spiritual mystical literature and of carnal love into an elevated love for God, using the example of Marguerite Porete's *The Mirror of Simple Souls*. In the fourth chapter, to which I will return below, Newman discusses parody and its various types and assumed goals. The fifth chapter analyzes the "convergence" of the sacred and the secular, using the example of the writings of René of Anjou, in which erotic adventures and spiritual quests lead to the exact same end. In all chapters and, correspondingly, in all types of interplay that Newman expounds upon, the sacred and the secular neither submit to nor engulf one another. Rather, they coexist and comingle.

In the concluding chapter, Newman summarizes the approaches suggested at the beginning of the book and tested out in the course of her close reading of various sources in order to understand the sacred-secular dialectic. She states her hope that further research will emerge that utilizes the framework of this proposed paradigm. "The achievement of a book," Newman writes, "is measured not just by the ground it covers, but by the space it opens" (262). And critics, by comparing Newman's new book with Robertson's *A Preface to Chaucer*, are predicting an even greater productivity for her, an influence on other scholars not only in the field of medieval theology and philology, but also in the sphere of the epistemology of modernism. In particular, Newman's analysis of contradiction and paradox in late medieval literature seems to be extremely relevant for the study of the transition to the modern era.

With respect to this issue's theme on the poetics and pragmatics of blasphemy, the fourth chapter of this book is particularly relevant. Newman dedicates this chapter not to the "high" genres (from the amorous lyrics of trouvère to the celebration of divine love), but to inverse transformation, or parody. Surveying the existing research on this genre, Newman (167–68) notes that the essence of parody eludes any definition clearer than the one provided by Linda Hutcheon: "imitation with critical difference" (Hutcheon 1985, 36). With few exceptions, scholars have predominantly studied the great masters of medieval parody — Jean de Meun, Giovanni Boccaccio, or Geoffrey Chaucer —

rather than the actual genre itself. The works of Paul Lehmann and Martha Bayless — the exceptions — focus on the well-known Latin texts that have been preserved in multiple scrolls and belong to the mainstream "tradition of clerical humor based on the inversion of Scripture, liturgy, and hagiography" (168). Newman draws upon texts that are much less well-known and are preserved in only one or a few copies, such as *Le lai d'Ignaure*, *The Dispute between God and His Mother*, and *The Passion of the Jews of Prague*. By doing so, she unveils other approaches to resolve the conflict of sacred vs. profane. These three texts show that no one and nothing was immune from being parodied in the Middle Ages — not even the Eucharist, the Passion of Christ, or the Virgin Mary.

Narrowing the genre's field, Newman invokes the term *parodia sacra* (sacred parody), which received widespread attention thanks to Mikhail Bakhtin, who defined it as the use of sacred texts or topoi in a profane context with the goal of their abasement and/or ridicule (168–69). Notably, this term, having emerged in the early modern period, originally denoted something quite different in the mouths of humanists: "the 'upward' . . . adaptation of pagan classics for Christian ends," as in compositions like *Horatius Christianus* (*The Christian Horace*) or *Martialus renatus* (*Martial Reborn*) (169). This epistemological excursus already hints at the variability of parodic intention. In contrast to the cases examined by Bakhtin, the texts that Newman analyzes were not connected with rituals of social or liturgical inversion, nor did they necessarily include a folkloric (vernacular) element, "for most religious and even anticlerical satire was produced by clerics themselves" (169). Newman proposes that medieval sacred parody added humor to the parody's text and professed a certain distance, but it did not entirely abrogate the solemnity and, as such, the sacredness of the parodied content. Here, the hermeneutical principle of "both/and," or *sic et non*, is at work, allowing the reader not to choose one meaning or one presumed authorial intent, but rather to read the text polyphonically.

Le lai d'Ignaure tells the story of a gallant knight who is the lover of twelve women at once until their baron husbands find out about it, kill the knight, and serve their wives the penis and heart of their lover [a fact only revealed to the women at the end of the meal — Trans.]. The poem reveals "twelve devotees of a single lover, a confessional scene, [an] arrest in a garden, a traitor paid to inform, a grisly execution, an anxious fast before communion, [and] a ritual feast on the body of the Beloved" (178). Newman suggests here that the reader see this not as a parody of the Eucharist, as much

as a misogynistic mockery about the religiosity of women, and primarily of beguines, who insisted on weekly communion, practiced lengthy fasts, and ecstatically worshipped Christ as their Beloved, Divine Bridegroom (177–78).

In *The Dispute between God and His Mother* (*La Desputoison de Dieu et de sa Mère*), "God" stands before the papal court at Avignon and accuses his mother of appropriating "the lion's share of his father's legacy, leaving him nothing of value" (202). He complains that all of France's best cathedrals belong to her. If one were to see here a variation of a dispute between allegories — the soul and the body, the Church and the Synagogue — then it is possible to consider Jesus the embodiment of a mendicant position that includes a critique of the Church's riches, along with a modicum of proto-Protestant criticism of the hypertrophied Marian cult. The Virgin Mary's very "bourgeois" opinion, with which the judge from the avaricious papal curia subsequently agrees, is that poverty is not a virtue, but rather a characteristic of the laziness and stupidity, squandering and debauchery by which her son sins. Newman compares this source with Pierre de Nesson's *Lay de Guerre*, which was familiar to the anonymous author of the *Dispute*. In Nesson's work, War, the daughter of Satan and goddess of hell, argues against her archenemy Grace-Dieu. Newman, in her analysis of this comparison, suggests that readers not equate the author's opinion with the victorious position of Mary in the *Dispute*. Rather, she suggests that they see here the "double-edged sword" of satire — directed toward Christ's poverty-stricken life and an earth-bound consciousness that is incapable of understanding this life, while also directed toward the Marian cult, apostolic poverty, judicial corruption, and the papacy's "Babylonian captivity" in Avignon (219). Yet, considering the absolutely conventional texts that surround the *Dispute* in an anthology compiled by a scribe, Newman argues that it was perceived as a piece of provocative mischief with a shade of blasphemy, but not as a subversion of foundational principles. The author's purpose was more likely to have fun and to entertain the reader than it was to polemicize seriously, much less to incite crowds of paupers to revolt against the well-fed Church (219).

The third source, *The Passion of the Jews of Prague*, is not nearly as lighthearted as the *Dispute*, and in contrast to the darkness of *Le lai d'Ignaure*, its gruesomeness has a completely realistic foundation. Drawing on the case of *The Passion of the Jews of Prague*, a brief description of the Prague pogrom of 1389 written in terms of a gospel and liturgical narrative of the Passion of Christ, Newman demon-

strates that parody could be in the genre of hate speech, not always in the genre of comedy. Rather than a "progressive" revolutionary protest against ecclesiastical corruption and duplicity, *The Passion of the Jews of Prague* reveals that medieval parody could express a completely trivial, traditional anti-Judaism that is at best marginalized by the great extent of its radicalness.

In the seven-page *Passion of the Jews of Prague*, over ninety biblical verses are cited, more than half of them from the Gospel of Matthew (194). Most of them are inverted to such a degree that a blessing morphs into a threat, salvation into destruction, and a victim into a criminal. It also inverts liturgical Christian prayers. By way of example, a fragment of the well-known prayer *Exsultet*, read at the beginning of the Easter Vigil, originally reads, "This is the night which today throughout the world delivers those who believe in Christ from the vices of the world and the darkness of sin, restores them to grace, and clothes them with sanctity. . . . O truly blessed night, which despoiled the Egyptians and enriched the Hebrews! O night on which heaven is united with earth, the divine with the human!" Yet, in *The Passion of the Jews of Prague*, it was rewritten as follows: "O truly blessed night, which despoiled the Jews and enriched the Christians! O most sacred Passover of ours, in which the faithful, . . . liberated from the chains of sin . . . , spared neither the Hebrew children nor their white-haired old men" (198–99).

In her analysis of *The Passion of the Jews of Prague*, Newman does with a Christian source what Israel Yuval (whom she mentioned) and Jeremy Cohen (whom she did not mention) have done with Jewish sources. They all reconstruct — or imagine — a certain Judeo-Christian continuum and a common cultural field where a cleric from Prague, despite his apparent anti-Judaism, must be aware of the customs of Purim while a Jewish chronicler from Mainz must invoke the iconographic image of the *pietà* in his account of the Jewish martyrdom during the massacres of the First Crusade (Cohen 2004, 124–25). This approach certainly creates a more extensive and multifaceted picture of Jewish-Christian relations than the erstwhile traditional research on legal discrimination and episodes of physical assault. If the greatest Catholic theologians of one period could learn from Jews the correct understanding of the literal meaning of Scripture and could wonder whether Jews were real people or were better associated with the animal world, then even those who conducted the pogroms might have known the contents of the Passover Haggadah as Newman nearly concedes

(198) with reference to Israel Yuval's argument on the parallel development of the Passover Haggadah and the Easter Liturgy (Yuval 2006, 68–90). Certainly, this line of thinking disavows the traditional argument that Jews themselves are to blame for medieval anti-Judaism because of the hermetic isolation of the Jewish community that engendered enmity, aggression, and a distrust toward the unknown. The ghetto walls were completely permeable, yet that did not stop the aggression; hence, the aggression was provoked not by the unknown, but by something else. However, there is often no concrete evidence that medieval authors were familiar with neighboring cultures, and this Judeo-Christian continuum, which rests on correspondence and parallels only, more often seems a reflection of a continuum of sources in the minds of scholars.

Given all of this, I must ask a number of questions not only regarding *The Passion of the Jews of Prague*, but also regarding the other sources discussed and the other chapters in Newman's book. To what extent does Newman's complex and subtle philological analysis reflect the medieval authors' purposes and the medieval readers' reactions? Did they have in mind double inversion, reverse typology, and ambivalent satire? Or were one or the other of these devices achieved "unconsciously" (as Newman lets slip several times)?

Might the author of the *Passion*, working in the ancient *cento* technique (184), simply have written in gospel and liturgical language, using verses that went with the storyline, but changing the characters, details, and epithets to those of more current interest? Just how radically did this parodied, inverse citation distinguish the *Passion* from many other medieval texts — both Christian and Jewish — that were also rife with biblical citations or paraphrases and also substituted current people and heroes in place of biblical people and heroes?

Why did the authors write these parodies? What did the author of the *Passion* achieve? Perhaps, being conscious of the anti-canonical nature of the pogrom, the author wanted to justify himself in this way, not so much before an earthly judge as before the Heavenly Judge, having sacralized sinful conduct with biblical allusions? Was diversion a sufficient reason for a creative work, as Newman suggests concerning *The Dispute between God and His Mother* (219)? Or perhaps one can see here a variation of the "symbolic contradiction" of the dominant ideology and institution, which manifested itself in mockery of various attitudes held in the framework of this ideology?

And finally, is it actually possible for us to reconstruct the medieval reader's interpretation of a

text? On what basis does Newman suggest that the readers, having caught the parody of the Eucharist, "might have been distinctly uncomfortable" (220)? Are we able to agree with Martha Bayless, who saw in the *passiones* such as *The Passion of the Jews of Prague* "no humorous component whatsoever" (221, commenting on Bayless 1996, 9)? And what is the point in the detection of a "textual unconscious" (185), if such unconscious was hidden as much from the medieval author ("But even if John [the Peasant] was not consciously invoking Esther, the allusion still lurks in the textual unconscious of the Passion" [196]) as it was from the medieval reader? If the breakdown of a text into a multitude of components that were not foreseen by the authors and their contemporaries takes place only to serve the logic of a philological analysis that is pursuing newer and newer sources and parallels, then a deconstructive reading could actually turn out to be unproductive, a deconstruction for deconstruction's sake.

Skillfully discussing examples of duality, transformation, inversion, and convergence in detail, Barbara Newman brilliantly addresses the question of the boundary between the sacred and the profane, saying that it did not exist as a fixed border, as such. Above all, I would like to pose a question with respect to parody: where did the border between the comical and the non-comical run, and at what moment did a medieval reader find something funny? Perhaps this is one of the prospects for further research, mentioned in the conclusion (261–62), that will be germane to the dialectic of the sacred and the profane described by Newman.

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Elena Smilianskaia. 2016. *Magicians, Blasphemers, and Heretics in the Net of Russian Interrogation in the 18th Century (Volshebniki, bogokhul'niki, eretiki v setiakh syska XVIII veka).* Moscow: Lomonosov (in Russian). — 384 pages.

Elena Borisovna Smilianskaia's monograph, which was published in 2016 by the publishing house Lomonosov, constitutes an expansion and supplementation of her previous book (Smilianskaia 2003). As the author notes in the introduction, the second edition of the book takes into account the newest publications on the topic. Unfortunately, this 2016 edition has lost supplements that were highly valuable in terms of scholarly significance — a list of archival documents from 1700–1801 "about witchcraft, blasphemy, sacrilege, heresy, and 'superstition'" (30 pages), a list of literature and sources (60 pages), and an alphabetical index. Footnotes were exchanged for endnotes with continuous numeration and every odd page is supplemented with illustrations in the margins. All of this made working with the text significantly more difficult, but it did not overshadow its contents.

The book is devoted to the religiosity of Orthodox inhabitants of Russia in the eighteenth century, which it investigates strictly by means of judicial-inquisitorial documents that contain evidence about "spiritual crimes" of that time. Sources for these materials are: the Secret Chancellery, the Secret Expedition (f. 7), the Senate (f. 248), the Preobrazhenskii Prikaz (f. 371), the Investigations Department (f. 372), the Moscow Kontora of the Synod (f. 1183), documents of the Cabinet of Peter I (f. 9), the Cabinet of Catherine (f. 10), and the Spiritual Department (f. 18), which are preserved in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA), and the archive of the Synod (f. 796), in the Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA), and also investigative documents from the regional archives of the Vologda, Kursk, Novgorod, Sverdlovsk, Tver, Tyumen, and Yaroslavl oblasts.

The researcher divided the archival materials she collected into three large sections: "Magicians," "Blasphemers and the Sacrilegious," and "Heretics." A solid historiography precedes each of the three parts of the book. The first part of the book is dedicated to the investigation of "magical belief" as a living reality not just in medieval, but also in modern European culture. Moreover, as the author shows, belief of this type was characteristic not only of the grassroots folk culture, the culture of the "common folk," but also of the high culture of educated city dwellers (including those who took part in the creation of

the laws of the Russian Empire). Individual cases, for example the history of Pyotr Saltykov (c. 1724–post 1796), the story of Katerina Ivanova (1764), and others, are collected here as well.

Each such history contains not just description of historical materials, quotations from sources that have been adapted for the reader, and the conclusions of the author, but also, on the margins, a fairly extensive reconstruction of fragments of the inner and outer world of people of the eighteenth century.

For instance, in the first part of the book we encounter a story about lots, which were magical instruments for divination. "Fortune telling with lots," the author writes, "is one of the simplest means of predicting the future, rarely requiring recourse to either fortune-telling books or to a complex toolkit. Lots cut out of bread could replace wooden ones; pits from black prunes, and also beans or even pieces of radish were used in their place. Sometimes in the most crucial life situations, people cast lots or even more simply, two slivers of wood. Thus the peasant girls Efim'ia and Matrena, who could not share the beloved house serf Andrei, told fortunes with kindling" (51–52). The author verbally creates a veritable museum exhibit, which due to the author's masterful command of words receives scope and depth.

In another place the author quotes the Trebnik (Service Book) of 1720, which directed clergymen to deny communion to sorcerers for twenty years, and deny communion for six years to those who carry charms to protect livestock magically or to cast spells. "Tell me, child, did you not practice magic, or while practicing sorcery, did you pour wax or tin? Did you not bring a sorcerer into your home, who took off inflicted harm, or would you take it off yourself; or did you yourself not create sorcery to harm someone; did you not hex animals from the wolves, or did you not spell a man or woman, or another one in bind of feebleness? Did you not carry magic herbs?" (96).

In yet another fragment in the third chapter, we learn that "the cross acquired a special place in the magical rite, while not losing its semantic meaning, which is evidence that the individual belongs to Christianity." E. B. Smilianskaia writes that "magical instruments, such as wax, or a little root were usually 'attached' to the cross to strengthen their effect. . . . Wax, stuck to the cross, was one of the more widespread charms against the 'evil eye' or a talisman for obtaining mercy" (99). They even pronounced incantations over the cross for luck.

In the pages of the book not just objects come to life, but also people — peasants, nobles, priests, soldiers, and townspeople. We get to

know their mode of speech, names, and nicknames. We see how and in what they believed, how they prayed. We know how much they paid for magical services: in the beginning of the eighteenth century "magical roots for hexing the landowner" cost fifty kopecks, enchanted salt four kopecks, and "magic" wax ten kopecks. Treatment "with incantation" by the village sorcerer cost one kopeck per session, but sometimes sorcerers would treat for a "cup of wine," a "hat or cap," and even for free. "On account of this, magic in the eighteenth century proved to be a profitable fraud," writes Smilianskaia. "It seems that the fact that sorcerers began to be sought out more frequently at the market and that their services at times demanded a considerable sum can also testify to this" (89–90). In speaking of sorcery by bearers of Christian culture, it is difficult to avoid discussion of "dual faith." Elena Borisovna, however, proposes another approach to the problem. "The magical and the Christian," she writes, "did not even enter into conflict; instead they frequently complemented each other in the religious life of an Orthodox person of the eighteenth century. If Christian prayers, pilgrimages, or turning to the priest did not help in the fulfillment of one's desires, the sufferer had no difficulty turning to magical words, talismans, or the help of a magician. Conversely, the performance of magical rituals did not hinder many from abiding in the bosom of the church" (101).

Smilianskaia describes the characteristics of "folk belief," the most important of which is the lack of consistency, an organic cohesiveness of religious conception. "The distinctive weaving together of magical, pagan belief and Christianity, which are contradictory in their essence," she writes, "often proves to be persistent and affixes its imprint on the foundational conceptions of good and evil, of the power of God and Satan, and of the interrelationship of the earthly and otherworldly in traditional consciousness" (282–83).

In another place the author writes, "Documents from investigations of witchcraft show that in the religious viewpoint of all the participants of the process — the accused, witnesses, investigators, and judges — "opposite systems" — religion and magic, Christian feeling and magical superstition — were joined in indissoluble unity" (94).

An undoubted merit of the author is an excellent command not just of historiography and the materials of the Russian archives, but also a knowledge of the Western European context. The book cites examples of typical testimonies of the convicted, which were preserved in the materials of Western European "witch trials" from the end of the fifteenth to the end of the seventeenth centuries. The author lays out the following narra-

tive arc: meeting with a devil, the physical and spiritual transfer of self to the devil, travel to a witches' sabbath by magical means, supplication to the devil at a witches' sabbath, the return home by supernatural means, and the committing of crimes with the help of the devil against people, their property, community, or religion. Smilianskaia writes that, "such uniformity of plot, produced in various parts of Europe over two centuries, leads researchers to the idea that the logical outline of 'high theology' prevailed in the course of the investigation, compelling judges to secure the needed testimony, to impose their logic of explanations onto the sequence and connections of events" (65).[1]

Not just an analysis of foreign materials is important here, but also the conclusions toward which the author leads the reader about the place of Russia among other European states. Much of what we see in fifteenth- to seventeenth-century Europe allows us to understand the processes that were occurring in Russia in the first half of the eighteenth century. Thus, in the first part of the book the case of young peasant women from Yaroslavl province who are *klikushi*[2] is introduced. In 1764 during a fit, these women called out the name of their neighbor, Katerina Ivanovna, who had allegedly "corrupted" them. The relatives of the *klikushi* not only beat Katerina, but also gave her over to the provincial chancellery, where she told in detail how, "having obtained an herb, she summoned two devils to herself and sent them to the Moloksha River to pull out stones" and how "having stirred that herb in water with her finger, gave the water [to the *klikusha*] to drink, and having removed the herb from the water, placed it in a chink in the hut" and that "she did this damage out of spite as testified in the interrogation" (66). Katerina Ivanovna's interrogation is given in full in the book on pages 67–73. "The case of Katerina Ivanova," writes Smilianskaia, "corresponds in a surprising manner with the charges described in Western European historical anthropological literature of English women who were accused with witchcraft in the sixteenth through seventeenth centuries" (67).

Analyzing Russian sorcery trials, Smilianskaia proposes to delineate the distinctive acts of a "ritual drama": the prologue (the "realization by a person that he cannot receive help in his trouble through permitted means"); the

1. We also see the influence of investigatory rhetoric in Russian materials, for example, in the statements of those arrested in the interrogations of the Khristovery in 1733. For more, see Sergazina 2017, 113–30.

2. *Klikushi* — literally "shriekers," women of all classes thought to be possessed by demons in eighteenth-century Russia — Ed.

beginning of the story ("meeting with a magician" or the search for a sorcerer and an intermediary); the climax of the drama ("when, usually in solitude, the sorcerer completes the transformation of salt, wax, dry herbs, or water [more rarely something different] into a magical object, which possesses the given magical power"); the denouement (success or failure, but more often the suspicions of those nearby, rumors, denunciations, arrests, and torture). Moreover she proposes viewing the very text of the spell or incantation "not just as a demonic language, understood above all by otherworldly powers who are summoned or banished in ritual action, but also as its own kind of narrative, which carries information about the supernatural" (109). The data on the quantity and dynamics of sorcery trials in the eighteenth century are interesting. E. B. Smilianskaia's examination of the archival material allows her to speak with certainty about twenty-three witchcraft trials between 1700 and 1720, eighty trials between 1721 and 1740, ninety-seven trials between 1741 and 1760, twenty-two trials between 1761 and 1780, and eighteen trials between 1781 and 1801. We see that the peak occurs during the time of Elizabeth.

The second part of the book addresses the profanation of the sacred (the inverse of reverence for the sacred [204]), for instance the disrespect for and desecration of sacred objects and shrines, and as well as sacrilegious and pseudo-sacrilegious actions; that is those things that are customarily called blasphemy. Analyzing the extensive archival material, Smilianskaia reviews the tradition of Soviet historiography and writes: "It is hardly possible to agree with the conclusions expressed by Soviet researchers of the 1950s and 1960s that the investigative cases into the desecration of saints and shrines give evidence for an indifferent and outright negative attitude to religion or for the origin of atheism in Russia. [. . .] An overwhelming majority of 'blasphemers' who are known to us did not identify themselves with anti-church and anti-Orthodox views. Rather, several had reputations as exemplary parishioners" (181).

On the basis of 133 trials for "blasphemy," E. B. Smilianskaia comes to the conclusion that in eighteenth-century Russia, the majority of the crimes of blasphemers "consisted of drunken swearing or cursing in a fit of passion, during which the swearing included mentions of the saints, the church, the cross, the Almighty, and the Mother of God" (178). Here it is necessary to add reservations about the divine liturgy, vandalism, the theft of icons, and criticism of church songs or services.

"Our materials about blasphemous swearing in addressing the

saints and the Almighty," writes the author, "to a certain degree confirm the opinion, which has been stated in literature, of the absence of a spiritual-deferential attitude to saints and shrines in everyday consciousness. [. . .] The expression of the sacred beyond the confines of a 'pure' space (such as prayer texts, literary texts, or the space of the church) and the mentioning of holy images 'in vain,' 'simplifies' and coarsens it. Then in that 'base' sphere, the sacred turns into its opposite: 'laughable' or blasphemous, 'fleshly' or 'black,' demonic" (189–90).

The third part of the book is dedicated to religious free-thinking and heterodoxy as a reaction "to folk piety and the folk reverence for Christian sacred objects, which had taken the place of worship of pagan idols and charms in the medieval mass consciousness." "The significance for our national history of reformational freethinking in the eighteenth century," writes Smilianskaia, "can be explained not just by the number of its adherents. 'Heretics' attempted to comprehend the contents of Christian dogma, including through the rejection of external rituals in favor of the search for 'spirit and truth,' and obviously they were in larger number than it is possible to judge by reports of open opposition to the church. [. . .] It is also clear that given the insignificant number of Russian 'iconoclasts' or 'heretics,' the higher powers (both church and secular) were not inclined to serve Westernism by showing tolerance to those of their own subjects who had been contaminated with reformation criticism. They tolerated and invited Westerners of other creeds, but punished and tortured their own, both physically and spiritually" (279–80).

With all its depth of conception and the consistency of its exposition of historical materials, principally archival, E. B. Smilianskaia's book may be interesting not just to historians, philologists, anthropologists, and religious scholars, but also to all who are interested in our national history. It is interesting even, perhaps, to those who wish to find practical applications for the magical recipes laid out in the book.

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