

Politics, & Law, Morality

Essays by V. S. Soloviev

Edited and translated by Vladimir Wozniuk

Foreword by Gary Saul Morson

Politics, Law, and Morality

Russian Literature and Thought

Gary Saul Morson, Series Editor

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Foreword: Soloviev, the Russians, and Ourselves

Gary Saul Morson

A key purpose of the Yale series Russian Literature and Thought is to bring to light some neglected aspects of the Russian tradition. During the Cold War, both Soviet and Western commentators tended to see prerevolutionary Russian thought as the conflict between various forms of tsarism and reactionary nationalism on the one hand and a diversity of socialisms on the other, with the Bolshevik triumph as the (perhaps foredoomed) outcome. It is, in fact, remarkable how frequently intellectual historians bought into this Soviet story, even if their values differed.

The picture has compelling power in part because, to a great extent, it corresponds to the self-image of the nineteenth-century intelligentsia itself, who thought in terms of polarities and anticipated the triumph of revolutionary socialism. Here it is worth repeating some truisms: the word *intelligentsia* is itself a Russian neologism that came into use about 1860 to describe a group very different from what we today would think of as the intellectuals. Indeed, when in

1909 a group of Russian thinkers published an attack on the intelligentsia (*Landmarks: A Collection of Articles of the Russian Intelligentsia*) they called for the replacement of the classic Russian intelligentsia with intellectuals in the Western sense. When they predicted, accurately enough, that the intelligentsia would lead Russia to disaster, they were condemning not thinking but the anti-intellectual mindset of the intelligentsia, its ideological fanaticism. In doing so, they were inspired by Vladimir Soloviev as well as by the great Russian novelists.

The contributors to *Landmarks* observed that the intelligentsia paid scant attention to Soloviev; as for the great writers, the volume's editor, Mikhail Gershenzon, observed, none belonged to the intelligentsia. Indeed, he opined, the best measure of a Russian writer's greatness is the degree of his hatred for the intelligentsia. If we understand the word *intelligentsia* to mean thinking or educated people, this statement loses its point, for the writers were obviously intellectuals and thinkers. But they were not *intelligents* (members of the intelligentsia). Why not?

To oversimplify somewhat, a classic Russian intelligent might be characterized by three interrelated features. To begin with, he or she was committed to a rather narrow range of beliefs: atheism, materialism, revolution, and some form of socialism. Their views ran the gamut from A to B. Of course, the particular form of socialism, the choice of a method for instigating a revolution, and the alleged implications of materialism might differ from group to group and from generation to generation. But it was clear enough, for instance, that Leo Tolstoy, with his commitment to absolute moral values, his total rejection of violence, and, above all, his belief in God, could not be called an intelligent. Indeed, he expressed utter contempt for the intelligentsia and would have been insulted had he been numbered among its members.

For that matter, Tolstoy's use of his title of count also disqualified him, for to become an intelligent meant forsaking all other social allegiances. An intelligent, for instance, could not be a nobleman who read books; neither, for that matter, could he be a government official who wrote philosophy. One's first loyalty had to be to the intelligentsia itself, and from it one took one's very identity. To be sure, an intelligent might have a profession, but that was just a way of earning a living, not the source of an identity or one's prime public commitment. A character in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Possessed* thus asks whether it is wise to hire an engineer committed, as an intelligent must be, to universal destruction?

The choice to become an intelligent was, as commentators often put it, some-

thing like joining a monastic order. One was bound to other intelligents and in some fundamental sense ceased to belong to this world by taking on citizenship in the glorious world to come. By the end of the century, Russia became (so far as I know) the first society in which young men and women might choose as their profession revolutionary or terrorist. I plan to grow up to be a revolutionary and so am learning bombmaking: this was an honorable choice for one's life-work.¹ The very danger of such a career conferred an aura of martyrdom and of the sacred on its members, while inspiring respect among those insufficiently self-sacrificing (or other-sacrificing) to make such a choice. The religious overtones of the intelligentsia's self-conception make understandable the commonplace but accurate observation that a remarkable number of the most influential intelligents, from Nicholas Chernyshevsky to Joseph Stalin, were either sons of priests or ex-seminarians. Indeed, to call someone a seminarian was something like calling him a Red. A divinity student was either a future priest or a future revolutionary. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, for instance, we are told that Dmitri's mother ran off to Petersburg with a destitute ex-seminarian and there "had thrown herself into a life of complete emancipation."²

Dostoevsky's irony in referring to debauchery as emancipation points to a third characteristic of intelligents: they were expected to follow a properly sordid lifestyle. Chernyshevsky came by his bad manners honestly, but others had to learn them and display them, as, for instance, Ivan Turgenev's Kukshina does, with a few unavoidable slips into propriety, in *Fathers and Children*.

The intelligentsia dominated Russian intellectual life to the point where intellectual conformity tended to prevail. Anton Chekhov complained, for instance, that "if these toads and crocodiles" ever gain power, they would create a world rivaling the inquisition in Spain, a prediction that of course proved a considerable understatement. It is hardly surprising, then, that Soloviev, who sought to formulate an explicitly Christian and idealist alternative to the intelligentsia's materialism and positivism, had great difficulty in gaining a hearing. And yet by the last decade of the nineteenth century his ideas had begun to attract followers.

The anthology *Problems of Idealism* (1903) and *Landmarks* itself bear witness to a renewed interest among thinkers in alternatives to positivism and material-

1. See especially Anna Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894-1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
2. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: Modern Library, 1996), 7.

ism. Soloviev's work now began to exert a major influence on Russian intellectual life. Although he is commonly referred to as Russia's first and greatest "systematic" philosopher, Soloviev's ideas are more pregnant with thought than carefully explained, more inspiring than clear and coherent. He changed his mind frequently and, even within the bounds of a single work, often appeared to contradict himself.³ It is understandable, therefore, that his influence, once established, grew rather diverse. One could find support for very different prescriptions and approaches in his writings.

To begin with, he became the starting point of modern Russian Orthodox religious philosophy. Drawing on sources as distinct as Immanuel Kant and Jacob Boehme, Slavophiles and the German idealists, Plato and the Church fathers, he brought together diverse traditions into a new, if hardly stable, synthesis. What we now think of as the great Orthodox tradition of theology consists pretty much of those who expanded on, criticized, or developed his ideas—most notably, Nicholas Berdyaev, Lev Shestov, Sergei Bulgakov, and Nicholas Lossky. Like Soloviev, these thinkers expressed a profound debt to Dostoevsky. Soloviev not only wrote frequently about that great novelist, but is commonly regarded as the prototype for Alyosha Karamazov.⁴

In short, one may trace a line of Russian thought, both secular and religious, that includes the Slavophile Ivan Kireevsky, Dostoevsky, Soloviev, and their diverse explicators. Russia's foremost literary critic and perhaps its greatest thinker of the twentieth century, Mikhail Bakhtin, belongs to this tradition. It would almost be possible to see modern Russian literary and social thought as the interactions of three major strains: the Marxist, the Formalist and Structuralist (from Roman Jakobson and Victor Shklovsky to Boris Uspensky and Yuri Lotman), and the spiritual. It is impossible to understand the third without understanding Soloviev.

Soloviev's influence may also be seen in numerous other movements of the early twentieth century. His concern to develop a theory of "Sophiology"—Sophia as the embodiment of divine Wisdom and an intermediary between God and the world—inspired the Russian symbolist poets, especially Andrei Bely and Alexander Blok. Soloviev's key concept of *bogochelovechestvo* (variously translated as "divine humanity" or "Godmanhood") developed the Or-

3. See, for instance, the discussion of Sophiology in Frederick C. Copleston, *Russian Religious Philosophy: Selected Aspects* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), esp. chap. 5.

4. On Soloviev and Dostoevsky, see Marina Kostalevsky, *Dostoevsky and Soloviev: The Art of Integral Vision* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

thodox emphasis on the transfiguration of the world, the idea that God became man so that man might become God. In social terms, such a belief fed the eschatological and millenarian impulses of Russian thought, and Soloviev's last work, three dialogues ending with a prediction of the Antichrist, somehow manages to combine his impulse to endless dialogue with his fears of the end. But the idea of Godmanhood also helped raise the sights of individual people to their spiritual potential. Like so much in Soloviev, it contained the seeds of quite diverse fruits.

Perhaps Soloviev's most decisive influence lay in providing alternatives to and arguments against what he opposed. It is often easier to see what he rejected than what he affirmed, again a reason for the diversity of his influence.

Soloviev keenly discerned the central contradictions of the intelligentsia's beliefs, especially in their quasi-religious attachment to materialism. With moral fervor they denied the basis of their own moral appeals. They called for violence to realize peace, demanded that people act to achieve inevitability, and rejected good and evil out of a moral obligation to save humanity. As Soloviev paraphrased the "intelligentsia's syllogism": man is descended from the beasts; therefore, love thy neighbor as thyself.

Real morality, he argued forcefully, can be based only on the assumption of the infinite and intrinsic value of the individual human being, an idea that he believed could be derived not from materialism but only from Christianity. Leon Trotsky was to contend, in his remarkably frank book *Terrorism and Communism*, that terror was permitted for, indeed required of, Communists; Bolsheviks, he wrote, do not adhere to the bourgeois notion of the sanctity of human life. As we see in this book, Soloviev understood that atheist salvationism was likely to lead to mass violence for precisely the reason that Trotsky gives in justifying it: "Once the theological principles and the metaphysical idea of the absolute value of the person are removed, there remains only animal nature, the effect of which is violence" (see "Christianity and Revolution," below).

Even today, it is commonplace for intellectuals to believe that the influence of religious belief is baneful and that, as the Russian intelligents argued, life would be more moral without it. Consider the Spanish Inquisition, for a start. In a recent issue of the *New York Review of Books*, for instance, Steven Weinberg, pointing to the Christian justification of slavery, to "the harm done by religious enthusiasm, through a long history of pogroms, crusades, and jihads," and "in our own century" to the religious fanatics who killed Anwar Sadat, Itzhak Rabin, and Mahatma Gandhi, concludes that "on balance the moral influence of religion has been awful." As for those who, like Freeman Dyson, point to the

good religion has done, Weinberg stresses their selective bias in neglecting the evil on the other side of the balance.⁵

True enough: but a Russian specialist is likely to wonder why Weinberg does not consider his own selectiveness. If we are to consider the harm done by believers in the name of religion, what about the harm done by atheists in the name of atheism? The Spanish Inquisition killed fewer than ten thousand people; the most conservative estimates for those killed by the officially and militantly atheist regimes we call Communist exceed one hundred million. Or to put the point another way, during the Soviet terror famine of the late 1920s and early 1930s and the Great Purge of 1936 to 1938, executions surpassed the entire history of the Spanish Inquisition daily. Does Weinberg imagine that Nikolai Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, and Pol Pot were believers? The blindness of religious apologetics, as Soloviev frequently pointed out, has its atheist counterpart.

Our century has been the bloodiest in human history, and those most responsible for the blood have been atheists who explicitly rejected any religiously based idea that individual human life is sacred, is more than a tool in the name of their ideology. The modern Russian religious tradition was shaped precisely in reaction to these ideologies as they were developing. Both Soloviev and Dostoevsky pointed out that the very intellectual hubris of their opponents, their use of a tone of superiority to benighted believers, reflected the demonic pride that would end in plans for social engineering at enormous cost. Is it a mere accident that, even in the West, intellectuals apologizing for the crimes of “scientific socialism” should have referred so frequently to “the Soviet experiment”? A Christian after the manner of Soloviev would ask: should one experiment on millions of human beings?

Soloviev was also keenly aware of the danger posed by the other collectivist ideology of our times, extreme nationalism. His ideas of “all-unity” and Godmanhood led him, in purely theological terms, to hope for Creation’s transfiguration and the “deification” of all humanity, not any one particular class, group, or nation. In political and social terms, this faith left him deeply suspicious of all particularisms. Like Tolstoy, whose ideas he generally despised, Soloviev strongly opposed persecution of the Jews. Considering our own age’s anti-Semitism, Berdyaev reminded his readers that “Vladimir Soloviev believed the defense of the Jews to be one of the important missions of his life. For us Christians the Jewish problem does not consist in knowing whether the Jews are good

5. See Steven Weinberg, “A Designer Universe?” *New York Review of Books*, vol. 46, no. 16 (October 21, 1999), 48.

or bad, but whether we are good or bad.”⁶ Soloviev would have said the same about hostility to Poles and Catholics, and, indeed, he worked for a reunification of the Churches. With his wonderful, utterly impractical, at times even absurd idealism, he once called for the unification of Europe spiritually under the pope and politically under the tsar.

As he saw the danger of revolutionary violence, Soloviev also warned of nationalist violence. In an argument that has recently been revived in Russia, Soloviev first rejected both nationalism, in its usual sense, and its opposite, cosmopolitanism; he then sought to combine the best of the two dialectically—a style of his thinking and argumentation that, to this reader at least, rapidly grows tedious. Nationalism, he contended, denies the true Christian and ethical teaching of brotherly love and so leads to the moral degradation, not (as its proponents imagine) to the spiritual uplifting of the nation. But cosmopolitanism, much like Marxism, destroys the human personality, without which no spiritual development is possible. Not only do collective entities like nations have personalities, but every individual personality, shaped as it is by its cultural milieu, manifests national features. And how can one love or even respect a person while denying what is regarded as important by him or her?

The resolution of this conflict between nationalism and cosmopolitanism lies in a truer understanding of nationalism. Francis Bacon and Shakespeare contributed to the glory of England not by an ideology of England for the English but by contributing, in their own national style, to the absolute values of humanity, accessible to anyone; so did Cimabue and Dante in Italy, and their equivalents among other peoples. What is wrong with nationalism is the idea that truth and goodness are national; rather, the nation is exalted by contributing to universal truth and goodness in its particular way. Here again we see Soloviev’s inclination to seek a free unity, a pluralism preserving each personality but somehow forming a whole.

One often wishes that Soloviev would arrive at his conclusions in some other way, because they are often much more profound than the allegedly systematic thinking that leads to them. His idea that the resolution of the conflict between the oppressive Russian Orthodox Church and materialist atheism is to be found in a spiritualized Orthodoxy concerned with social justice is doubtless one that (to paraphrase a comment by Sigmund Freud) lesser minds could have arrived at with smaller effort. But we might pause at his idea that between the collective

6. Nicholas Berdyaev, *Christianity and Anti-Semitism* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 4.

state and individual people, between abstract law and particular personalities, between coercive bureaucracy and freely choosing individuals, a country needs a middle ground: and Soloviev proceeds to describe “society,” more or less what we have come to call civil society. No country can prosper without such middle-level institutions, and the Soviets, who destroyed all independent institutions in their pursuit of total control, doubtless weakened Russia. And when the Soviet state disintegrated, each of its component parts was left lacking any stable and respected entities—in contrast, for instance, to Spain and Poland, which preserved them and so made an easier transition to democracy.

Berdyaev was to criticize Soloviev for valuing unity too much; it would necessarily lead to an infringement on the personality. But in the Russian context in which he lived, Soloviev was remarkable precisely for stressing, explaining, and applying the idea that unity and social progress are not only compatible with, but actually presume individual differences. A multiplicity of worldviews enriches humanity and a society not only because (in the classical liberal view) it is by open competition that the truth can best be reached, but also because plurality of perspective is itself enriching. Here is one real link between Soloviev’s concept of all-unity and Bakhtin’s ideas of dialogue, polyphony, and “a unity of a higher order.” Nationalism, totalitarianism, and narrow-minded religiosity seek to obliterate the many to make one; but we need instead a one that is already plural. The Trinity is itself a society.

Soloviev’s approach had significant influence on the Russian liberal movement. And here a personal note: as a graduate student, I chose as a minor field Russian intellectual history, but the Russian liberal (as opposed to radical) movement was barely, if ever, mentioned. The Whiggish history of the time had led to that movement’s neglect—or perhaps we should say, the *inverse* Whiggism, insofar as everything was seen as leading not to the enlightened present but to the disaster of Bolshevik rule. Because another path was not taken, history was implicitly presented as if it *could* not have been taken. Now that Communism has fallen, the need to recover Russia’s liberal tradition, the counterfactual history that never was realized, has been felt.

Several prominent Russian liberals and pluralists began as Marxists and later found faith, as did Berdyaev, Sergei Bulgakov, and Peter Struve (the last a prominent leader of the Constitutional Democratic Party). For them, the intellectual roots of Western liberalism seemed less than adequate. In Russia, the utilitarians had been appropriated by the radicals, who discovered (and emphasized) the potential for totalitarianism that lay hidden in their work. Not only Jean-Jacques Rousseau but also Jeremy Bentham and even John Stuart Mill have had a dou-

ble career, both as liberals and as authoritarian radicals, and, however strange it may seem to some, both readings develop potentials in their work.

With all forms of materialism taken over by the radicals and ideologues, Russian liberals sought other sources. Often enough, they realized that their key difference from the radicals lay in their respect for the individual personality. They decisively rejected the line of thought voiced by the nihilist Bazarov in Turgenev's *Fathers and Children*: that there is no need to be concerned with individuality just as no botanist would think of studying every individual birch tree; that all people are alike in soul and in body. As Bazarov puts the point, people all have the same spleen. Moreover, the radicals evinced a strong tendency to dislike, not just deny, individuality because it threatened egalitarianism as they understood it. As one radical ideologue in *The Possessed* demands, in the coming socialist society "Cicero will have his tongue cut out, Copernicus will have his eyes put out, Shakespeare will be stoned. . . . Complete equality!"⁷

If the usual Western sources of liberalism and pluralism were unavailable, how could the ideas of freedom, human rights, and the value of multiplicity be defended? Besides, utilitarianism raised disturbing questions: What if it were useful for society to murder people because of their beliefs or class origin, as was, indeed, to happen? For a group of Russians influenced by Soloviev, the answer lay in the infinite value of the human soul, an idea that could best be defended in idealist or religious terms. These thinkers' pluralism was not wedded to capitalism. Many, indeed, professed some form of noncoercive socialism; and though Soloviev defended private property and the rights of inheritance, he also advocated socializing the basic means of production. At the very least, he contended, respect for individuality demands finding some way to ensure that everyone's minimal needs are met. But the key point for him and his pluralist followers was that an economic system was to be judged by how well it fostered the development of the soul and not by how well it created equality, exalted the nation, or abolished class differences.

Dostoevsky has earned the reputation of prophet in large because he was apparently the only nineteenth-century thinker who foresaw that the twentieth century would become the age of what we have come to call totalitarianism. Less well known is his prediction that even in liberal societies, the increasing of wealth and the extension of rights would not, as assumed, be accompanied by a reduction but rather by an increase in crime. It was not that the author of *Poor People*

7. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Possessed*, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: Modern Library, 1936), 424–25.

and *Crime and Punishment* failed to recognize the contribution that bad social conditions make to crime. Rather, he insisted that those conditions include not just material but also moral ones, and the harmful changes in the moral climate may overwhelm the positive ones in the socioeconomic one. He laid special stress on one factor contributing to moral decline: the very idea that crime is merely the result of social conditions.

As so frequently happens, the intellectuals who describe reality overlook their own deleterious effects on it. When people cease to regard crime morally, as a matter of right and wrong, no amount of police will make up for the change. Moreover, if one is truly to help a criminal, to restore him to the social community, the transgressor must recognize that he has done something wrong in some fundamental sense, not just that he has violated some rule and been caught. And how can one convince someone of that if one believes in nothing beyond social conditioning oneself?

There must be such a beyond. Without something transcending the world described by what we have come to call rational choice, social life is nasty, brutish, and long. Soloviev phrased this point, somewhat obscurely, by insisting that there must be a Christian State. By this formulation he apparently meant both a force to restrain crime and a sense of transcendent morality to give the very concept of crime real content; one impulse to protect society and another to care for those it punishes.

A walk around Chicago or Miami might convince us that, in stressing that the social conditions of crime include moral ones, Dostoevsky and Soloviev had a point. Murder, suicide, and—perhaps most dangerous of all—the attraction of fanatic ideologies all increase as people suspect that life has no meaning beyond themselves. As the title of that famous anthology *The God That Failed* suggests, without ideals we succumb to idols. So, too, Jerry Muller's study of intellectuals' attraction to National Socialism, *The Other God That Failed*, suggests that the quest for Purpose may take on the bloodiest forms.⁸ In religious terms, ideology is idol worship.

Perhaps one thing we might learn from the history of the twentieth century is that liberal societies overlook spiritual questions at their peril. We may have something important to learn about the requirements for a lasting pluralism from Dostoevsky, Soloviev, and Bakhtin. Pluralism demands not an absence of values but an open dialogue among them. Capitalism and democracy deliver the goods, no doubt about it; but do they deliver the Goods?

8. Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

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Introduction

Vladimir S. Soloviev (1853–1900), once hailed by Nicholas Berdyaev as the “most distinguished representative of Russian religious philosophy in the nineteenth century,” was not well known in the West in his lifetime and has continued to languish in the margins of Western thought ever since his death. Moreover, he was consigned to relative obscurity in his native land for much of the twentieth century as his work remained largely outside the parameters of sanctioned discourse in Russia during Soviet rule. This situation changed in the late 1980s, when new editions of his works began to be issued as glasnost expanded and the Soviet state began to unravel. The revival of Russian interest in Soloviev’s thought inspired me to reexamine his writings on politics, law, and morality, an undertaking that resulted in this book of annotated translations. These selections reflect the evolution and maturation of Soloviev’s thinking about what he considered to be closely related subjects of abiding importance not just to Russians, but to all of humanity. And as readers of Soloviev will find evident, his contributions belong not just to Russia, but to the world; not just to the nineteenth century, but to the twentieth and beyond.¹

Seven decades of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice not only left a gaping hole in the landscape of Russian politics, but also resulted in the near destruction of independent and genuine inquiry in the more ethereal realms of philosophy, ethics, and legal theory. While intense competition to fill the first space began even as the Soviet Union collapsed, developments in theoretical discourse have lagged, and the second space remained in a kind of limbo in Russian social life at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Ongoing efforts by religious groups and political parties to build bridges over the chasm separating post-Soviet Russia from the pre-1917 epoch may be viewed as an integral part of the transformation that Russia is undergoing as its leaders attempt to redefine its mission to the world.² Perhaps recent Russian interest in Soloviev's work can be understood in the context of this ongoing search for meaning.

Soloviev could not have foreseen that his social and political thought would still have relevance for audiences a century after his death. Yet any contemporary reader of Soloviev must be impressed not only by his profound understanding of the integral unity of the common human experience, but also by how he seems to be speaking at times directly to the modern conscience and consciousness. Although Soloviev's life was cut short by illness, his prodigious intellect yielded fruit in a number of fields; he was known in his time as "theologian and philosopher, social and political writer, critic, historian and poet."³ But the only appellation that was important to Soloviev himself was that of Christian. He remained throughout his adult life a humble follower of Christ, one who, although often in urgent need himself, routinely gave away any money that he had to those who asked for it.⁴ He also propagated the basic message of the love of Christ in his consistent advocacy of a social gospel and genuine ecumenism, even as he fought vigorously for the formal legal guarantee of human rights in Russia. An unshakeable Christian faith informed every aspect of his work, from master's thesis ("The Crisis of Western Philosophy"—1874), through doctoral dissertation ("Critique of Abstract Principles"—1880), and right up to the very last of his endeavors, a remarkably prophetic piece which he titled "A Brief Tale about the Antichrist."⁵

Son of the respected historian Sergei M. Soloviev, grandson of an Orthodox priest, and related as well to the eighteenth-century Ukrainian Neoplatonist philosopher Hryhorii S. Skovoroda, Vladimir Soloviev exhibited passionate concern for the realization of a just society in Russia throughout his life. He would become the most tolerant, patient, and committed advocate and apologist for Christianity to participate in the intellectual life of Russia in the nine-

teenth century. Soloviev maintained a close friendship with Fyodor Dostoevsky in the later years of the great novelist's life, in spite of their age difference and many disagreements on practical matters. It was Soloviev's trademark stubborn intellectual consistency that compelled him to disagree and critique the elements of Dostoevsky's worldview which seemed not only illogical, but even irrational—most notably, his anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism. Soloviev had been allowed to view drafts of Dostoevsky's works in progress and conferred with him about his novel *The Devils*. Seen by some as spiritually linked to Dostoevsky and his successor in practice, Soloviev began after Dostoevsky's death in 1881 to focus more and more on a wide range of politically related topics, including the relation between church and state in Russia and abroad.⁶

None of his contemporaries took Christianity as social and political vocation more seriously. Soloviev believed that confessing the Christian Gospel meant pursuing social and political justice, which included the absolute rejection of religious and ethnic persecution and all forms of retribution. Soloviev openly championed such unpopular causes: he worked for the granting of full and equal legal rights to Russia's ethnic and religious minorities and for the abolition of capital punishment, emphasizing what he understood to be the divinely bestowed and therefore unconditional right to life and liberty. These public policy stances led directly to his isolation from nearly all secular sociopolitical institutions and much of the clerical establishment; they also cost him a regular income. He consciously prepared himself to pay the material cost of discipleship in following the gospel directive to "image Christ" in daily life. At Dostoevsky's funeral, Soloviev eulogized the great novelist's tireless preaching of the kingdom of God. Two months later he publicly protested the death penalty imposed upon the assassins of Tsar Aleksandr II, a scandalous act that can be seen as an example of his service to Christ through faith "not only in word, but in deed."⁷

As a result of this statement, Soloviev was officially barred from lecturing in public and ended up resigning his university post at St. Petersburg, abandoning what appeared to be a promising academic career. His public opposition to the death penalty, along with his support of religious and ethnic minority rights, his stress on an authentic, revitalized Christian political morality for the Russian State, and his vision of a reunified Church, East and West, combined to alienate him both from conservative, Orthodox Slavophiles and progressive, secular Westernizers. In his attempt to occupy a middle ground between them, he viewed himself as a conciliator and a member of the "Universal Church" (see especially "Heaven or Earth?" and "The Social Question in Europe").⁸

Soloviev proceeded to write in a well-established Russian tradition under the scrutiny of what he once referred to as the “censorship’s terror.” Oftentimes being forced to accept emendations of his work so that it would pass the censor’s desk, he learned, like others who preceded him, how to produce veiled criticism of the autocratic system, the Orthodox Church, and Russian nationalists, which he understood to be close collaborators in the construction of obstacles in the way of human rights and social progress. His passionate feelings about these matters and other issues of public policy sometimes appeared more bluntly in his private correspondence than in his public writings. He once compared nationalism to “the plague and syphilis,” the followers of which he later characterized as a “pseudo-patriotic clique . . . the grunting and howling embodiment of the national idea”; he also once used the example of the French Republic in a scathing comment about a state “without a tsar” being possible, but “a state without bureaucrats and thieves” being “absolutely unthinkable.”⁹

The severity of the censorship regime also forced Soloviev to publish some of his works outside his native land, a few of them first appearing in print only in French, and in one case of public protest against official anti-Semitism, anonymously in an essay published in English, under the aegis of a group of well-known writers. Regarding the publication abroad of his extensive theocratic project’s last installment (*La Russie et L’Eglise Universelle*, 1889) he wrote that he saw no use in the “publication of Russian books which will inevitably be forbidden in Russia.” The censors had earlier held up and altered parts of this enterprise, selectively excising some of his lengthy Old Testament citations in places that suggested an ambiguous evaluation of the righteousness of earthly kings. Such meddling could not have but adversely affected his exegetical purpose in this running commentary on what the Bible had to say about temporal rulers, and likely contributed to Soloviev’s growing alienation from all sectors of Russian officialdom.¹⁰

In this project, Soloviev had endeavored to build a Christian theory of the State based on what he called “free theocracy” (see “On the Christian State and Society”). That Soloviev intended this work to be a contribution to European political philosophy is strongly suggested by his reference to it as his “theocratic Leviathan,” recalling the seventeenth-century treatise by Thomas Hobbes, who sought to justify the inviolable rule of the British Sovereign. However, the practical mechanics of a future universal theocracy in which Russia would take its place as a moral and political force remained unclear. Some months before Soloviev died, he wrote that he had in fact wasted his “best years” on this failed

project, indirectly suggesting a comparison with Plato in what Soloviev understood to be the Athenian philosopher's failure in his *Laws*. One of his biographers, Konstantin Mochul'skii, who was very sympathetic to Soloviev's ideas, later assessed Soloviev's theocratic venture as a quest for a "practical Christian politics" that instead had resulted in "a most fantastic utopia."¹¹

It is perhaps no surprise that Soloviev's opponents sometimes accused him directly of heretical teaching. But in answer to the question What does Vladimir Soloviev teach? Soloviev's reply was clear and simple: "I can answer this briefly and definitively: I do not have *my own* teaching; but in view of the dissemination of harmful counterfeits of Christianity, I consider it my duty to explain the basic idea of Christianity from various aspects, in various forms . . . the idea of the Kingdom of God as the plenitude of human life, not only individual, but also social and political, united through Christ with the fullness of Divinity."¹² He understood his life's mission as evangelizing the Christian Gospel in the ancient tradition of the Nicaean church fathers and the writers of the Gospels themselves, and in no way developing some separate utopian theological schema that did not exist in the Nicene Creed (see "The Significance of Dogma").

An ongoing dispute—sometimes heated, sometimes cordial—between Soloviev and Count Lev N. Tolstoy over the nature of Christianity did not, however, prevent their cooperation in a common cause. The dispute encompassed Tolstoy's "new religion," which Soloviev understood to be only a variation of ancient heresies that either refuted the Nicene Creed directly or confused Christ's divine and corporeal natures in one way or another. Tolstoy sponsored and Soloviev organized the protest against official anti-Semitism in the spring of 1890, a written text appearing publicly only some months later in the *Times* of London under the title "The Jews in Russia" (see Appendix A).¹³

By 1892 Soloviev had become jaded by what he saw as a corrupt church and a false Christianity whose values differed little from those of the society around him. He decried the prevalent "ecclesial dogmatism, false spiritualism and individualism," but instead of urging "Christians of all faiths to unite in a common struggle against unbelief," he countered paradoxically at one point with the suggestion of uniting "with contemporary *unbelievers* in a struggle against contemporary Christians."¹⁴ From 1892 until 1894, the philosopher returned to the core of his formal intellectual upbringing, which consisted largely of Platonic and German idealism. During this time he completed one of his best-known works, *The Meaning of Love*, a series of essays in which he struggled to reconcile erotic love with philosophical idealism and biblical truth. Soloviev

would continue this effort by retracing what he understood to be part of Plato's own spiritual odyssey at a critical point in his intellectual development (see "Plato's Life-Drama," section XIX ff.).

Although in the end his lengthy theocratic Leviathan project floundered, Soloviev still retained faith that even if it was not to be revealed to him just how the great paradoxes and questions of human existence would eventually be resolved by the Divine Will, they indeed would be. His philosophical idealism would withstand the disappointment that followed the failed attempt to build a theoretical framework for a theocratic polity and to explain Russia's mission to the world in terms of both Christian eschatology and the Kantian-Hegelian notion of historical progress that underpins German idealism (see "On the Christian State and Society" and "Nationality from a Moral Point of View").

In his last statement on the subject of historical progress, the fictional "A Brief Tale about the Antichrist" (the last section of *Three Conversations*, his final philosophical work, completed only a few months before his death), Soloviev appeared to transfer his earlier optimism regarding the establishment of a political kingdom of God on earth into an eschatological framework. For Soloviev the philosopher-theologian, the ultimate solutions and answers to the dilemmas and paradoxes of human existence lay only at the Hegelian "end of history," a favorite topic in Russia at the fin de siècle. But Soloviev's understanding of the acceleration of the historical process and human progress as a sure symptom of the proximity of the end times should not be interpreted as implying their immediate eschatological imminence, and he suggested as much in this apocalyptic story, which was set more than a century in the future.¹⁵

"A Brief Tale about the Antichrist" is one of two pieces of artistic literature that I have selected for this collection of primarily sociopolitical and religious essays. Unique among Soloviev's endeavors, it is generally considered to be his final legacy to an unbelieving world. Answering millennialist expectations, Soloviev drew extensively on the Bible, including St. John's vision in the Book of Revelation, as well as on ecclesiastic tradition and legends concerning the Antichrist, integrating them into a remarkably hopeful vision of a future reconciliation and reunification of the Christian churches with each other and of Christians with Jews. The work recalls in some ways Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor legend, which constitutes a seminal part of *Brothers Karamazov* and reflects a timeless theme that continues to inform normative political philosophy as well as theological and literary studies. Significantly, some of the contemporary sources for the story can be found in the subjects of the several essays which the author included as addenda to his *Three Conversations* and which I have in-

cluded in this book. Emphasizing the special importance of some of these essays, Soloviev wrote in the preface to the first edition of this work that they were among “the most felicitous that were ever written by me.”¹⁶

In “A Brief Tale about the Antichrist,” Soloviev foresaw the eventual rise of powerful international organizations, the culmination of the process of European political unification into a “United States of Europe,” and the expansion of Japanese power and influence. European *realpolitik* and the conflicting nationalist agendas of his day suggested an inevitable confrontation. He was able to extrapolate that the waning power of Russia and the rise of Japan would lead to disaster—and indeed, several years later the Japanese would deal a devastating blow to the Russian imperial fleet at Tsushima Strait (1905). In the prelude to Soloviev’s tale, however, a Japan allied with China goes on to conquer Europe and virtually enslave it for fifty years, after which Europeans revolt against Asiatic control. This political prophecy sets the scene for events which lead up to the end of the historical process and the heart of the story.

The tale is at once eschatological and contemporary in its view of the paradoxes that characterize human existence and the divine plan for the world.¹⁷ In one sense, the story appears as the culmination of Soloviev’s efforts to refute Nietzsche directly from a purely biblical frame of reference and at the same time to outline the inevitable consequences of human egoism outside the framework of the Divine Will. Soloviev adapted the Dostoevskian and Nietzschean theme of the political incarnation of a superman to this preapocalyptic end-of-history scenario. Two other essays included in this volume also directly address Nietzsche’s foretelling of a superhuman “man of the future” arriving to teach humanity a new religion (see “Literature or Truth?” and “The Idea of a Superman”).

The complexity of Soloviev’s tale is apparent in the variety of interpretations it has yielded: according to one, it represents part of a “veiled controversy with Tolstoy,” perhaps a final salvo, as it were, in their intense, long-standing debate over spiritual matters.¹⁸ The story reflects Soloviev’s pessimism about the future of egoistic patriotism, the European balance of power system, and the post-1870 wave of colonialism, all of which he had earlier condemned as part of a predatory “politics of interest” (see “Morality and Politics”). From 1883 to the last years of his life Soloviev castigated Russia’s role in these politics in the harshest terms. In the brilliant essay “Nationality from a Moral Point of View” (1895), Soloviev fashioned a rebuttal to Kant on cosmopolitanism by developing a theoretical model distinguishing between nationalism (a negative phenomenon) and nationality (a positive characteristic). He had earlier introduced this model in rough form in “Morality and Politics,” drawing extensively on the Bible and the

historical record to warn of the dangerous signs of barbarity revealing themselves in Europe.¹⁹

The lengthy essay “Plato’s Life-Drama” (1898) and the major undertaking of a translation of Plato’s dialogues toward the end of his life attest to the vital importance of Plato to Soloviev in his last years. This immersion into the Platonic corpus accompanied Soloviev’s work on the problem of logically reconciling law and morality. As references throughout his essays and correspondence suggest, Soloviev in some ways modeled his own quest for justice and reconciliation in Russia on the classical example of Socrates in Athens. In “Plato’s Life-Drama,” Soloviev characterized Socrates as a rejected conciliating force (*tertium quid*) in an Athenian imperial order that had arrived at a critical juncture in its history; the parallels with Soloviev’s own situation are more than coincidental. Soloviev also took issue with some of the predominant interpretations of Plato in German scholarship, innovatively explaining the sea change from Plato’s early Socratic views on justice and law in the earlier dialogues to the conservatism of the *Laws* of his later life. The conclusions he reached about Plato’s abandonment of Socrates’ quest for justice were informed by his own historical and ethical insights into Christian and pre-Christian thought.

In the absence of a good Russian translation of Plato, the poet A. A. Fet had earlier encouraged Soloviev “to give Plato to Russian literature” as part of his “patriotic duty.” At the peak of his intellectual powers and with characteristic modesty, Soloviev studiously returned to Plato: “What better means to master completely and firmly philosophical works, especially those of the ancients, if not by translating them from the original into one’s native language?”²⁰ But Soloviev was not translating Plato in order to lose himself on the ethereal plane of Platonic abstraction; on the contrary, he was driven by a keen sense of practical necessity and historical purpose. Addressing the shortcomings of both Plato’s early and late treatments of the twin issues of law and justice, Soloviev unequivocally maintained in *Law and Morality* that law must correspond “not to the form of justice only, but to its practical essence, which is not at all tied to the abstract concept of equality in general. *Injustice which is equally applied to all does not become justice.*”²¹ Soloviev transformed theory into practice by openly condemning any coercion in matters of conscience; he wrote that formal religious freedom and tolerance of other faiths were as important to his generation as freeing the peasants had been to an earlier one.²²

Soloviev’s discussion of the closely shared social, historical, and theoretical foundations of law and morality resonates especially well in the contemporary

Western mind. Modern deterministic attitudes about crime echo the program of the then-dominant paradigm of criminal anthropology, against which Soloviev so vigorously argued in the essays of *Law and Morality*. Proceeding methodically and with logical precision, he constructed an argument in which the demands of morality and law alike might be reconciled. His assumptions were at the same time simple and complex: not surprisingly, with regard to the moral universe they showed themselves to be both theologically Christian and philosophically idealist, encompassing both the Nicene Creed and a philosophical aspiration for the Good.

Many of the essays in this book are the product of Soloviev's extremely active role as *publitsist*, or social and political commentator on current affairs, in such journals and newspapers as *Vestnik Evropy* (Messenger of Europe), *Pravoslavnoe obozrenie* (Orthodox review), *Mir iskusstva* (World of art), and *Rus'*. Soloviev obtained wider recognition through his current affairs writing than through his more abstruse theocratic and philosophical pursuits. This writing stubbornly defies attempts at simple categorization, for its high erudition and eclecticism speak of a bygone age in which the classics, religion, philosophy, and history as well as contemporary developments were often interpreted as integral parts of an indivisible humanistic whole. A unity of thought across disciplines is consistent with Soloviev's central and key principle of *vseedinstvo*, or "all-unity." According to Soloviev, "The all-unity idea can finally realize itself or become embodied only in the fullness of perfected individuals, which means that the ultimate purpose of the entire matter is the higher development of each individual in the fullest unity of everyone. And this necessarily includes in itself as well our life's purpose, which, therefore, has neither the inducement nor the possibility of separating or isolating us from the universal purpose. *We are necessary to the world just as much as it is to us.*"²³

Ironically, Soloviev the Christian social and political commentator seemed to agree with the socialist Karl Marx on one point: philosophers up to that time had only interpreted the world, but the task lay in changing it. Soloviev would often take issue, directly and indirectly, with official explanations and rationales for social and economic policy, attempting to represent the unofficial views of an unrecognized "loyal opposition" to the tsarist regime. Although he was not afraid of the word *progress* and used it in a positive sense, he rejected radical socialism (Marxism) and revolution outright on the basis of ethical considerations (see "Christianity and Revolution"). He provided progressive Christian perspectives on issues which were in some ways ahead of Russia's time and pas-

sionately opposed every kind of obscurantism and languishing in the comfortable indolence of ignorance (see “The Question of Women’s Rights,” “On Temptations,” and “Heaven or Earth?”).

Soloviev’s critique of Russian religion and dogma as a function of the political situation appears forcefully in different ways throughout his “Sunday Letters” (1897–98), a hitherto virtually untapped source for his views on contemporaneous Russian affairs. The cultic heresies that reflected premillennial anxieties and that the Orthodox Church recorded and monitored closely became for Soloviev a reason for questioning why peasants had become alienated from the official church in the first place. Consistent with his position on freedom of conscience as absolute, he insisted that the peasants had a right to adopt any views, however bizarre and heretical, without being investigated and hounded by the authorities (see “The Spiritual Condition of the Russian People”). In this regard, Russia at the end of the nineteenth century was perhaps not very different from Russia at the end of the twentieth.²⁴

Soloviev addressed problems ranging from nationalism and power politics to socialism and revolution, from women’s rights to capital punishment, while keeping the role of the Universal Church ever in view. The depth of his integrity was apparent to all who had contact with him. Even the Russian symbolist writer Valerii Briusov, who himself was far from Christian faith and who had been directly criticized by Soloviev for his decadence, could eulogize the Christian philosopher in the following way: “In reality, all his philosophy is only an attempt to justify rationally the Christian belief that every person is gifted a fullness of being, that our existence does not end with death. . . . A kind of special power and intensity of perception seemed to show itself in his work. Everyone listened to the powerful voice of Soloviev as to the words of a master; his right to judge was acknowledged. . . . Death unexpectedly cut short this teaching so necessary to us.”²⁵

Some of the essays comprised in this book represent their first faithful rendering into English in their entirety (for example, “Plato’s Life-Drama”). Additionally, many of the essays that I have selected have never before been translated into English (*Law and Morality* and “Sunday Letters”). One of my principal purposes was to provide English-reading audiences with works that, although more than a century old, would be completely new and relevant for them and would display the unity of Soloviev’s thought across the spectrum of his political, theological-philosophical, historical, and literary endeavors. Although these essays appeared under one cover in Russian in a prerevolutionary, posthumously

published twelve-volume set of collected works, wherever possible I turned to the first printing or publication of a text in one of the journals mentioned above.

As an experienced translator of literature and philosophy in several languages, Soloviev could empathize with the difficulties that any translator encounters:

A translator who wishes to *convey* faithfully, and not *betray* his author (especially when the matter concerns a classical author), should beware of both the Scylla of inappropriate invention and the Charybdis of a dead literalism alike. Both the one and the other are incompatible with *faithfulness* in translating. Concerning inventiveness, or so-called free translation, no one obstructs any man who has the capability and inclination to literary work from displaying it, however and in whatever form he chooses. This inalienable right is restricted, however, by the right of the reader not to be subjected to premeditated deception.²⁶

Following this advice, I remained concerned throughout this project first and foremost with the issues of precision and clarity in rendering Soloviev's thought into English; considerations of style entered only secondarily into the calculus of the translation. Wherever possible I attempted to convey some of the flavor of Soloviev the master stylist while doing justice to the complexity, brilliance, and humanity of Soloviev the thinker. Unfortunately, this was frequently not possible, and whenever a conflict arose between substance and style, substance always prevailed. A case in point is my translation of the occasional lines of verse (Soloviev's own and those of others) interspersed throughout these essays: disregarding meter and rhyme, I stay close to the literal meaning of the Russian words.

The author's notations appear mostly as they originally did either parenthetically within the text or as footnotes. My comments appear as endnotes.

Politics, Law, and Morality

1 Christianity and Revolution

The point of departure of Platonism is the negation of reality as authentic existence, as truth. Plato acknowledges given reality but places in opposition to it a proper world of truth.

In the philosophy of Plato, as in philosophy in general, this opposition is mainly theoretical. From Plato's point of view, the improper, abnormal character of reality consists in its irrationality, haphazardness, and inauthenticity. That which he acknowledges as the authentic, proper, rational, and ideal world is accessible to intellectual contemplation—to the speculative activity of intelligence. To be sure, the philosophy of Plato contains a moral element as well, but it is only secondary. The philosophy of antiquity did not go beyond this theoretical

Source: “The contents of a lecture given for the women’s curriculum by Professor V. Soloviev, 13 March 1881,” in *Sobranie sochinenii Vladimira Sergeievicha Solovieva* 3:417–21. This lecture was later appended as a supplement to “Dukhovnye osnovy zhizni.” I have excised Soloviev’s brief introductory remarks and borrowed a title for this lecture from a French version, “Le Christianisme et la Révolution,” which appears in J. B. Severac, *Vladimir Soloviev: Textes* (Paris: L. Michaud, 1906), 75–81.

opposition of an authentic world and an inauthentic world, and the final form of this philosophy, Neoplatonism (as the name indicates), was no more than a systematized complement to Plato's philosophy.

Christianity for the first time gave this ancient opposition of an authentic world and an inauthentic world a moral, vital, practical significance. Like Platonism, Christianity starts with the negation of reality; yet it negates it not only as inauthentic existence, but as antimoral existence as well—evil. Evil and the weight of existence were perceived here with quite a special force. “The entire world lies in evil,” said the Apostle, and this is true.¹ All that we call evil in a moral sense—violence, slavery, the destruction of one creature by another—is the law of the world and nature, which lives by nothing more than this rule of struggle among creatures and destruction of creatures by one another.

But this general law of nature would not have been perceived as evil if another law had not existed. That this other law or principle already appears in nonhuman nature but acts there as a blind, unconscious, and internally imperceptible force is without doubt. This higher law has the same instinctive character in man in the state of nature. But man goes beyond this stage; at a certain point in his development, he attains the perception and consciousness of this other law of existence as an *intrinsic* principle of his noncorporeal life.

This consciousness and perception of a Divine principle opposed to the material principle of existence first achieved its perfection in the person of Christ and constitutes the essence of Christianity. “The entire world lies in evil,” said the favorite disciple of Christ, but we know that we are “sons of God” and we have “conquered those who are of the world” because “the One Who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world” and “this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.”*

We have in Christianity not only a teaching similar to other religious teachings, but a genuine, practical, and simple fact: the birth of a New Man. This simple reality, this incarnation of the Truth in one deed as a living principle, as new life, was not just an inward and subjective transformational process; the interior rebirth was accompanied by a change in the material nature of man, by a transformation of all the outward relations of man.

But this external and objective rebirth must be witnessed and understood by all humanity in a necessarily long and complex process. The reasons for the sluggishness and complication of this process are easy to understand. Christ and those of his disciples in whom the fact of the birth of the Spiritual Man was ac-

* First Letter of John 4:4, 5:19, 5:4.

complished knew of what they spoke when they spoke of God, of Divine life, of the Spiritual Man: it was a question of the results of their own interior life, of all the things that they had themselves experienced.

But as soon as an outward expression was given to the reality they had experienced, as soon as it was objectified in images, people who had not themselves experienced this transformation, and on whom still weighed the domination of the material principle, could accept the new forms of life only in an entirely external manner, and reconcile them to the letter, as it were, with their former ways. And thus, they employed the spiritual life and the realm of the Spirit in a purely formal and external system. This is what has happened. The majority of humanity has taken Christianity by its formal aspect. Doctrines and institutions appeared that were on their surface Christian but were bereft of the interior life of Christianity. The theology and the church of the Middle Ages are of this genre. The theoretical attitude proceeding from here vis-à-vis the fundamental principles of true life (an attitude which is not only incompatible with the essence of Christianity, but also diametrically opposed to its spirit) inevitably involved the degeneration of Christianity in practice as well.

Christianity entrusts to humanity the mission of implementing the reign of Truth, a reign which at the same time has been revealed as an intrinsic and tangible fact, as the process of true life (the latter consists in a process of interior and subjective rebirth and in its objectification). In distorted Christianity a tendency appeared to realize the reign of God falsely by external means, by coercion. Let us recall these defenders of Catholic orthodoxy who, during the Albigensian crusade, gave orders to slaughter the innocent and the guilty without distinction, saying, "In the next world, the Lord will discern the truly faithful." These fanatical zealots of the letter of the law, who wanted to establish truth by violence and murder, should be considered the ancestors of contemporary revolutionaries.²

In Christianity and the Church of the Middle Ages, the Christian God, the Divine principle revealed by genuine Christianity, was converted into an external principle entirely alien to the true human principle, and in this capacity was condemned sooner or later to lose all its power. The result of this process of exteriorization was that man detached himself from God and declared that God does not exist. Nevertheless, there remained of Christianity an infinite desire in the human spirit to realize something better on earth, a reign of truth in this world, in spite of the fact that the true character of a reign of truth was lost.

Thus, man lost his God, mislaid the Divine principle which was hidden in his soul and which Christianity had revealed to him. There remained at his dis-

posal only his reason—the human principle—and his instinct—the principle of animal nature. And so, we witness the effort of people to found a realm of truth on these principles; attempts have been made to realize it in the name of pure reason: this is what the French Revolution of 1789 wanted to do when it proclaimed the absolute value of the laws of reason. But very quickly after the overthrow of the old order, it was discovered that reason is an indeterminate and indifferent formal principle, which can by means of its analysis shatter traditional forms of life, but is incapable in itself of giving content to life. Reason receives living content either from a Divine being or from material existence. When the first was shut off, only the second remained. Thus, we see that after the proclamation of the purely human principle of the laws of reason, animal passions were given free rein. The mission of the first half of the French Revolution was the proclamation of absolute laws of reason, which had certain good results. With the abolition of slavery in the form of feudalism's remnants and serfdom, it completed what Christianity had begun. But the second half of the Revolution was based on violence, and this only led to a worse despotism.

The contemporary revolutionary movement began where the French Revolution left off, and this is a logical course of events. In effect, the worldview that dominates this movement rejected not only theological principles, but also this metaphysical idea of any laws of pure reason, which lay at the basis of the French Revolution of 1789. Once the theological principles and the metaphysical idea of the absolute value of the person are removed, there remains only animal nature, the effect of which is violence.

But if the present revolution begins with violence, if it utilizes violence as a means to realize a new truth, it will by the same token reveal a concealed falsehood within itself, a falsehood both in principle and in practice.

The falsehood *in principle*—because when one admits only a material principle existing in the world and in man, one does not have the right to speak of what ought to be, to say that there is something which does not exist, but which ought to exist. From a materialist point of view, all is material fact and there cannot exist any absolute principle.

The falsehood *in practice*—if the present-day revolution truly searched for a reign of truth, it would not consider violence as a means to realize it. If it acknowledges truth as being that which is necessary and normal, if it believes in truth, it must acknowledge that truth is, by itself, more powerful than falsehood. To employ violence in order to realize truth is to acknowledge that truth is powerless. The contemporary revolution shows in fact that it acknowledges truth as powerless.

But truth is indeed powerful, and the violence of the present-day revolution demonstrates its weakness. From a human point of view, all violence, all external coercion by a force outside of man, is weakness. An external force of this type is power for the beast, but weakness for the spiritual being; and if man is not destined to return to a bestial state, then a revolution based on violence is without a future.

2 Morality and Politics

A complete separation of morality and politics constitutes one of the prevalent errors and evils of our century. From the point of view of Christianity and within the limits of the Christian world these two domains—the moral and the political—although they cannot coincide with one another, should however be in the closest sense connected.

As Christian morality has in view the realization of the kingdom of God within each man, so Christian politics must prepare for the advent of the kingdom of God for all humankind as a whole, made up for the most part of nations, races, and states.

The past and present politics of nations actively participating in history has very little in common with such a goal, and the greater part even contradicts it—this is an indisputable fact. In the politics of Christian nations up to now, godless enmity and discord rule, and there

Source: “Nravstvennost’ i politika. Istoricheskie obiazannosti Rossii,” which serves as the introduction to *Natsional’nyi vopros v Rossii*, 2d ed. (St. Petersburg: 1891), 1–24. This is a slightly revised portion of an article that appeared separately both in the journal *Rus’* (January 1883) and as an introduction to *Velikii spor i Khristianskaia politika*. See also *Sobranie sochinenii* 5:3–23.

is not so much as a mention of the kingdom of God. For many this is enough: so it is, and thus, so it will continue to be. Ultimately, however, it is not possible to sustain in a logical way this kind of admiration of raw fact, because then we would have to admire plague and cholera, which are also raw facts. The entire dignity of a man is contained in the fact that he consciously struggles with ugly reality for the sake of a better goal. The dominion of disease is fact, but the goal is health, and there is a transition from this ugly fact and the means to a better goal, and it is called medicine. And in the common life of humanity the kingdom of Evil and discord is a fact; but the goal is the kingdom of God, and toward this goal the intermediate transition from ugly reality is called Christian politics.*

In accordance with generally held opinion, each nation should have its own politics, the goal of which is to observe the exclusive *interests* of the individual nation or state. Recently, patriotic voices resound louder and louder among us, demanding that we not fall behind other nations *in this*, and also that we be guided in politics exclusively *by our* national and state interests, and any deviation from such "politics of interest" appears as stupidity or betrayal. Perhaps in such a view there is a misunderstanding which arises from the vagueness of the word *interest*: the entire matter is precisely *which* interests we are talking about. If we suppose the interests of the nation, as they usually do, to be its wealth and outward might, then despite all the importance of these interests, we are sure that they *must not* constitute the supreme and final goal of politics; for otherwise they will be able to justify all sorts of crimes, just as we now see. Our patriots have easily pointed out the political crimes of England as an example, as a suitable role model. The example is in fact a felicitous one: no one, both in word and deed, worries so much as the English about their national and state interests. Everyone knows how for the sake of these interests the rich and masterly English starve the Irish, suppress the Indians, forcibly poison the Chinese with opium, and pillage Egypt.[†] Doubtless, all these matters suggest concern about national interests. While there is no stupidity or betrayal here, there is much in-

* Thus this politics is not at all *utopian* in the disapproving sense of the word; that is, the kind that does not want to know about ugly reality and only realizes its ideal in hollow, abstract space; a Christian politics, on the contrary, proceeds from reality and first of all wants *to assist against actual evil*.

[†] One ought not, however, to forget that in England there are such influential party leaders (as, for example, Gladstone) who certainly understand the national interests of their native land otherwise, and that it is possible there to demand the liberty of Ireland openly, not bringing on oneself accusations of national and state betrayal.

humanity and shamelessness. If *this kind* of patriotism were the *only* patriotism possible, then we would not have to imitate English politics: *it is better to renounce patriotism than conscience*. But there is no such alternative. We dare to think that true patriotism is in accordance with Christian conscience, that there is another politics besides the politics of interest, or better said, that in a Christian nation other interests exist which do not require and absolutely do not permit international *cannibalism*.

That this international cannibalism is something unpraiseworthy is felt even by those who use it the most. The politics of material interest rarely exhibits itself in its pure form. Even the English, who complacently suck the blood from the “lower races” and consider themselves rightful in so doing simply because this is profitable for them, often assure us that by doing this they bring a great boon to the lower races themselves and introduce them to higher civilization, which is true to a certain degree. Thus, here crass striving toward one’s *advantage* turns into lofty thinking of one’s own cultural *vocation*. This ideal motive, still very weak in the practical Englishman, comes to light in all its force in the “nation of thinkers.” The crude empirical cannibalism of English politics is made impossible for the Germans by their penchant for generalization and German idealism. If the Germans have absorbed the Wendts and Prussians and are prepared to swallow the Poles, then it is not because it is profitable for them, but because it is their “calling” as a superior race: Germanizing a lesser nationality will lead them to true culture. English exploitation is a matter of material profit; Germanization is a spiritual calling. The Englishman appears before his victims as a pirate, the German—as a pedagogue, preparing them for a higher education. The philosophical superiority of Germans is revealed even in their political cannibalism: they direct their devouring acts not only to the external value of a nation, but also to its internal essence. The English-empiricist has a concern for facts; the German-thinker—with ideas: one robs and suppresses *nations*, the other destroys in them *nationality* itself.

The high merit of German culture is inarguable. But just the same, the principle of a higher cultural calling is brutal and false. The sorrowful shadows of nations having lost their vitality and having been subjected to spiritual slavery clearly speak of its brutality. And the falsehood of this principle, its internal inconsistency, is manifestly displayed in the incapability of its logical application. As a consequence of the vagueness of what is properly higher culture and of what the cultural mission consists, there is not one historical nation which would not announce its claims to this mission and would not consider itself in the right to violate other nationalities in the name of their higher calling. It is not only the

Germans that consider themselves a nation of nations, but also the Hebrews, French, English, Greeks, Italians, and so forth. But the claims of one nation for a privileged position in humankind *exclude* the same claim of another nation. Consequently, either all these claims must remain empty boasting, suitable only as a screen for the oppression of much weaker neighbors, or a struggle to the death must spring up between the great nations over the right to cultural violence. But the outcome of such a struggle in no way will prove the real higher calling of the victor, for the preponderance of military force is not testimony to cultural superiority: the hordes of Tamerlane and Batu-khan had a similar preponderance, and if sometime in the future such a preponderance would fall to the Chinese, thanks to their large number, then, anyway, nobody will bow to the cultural superiority of the Mongolian race. The idea of cultural calling can be well grounded and fruitful only when this calling is taken not as an imaginary *privilege*, but as a real *duty*, not as supremacy, but as service.

Every individual has material and selfish interests, but there are also *duties* or, in other words, *moral* interests, and the person who neglects these latter interests and acts only out of advantage or selfishness deserves every condemnation. This should also apply with regard to nations. Even if one looks only at a nation as on the sum of its individual people, then the moral element that is present in the components cannot disappear in this aggregate of individual people. As the common interest of a whole nation constitutes the *resultant force* of all individual interests (and not a simple repetition of each one separately) and has a relationship to similar collective interests of other nations, so too should national morality be discussed. The extension of the personal into the national is not a basis for restricting man to the lower aspect alone: if the material interests of individual people generate the common national interest, then the moral interests of individual people also generate a moral interest of the nation, which is related now not to individual units, but to the national aggregate; a moral duty appears in the nation relative to other nations and all humankind. Seeing in this common duty a metaphor and at the same time standing for the common national interest as something real—is an obvious contradiction. If the nation is only an abstract concept, then an abstract concept not only cannot have duties, but also cannot have any interests and calling whatsoever. However, this is an obvious mistake.

In any event, we must recognize the interest of the nation as a common function of individual people, but such a function is also the national duty. A nation has an interest, a nation has a conscience. And if this conscience weakly comes to light in politics, and only barely restrains the manifestation of national ego-

ism, then this is an abnormal, unhealthy phenomenon, and everyone should confess that this is bad. International cannibalism, whether justified or unjustified by a higher calling, is bad; supremacy in the political views of an African savage is bad, when he responds to a question about good and evil thusly: good—is when I take from my neighbor his herd and wives; and bad—when they take them from me. Such a view dominates in international politics; but to a significant extent it also governs domestic relations: within the boundaries of one and the same nation, fellow citizens daily exploit, cheat, and sometimes kill one another; however, no one concludes from this that it should be so; why should such a conclusion obtain force when applied to higher politics?

There is yet another absurdity in the theory of national egoism which is destructive of the theory. Once the supremacy of one's own interest is recognized and legalized in politics only as *mine*, then it becomes absolutely impossible to point out the *boundaries* of this *mine*; the patriot considers as his own the interest of his nation by virtue of national solidarity; and certainly, this is much better than personal egoism, but here it is not obvious as to why *national* solidarity should be stronger than the solidarity of every other social group which does not coincide with the boundaries of nationality. During the French Revolution, for example, for the expatriate-legitimists, foreign rulers and magnates turned out to be much more “their own” than the French Jacobins; for a German social-democrat the Paris Commune was also more “his own” than a Pomeranian landowner, and so forth and so on. Perhaps this is very bad on the part of the expatriates and socialists, but on the basis of political *interest* it is absolutely impossible to find grounds for their condemnation.

For the nation as for the individual, the elevation of one's own interest, one's own self-importance, to a higher principle, means legalizing and perpetuating the difference and the struggle which tear humanity apart. The common fact of a struggle for existence which transpires throughout all nature also has a place in natural humanity. But all historical growth, all the success of humankind, consists in the consistent restriction of this fact, in the gradual elevation of humankind to a higher form of truth and love. The revelation of this image, of this New Man, appeared in the living reality of Christ. And having perceived the New Man, it does not suit us to return to the feeble and meager elements of the world, to the division between Hellene and barbarian, pagan and Jew, which was abolished on the cross. Exclusive interest and the significance of one's own nation require us in the name of patriotism to place it higher than anything else. The blood of Christ, spilled by Jewish patriots in the name of their national interest, saved us from *this kind* of patriotism!

"If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. . . . For it is better that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish." Destroyed by the patriotism of one nation, Christ is risen for all nations and commanded his disciples, "Go and make disciples of *all nations*."¹

So? Does Christianity abolish nationality? No, rather, it preserves it. *Nationality* is not abolished, but *nationalism* is. The bitter persecution and killing of Christ was the work not of the Hebrew nationality, for which Christ (in his humanity) was its supreme flowering, but this was the work of a narrow and blind nationalism of such patriots as Caiaphas—and that which was said above about the politics of the Germans and the English does not at all serve in the condemnation of these *nationalities*. We distinguish nationality from nationalism by *their fruits*. The fruits of the English nationality we see in Shakespeare and Byron, in Berkeley and in Newton; the fruits of English nationalism are worldwide robbery, the exploits of Warren Hastings and Lord Seymour, destruction and killing. The fruits of the great German nationality are Lessing and Goethe, Kant and Schelling, and the fruit of German nationalism—is the forcible Germanization of neighbors from the times of the Teutonic knights right up to our own day.

Nationality is a positive force, and every nation by its own character is appointed for a particular service.² Distinct nationalities are different organs in the whole body of humanity—for the Christian this is an obvious truth.³ But if the members of the physical body are only as in the fable of Menena Agrippa, arguing with one another, then in nations—in the organs of humanity, components not of chemical elements alone, but also in the form of conscious and volitional elements—the aspiration to separate oneself and to keep aloof from it in opposition to one's wholeness can and does arise. In such an aspiration, *the positive force of nationality* turns into *the negative aggression of nationalism*. This is a nationality abstracted from its living forces, sharpened in its conscious exclusivity and by this acuteness appealing to everything else. Taken to an extreme, nationalism destroys a nation which has fallen into it, making it the enemy of humanity, which will always prove to be stronger than an individual nation. Christianity, abolishing nationalism, saves nations, for *supra-national* does not mean *sans-national*. And here the Word of God has power: Only he who lays down his life will preserve it, and he who saves his life will lose it.⁴ And a nation desiring to preserve its life in a narrow and exclusive nationalism in whatever might transpire will lose it, and only by laying all its life into the supra-national cause of Christ will a nation preserve it. Personal self-sacrifice, a victory over ego-

ism, is not the destruction of the *ego* itself, of the individual itself, but on the contrary, raises this ego to a higher level of existence. It is precisely the same in relation to the nation: in repudiating exclusive nationalism, it not only does not lose its independent life, but only here receives its truly important task as well. This task is revealed to it not in the risky pursuit of base interests, not in the realization of an imaginary and self-styled mission, but in the fulfillment of historical duty which unites it with all others in a common universal cause. Raised to this level, patriotism is not a contradiction, but the fullness of individual morality. The best aspirations of the human spirit, the highest behests of Christian conscience *apply* then to political questions and affairs, and do not contradict them. One should not deceive oneself: inhumanity in international and social relations, the politics of cannibalism, in the end will be the ruin of both individual and family morality, which is already partly visible in all the Christian world. Man is still a logical being and cannot for long tolerate an enormous split between the rules of individual and political action. Even if just for the salvation of personal morality, one should therefore beware of elevating this split to a principle requiring the same man who behaves in a Christian manner toward his neighbor, and relative to other fellow-citizens conforms at least with the juridical law, to conduct himself when representing state and national interests in a manner more suitable to highwaymen and African savages. It is necessary, if only at first in theory, to acknowledge not interest and not self-importance, but moral duty as the higher guiding principle of *all* politics.

The Christian principle of duty, or moral service, is the solely consistent, solely certain, and solely absolute or perfect principle of political activity. Solely consistent—because, flowing from self-sacrifice, it takes it to its conclusion. Not only does it require that a man sacrifice his exceptionalism for the use of the nation, but it also tears asunder any exceptionalism for the entire nation and for all of humanity, calling all alike to the cause of *universal salvation*, which at its essence is the highest and absolute good. Consequently, it represents a sufficient basis for *every* self-sacrifice, while on the grounds of one's interest, one definitely cannot see why one's individual interest should be sacrificed to the interest of the entire nation. And it is just as unclear as to why I must bow before the collective conceit of my fellow-citizens, when everyone considers my personal conceit only as the weakness of my moral character, and in no way takes it for a moral principle of action.

Further, the Christian idea of duty is the solely *certain* principle in politics because on the one hand, interests, advantages in themselves, are something completely limitless and insatiable, and on the other, the opinion of one's higher and

exceptional calling still does not yield a positive aim in every given case and problem. Christian duty always indicates to us *how* we must act in every given case, and moreover, it requires from us only what we can certainly do, what is in our power (*ad impossibilia nemo obligatur*), while the aspiration to material interest does not in the least guarantee the possibility of its achievement, and the opinion of our exceptional calling usually lures us to heights that we cannot reach.⁵ Therefore, we are right to maintain that the motives of advantage and conceit are *imaginary* motives, and the principle of Christian duty is something completely real and solid.

Finally, this is the solely *absolute* principle that includes in itself all the positive content of other principles which are resolved in it. While advantage and conceit, in their exclusivity, affirm the conflict and struggle of nations and do not allow in politics the higher principle of moral duty—this latter principle does not at all deny either the legitimate interest or the true calling of each nation, but on the contrary, presupposes both the one and the other. For if only we acknowledge that the nation has a moral obligation, then certainly both its real interest and its real calling are tied to the fulfillment of this obligation. Neither is it required that the nation neglect its material interests and not think at all about its own aims; it is required only that it not place its soul in this, not make this its ultimate goal, not serve this. And for that reason, both material property and self-consciousness of the national spirit themselves become positive forces in subordination to higher considerations of Christian duty—real means and tools of the moral good, because the acquisitions of this nation then really go for the use of all others, and its greatness really extols all humanity. Thus, the principle of moral duty in politics, embracing in itself the two others, is the most perfect, as it is also the most certain and internally consistent. And we remind people of our faith that this principle is uniquely Christian.

The politics of interest, the aspiration to one's enrichment and to empowerment, which is characteristic of the natural man—is a pagan concern, and resting on this ground, Christian nations return to paganism. Affirmation of one's exclusive mission, the deification of one's nationality, is an ancient Judaic point of view and by accepting this point of view, Christian nations fall into Old Testament Judaism.

To oppress and absorb others for one's own satiation is an act of animal instinct alone, an inhuman and godless act both for the individual and for the entire nation. To glory in one's own higher calling, to appropriate for oneself before others special rights and advantages is an act of pride and self-affirmation both for the nation and for the individual—it is human, but also un-Christian.

To confess one's duty, to acknowledge one's obligation, is a Christian act of humility and self-knowledge, the necessary basis of moral action and a truly divine-human life—for the nation as well as for the individual. Here the entire matter is resolved not by one's opinion, but by a conscience that is identical for all, and thus there can be no imposters here. Neither can there be false-prophets here, for the advocacy of duty does not presuppose anything fated, any predestination: to indicate to a nation its duty still does not mean to foretell its future fate. The nation, just like the individual, can fulfill its responsibility, but it can also not do so; however, in this latter case, the duty still *remains*, and the one who pointed it out doesn't turn out to be a liar.

It is as yet impossible, both for the nation and for the individual in humanity's current state of existence, that every satisfaction of material needs and the requirements of self-defense flow directly from the behests of moral duty. There exist for the nation concerns of the present moment too, the matter of the day apart from a direct connection with its higher moral tasks. We are not called to speak about this. But in the resolution of great and vital questions, the nation must first of all be guided by the voice of conscience, moving all other considerations to the background. In these great questions the issue is the salvation of the national soul, and here every nation must think only of its own duty, not looking at other nations, requiring and expecting nothing from them. It is not in our power to compel others to fulfill their duty, but we can and must fulfill our own, and by fulfilling it, at the same time we will also serve the common universal cause; for in this common cause, each historical nation has its own service, according to its own particular character and place in history.⁶ It can be said that this service is *thrust upon* the nation by its history in view of the great and vital questions which it cannot circumvent. Yet it can fall into temptation to resolve these questions not in accordance with conscience, but in accordance with self-seeking and arrogant considerations. In this is the greatest danger, and the duty of true patriotism is to warn against it.

Our history has thrust upon us three great problems, in the solution of which we can either glorify the name of God and bring closer His kingdom by the fulfillment of His will, or lose our national soul and impede God's purpose on earth. These three problems are: the *Polish* (or Catholic), the *Eastern* (or Slavic), and the *Jewish* questions. These three problems, closely connected with each other, are only various forms of the great controversy between East and West that has been taking place throughout humanity's entire existence. All our politics, domestic and foreign, can be reduced to these three questions; this includes even

political nihilism with its periodic crimes, which stand in much closer proximity relative to foreign policy than is usually thought.⁷ The Church schism—another of our profound internal infirmities—is also tied to this great East–West controversy.

Our historical duty appears to us most immediately in the form of the Polish question. History has connected us to a nation fraternal to us by blood but hostile in spirit, the leading part of which hates and curses us. In response to this hatred and these curses, Russia should do good to the Polish nation. And, in fact, certain things have been done. Russian activity in Poland has not been restricted to participation in the three partitions of Poland and suppression of two armed uprisings. In 1814, Russia *preserved* Poland from certain dissolution. If, at the Congress of Vienna, the then—fully empowered emperor Aleksandr I had thought more of Russian than of Polish interest, joining Galicia to Russia, and turning over rump Poland to Prussia, then we would now probably not have much cause to be discussing Poland and the Polish people.⁸ If even now the Polish element in Poznan cannot withstand the Germans and is gradually being absorbed by them, although having behind them six million of our Poles who have been saved from Germanization, what would happen if the Prussian Germans were caretakers of the major part of Poland!

Furthermore, in the half century after the Congress of Vienna, Russian emancipation of the serfs also *liberated* Poland from that horrible antagonism between lords and peasants, which at its root undermined the vital forces of Poland and would have led the Polish nationality to certain ruin.⁹ And now we have also experienced the peasant uprisings and slaughter that occurred recently in Galicia, where they were preparing for the wholesale extermination of their lords, and only the intervention of Russian power stopped this massacre. If it had been accomplished, the Polish nationality, bereft of its cultured class, would have turned out to be completely unequipped in the face of the advance of the higher German culture, on the one hand, and the influence of the Russian element on the other. Then the scarecrow of Russianization could have acquired real meaning. But if the absence of a constituted cultured class is ruinous for a nation, then still more ruinous as well is exclusive lordship of this class over a population without rights. It is not for nothing that a popular Polish song asks the lords what was on their minds when they ruined Poland and themselves with it.¹⁰ The Russian power, saving the Polish *szlachta* (nobility) from the rage of the peasants and at the same time granting civil and economic freedom, secured the future of a real Poland for Poles, not just for lords or peasants.

Finally, despite the injustice and irrationality of certain individual measures,

Russian rule has allowed Poland, even according to the testimony of foreign writers, socioeconomic prosperity which she could achieve under neither Prussian nor Austrian rule.

Thus, the body of Poland is preserved and nurtured by Russia. And if, nevertheless, Polish patriots would sooner agree to drown in a German sea than sincerely reconcile with Russia, then here we have a more profound, *spiritual* reason for enmity.

Poland appears in Eastern Europe as a representative of the spiritual principle which lies at the foundation of western history. In its spiritual essence the Polish nation and with it all Catholic Slavs are adjoined to the western world. The spirit is stronger than blood; despite deep antipathy toward Germans and consanguinity with Russians, the representatives of Polonism would sooner agree to dissolution than to merger with Russia. A west European, even a Protestant, is closer to the spirit of a Polish Catholic than is an Orthodox Russian. Being the leading defenders of western principle, Poles see in Russia the spiritual essence of the East as harmful to them, an alien and dark force, having pretensions to the future and thus incomparably more dangerous than, for example, the Turks and the Islamic East, who have come full circle and are clearly not capable of any historic future. The enmity of Poland toward Russia is thus only the expression of the eternal East–West controversy, and the Polish question is only one phase of the greater Eastern Question. In the latter, Islam still plays an episodic, although a very important, role. When our war against Turkey is transformed into a struggle against the western powers, when Vienna appears between us and Constantinople, when Polish Catholics join the Turkish ranks against the Russian army, and Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia unite with the Moslems against Catholic Austria, then here it becomes sufficiently clear that the major dispute is not between Christianity and Islam, not between Slavs and Turks, but between the European West, chiefly the Catholic part, and Orthodox Russia. The significance of Poland also becomes clear as the avant-garde of the Catholic West against Russia. Behind Poland stands the Apostolic government of Austria, and behind Austria stands Rome.

In the Middle Ages the Crusades, which were begun against Islam, soon revealed their true goal, and the western crusaders, leaving Jerusalem to the Saracens, took to the task of the destruction of Byzantium and the founding of the Latin Empire in the East.¹¹ It is exactly the same in modern times in the struggle of the Catholic West against the victorious Turks, a struggle which from the outset Austria and Poland conducted with such zeal, but soon became a war against Russia, when the West surmised in it the powerful inheritor of the East-

ern empire. The goal of the struggle for the western powers now is not repelling the Turks from Europe, but not allowing Russia into Constantinople and once again founding a new Latin empire in the Balkan peninsula under the banner of Austria. And for this purpose Turkey itself is being transformed from an enemy to an ally and then to a docile instrument.

Thus, our Eastern Question is a dispute of the first, western Rome, with the second, eastern Rome, the political representation of which passed to the Third Rome, Russia, back in the fifteenth century.¹²

It is not by accident, however, that the second Rome fell and the power of the East passed over to the Third. Should this Third Rome be only a repetition of Byzantium and fall as she did? Or should it be not only according to number, but in significance as well the *Third*, that is, should it represent a third, reconciling principle to both hostile forces? When the danger of comprehending its calling unfaithfully threatened the Third Rome in Moscow and it appeared as an exclusively eastern kingdom in hostile contrast to the European West itself, Providence laid on it the heavy and coarse hand of Peter the Great. He mercilessly smashed the hard shell of exclusive nationalism, enclosing in himself the seed of Russian identity, and then boldly casting this seed onto the field of worldwide European history. The Third Rome shifted from Moscow to the West and toward an international sea route. The single fact that Peter the Great's reform could be accomplished successfully and could create a new Russia demonstrates that Russia is not called to be *only* Eastern: that in the great East–West dispute she must not stand to one side representing one of the disputing parties—that in this matter she has an intermediary and conciliatory obligation and must be in the highest sense an arbitrating judge of this dispute.

But in Peter the Great's transformation Russia concerned itself only with the outward form of western civilization. And thus, the reconciliation which was accomplished in the Russia of Petersburg, or unification with the West, is purely external and formal; here one can see only a preparation of the paths and an external means for a real reconciliation. But this reconciliation inevitably lies ahead for Russia: without it she cannot serve God's purpose on earth. The mission of Russia is a Christian mission, and Russian politics must be Christian politics.

A real and intrinsic reconciliation with the West consists not in a slavlike subjection to western form, but in an unfettered *covenant* with the spiritual principle on which the life of the western world is based.

From this point of view, the significance of Poland also appears in a new light for us. In Poland we are concerned not with the external forms of western civilization, which have already been adopted by us as well as by the Poles, but with

the spiritual principle of all western life and history itself, and we can avoid this principle still less because it is embodied for us in the form of a nationality closely and tightly tied to us.

There cannot be an outward reconciliation between us and Poland. It is not possible to come together with the Poles either on a social or on a State basis. On a social basis reconciliation, about which so much has been said, is impossible now because it remains unknown with *whom* strictly we should be reconciled. For in a social respect, Poland itself represents an irreconcilable split between lords and peasants, so that, in reaching out a hand to the peasant, we absolutely lose the lord, and in lending a hand to the latter, we must again squeeze the peasant, who was only recently saved by us from centuries of slavery. Regarding the State, a covenant with Poland is impossible because we are met only with boundless claims which are, on the part of the Poles, not congruous with anything. The restoration of Poland of 1772, then Poland of 1667, a Polish Kiev, a Polish Smolensk, a Polish Tambov—all these hallucinations comprise, if you will, a natural pathological phenomenon. It is similar to what a hungry man, not having a piece of bread, usually daydreams about—luxurious banquets. But upon awakening, a hungry man will be thankful even for a piece of bread; Polish patriots will be satisfied only with the Poland of their dreams. Perhaps behind these daydreams is hidden also the practical sense that an independent Poland within the strict borders of Polish nationality would become an inevitable victim of the German Empire; but whether out of this results a right of Poland to Kiev and Smolensk is another matter. There is another basis on which the better part of the Polish nation will willingly stand, and on which we can and must come together with them—this is on the basis of religion. For the Poles themselves, too, Poland is not just a national idea: in Poland they find a great religious idea and mission. And against Russia a Pole is so bitterly at odds not in the capacity of Pole and Slav (for then it would be necessary for him to be at odds with the Germans), but he is at odds with Russia in the capacity of a leading fighter of the great idea of western Rome; he sees in Russia a representative of the opposing idea of an *eastern* Rome. And here Russia's concern is to demonstrate that she is not only a representative of the *East*, that she is really a *Third* Rome, which does not exclude the first, and which reconciles in itself both of them.

There was a glorious time when on the basis of Christianity under the banner of a universal church both Romes, both the western and the eastern, united in one common cause—in the establishment of Christian truth. Then their peculiarities—peculiarities of the eastern and the western character—did not ex-

clude but complemented each other. This unity was precarious because it had not yet undergone the test of self-knowledge. It collapsed. The great dispute of East and West, abolished by the Christian idea, was renewed with even greater force within the boundaries of a historical Christianity. But if the division of the church was historically necessary, then it is even more necessary morally for Christianity to put an end to this division. The Christian and Orthodox country which took part at the beginning of the fratricidal dispute should be the first to put an end to it.

In beginning to speak of this great matter of reconciliation with the Roman church, I do not dare to direct myself to *perfect* Christians, for whom the Pope is only the antichrist condemned to an evil downfall; I do not dare to speak to pure and sinless people who can only throw stones at the whore of Babylon.¹³ But I am certain that in Orthodox Russia there are also to be found more than a few people who, conscious of their imperfections and sins and of their infinite separation from the Christian ideal, will open a wellspring of just and benevolent feelings even to the “antichrist” and the “whore of Babylon.” Perhaps even these people will find for the Roman church a more suitable prototype in the New Testament than the antichrist and the whore of Babylon. Let us recall, in fact, that the First apostle of Christ, the one with the name to which the Roman church itself ties all its power, distinguished himself by serious errors. Let us recall also the arrogant statement of his superiority: “Even if everyone betrays you, I will not”—and the unreasoning jealousy in raising the sword in defense of Christ, and the sudden cowardice in the triple renunciation of Christ.¹⁴ Let us recall, moreover, that this very apostle, whom, out of human design more than God’s, Christ called Satan and temptation, was called the rock and blessed for a confession of true faith in the Son of God; but for his ardent love of the teacher he thrice heard, “Feed my sheep.”¹⁵ Let us consider also the fact that for us, the Orthodox, seven ecumenical councils up to this point serve as the highest and absolutely obligatory authority in matters of faith and church. All of them came before the division of the church, and thus the issue of a pope also could not be investigated and resolved by any ecumenical council. By virtue of all this we will refrain from a willful condemnation of the West and will strive to clear an intellectual path that leads to the drawing together of the two Christian worlds.

3 On the Christian State and Society

The appearance of a new spiritual man in Christ is the center point of world history. The end, or goal, of this history is the appearance of a Spiritual Humanity. The ancient world gravitated toward the idea of Spiritual Man, the modern world gravitates toward the idea of Spiritual Humanity, that is, toward *the imaging of Christ in everyone*. This goal is to be achieved in a dual way: by the path of individual moral perfection and by the path of perfecting societal relations. If humanity were the simple sum of equal and independent parts, then the second path would be superfluous: to the extent that individual persons perfected themselves, so would the society which consists of them. But in fact a *mutual* dependency exists between the individual and society. The family really exists only in individuals, but individuals also exist only in the family; society is composed of persons, but persons, too,

Source: “O Khristiianskom gosudarstve i obshchestve,” *Dukhovnye osnovy zhizni*: 1882–84, part II, chapter 3, reprinted in *Sobranie sochinenii* 3:403–15. This essay first appeared as an article in *Pravoslavnoe obozrenie*, no. 4 (April 1884). In its first two editions (1884, 1885), “Dukhovnye osnovy zhizni” appeared under the title of “*Religioznye osnovy zhizni*.”

live only in this structure and perish in solitude: humanity is formed of people, but not by people. Basic societal ties do not depend on personal free will, but, on the contrary, individual life is brought about by these ties. Hence, improving humanity privately by individual action alone, that is, by direct action upon individual persons, is just as impossible as healing a sick organism by acting upon each of its cells or fibers separately. A sick person would die many times before such healing would show any progress at all. In exactly the same way, humanity would succeed in perishing many times before every man would achieve moral perfection. The solitary *Man of Truth*, who in himself alone possessed perfection and who did not have need of societal truth, was the One who was God before becoming human. In Him was all Truth. We cannot assimilate that Truth individually, but rather only jointly *with the entire world*. Without this link or solidarity our human impulse itself could not restrain itself and its independence could not be preserved amidst Nature. Furthermore, Godmanhood would be impossible.¹ The individual man would be in his separateness swallowed up by natural life; only collectively can man struggle with nature and freely turn to the Deity. In order to regenerate all of humanity Christianity must not only permeate its individual elements, but also its societal elements. The God–man connection must be renewed not only individually, but also collectively. As the divine element has its collective expression in the Church, so the purely human element has a similar expression in the State; and consequently, the God–man connection would be expressed collectively in the free combination of Church and State, the latter now appearing as the *Christian State*.

In general, the State is humanity's *buttress* against the external elemental forces which are acting upon it and within it. For such a structure, a unification of human forces themselves is necessary, but unification presupposes subjection. Hence, the State, which expresses human independence in general, at the same time requires the strict subjection of individual powers to itself. So it always was and will be, and the entire distinction to be drawn is only in the quality and manner of this subjection.

Pre-Christian history presented us with two types of States: the eastern, which was founded on *slavery*, and the western (Graeco-Roman), which was dependent above and beyond slavery upon the continual *struggle* among the masters themselves. In the East, the State (*gosudarstvo*) signified only dominion (*gospodstvo*).^{*} This dominion was either patriarchal or based on conquest. In both cases,

^{*} And so we have in Russian the words *gospodar*, *gosudar*; *gosudarstvo* ['lord,' 'sovereign,' 'state'].

the power of the sovereign and the subordination of the subjects were boundless and absolute: neither children nor war prisoners could sue either father or victor for rights; unconditional obedience was compulsory for both. Of course, ancestral principle and the facts of conquest had power also in the West, but here the continuous internal struggle of political forces was connected to them as a major formative factor. In the East, owing to the people's worldview and cast of mind there, political struggle could be only a chance phenomenon. They were quietist and fatalist by nature and conviction, interested mainly in the eternal and immutable aspect of that which exists. Eastern men were incapable of insisting on their rights and struggling stubbornly for their individual interests. He who is strong is also right; to stand against the strong is the act of a madman. Rulers of the East could compete and fight with one another, but this struggle was always brief and did not change the general situation. The first sign of a preponderance of force to one side resolved the dispute, and the subjects rushed to subordinate themselves to the strongest side, seeing in it the instrument of fate or a higher will. Hence, there would be a frequent change of despots, but despotism itself remained invariable.

However, "the impudent tribe of Japheth," which disputed with the gods, based its political structure also on conflict.² Hence, there was a completely different type of State in the West than in the East. In a confrontation of more or less equal political forces out of which no one could obtain absolute predominance, the State cannot be supreme but must present itself as the balance of many forces. This balance was expressed in *law*. Each of the competing forces would put forward its right, but these rights in themselves were indefinite and unlimited—and thus also excluded one another. They could accommodate and balance themselves only under condition of a boundary common to them all. This common boundary of all rights, before which all are equal, is law. The western State, as a balance of competing forces, is chiefly a State of law. It is well known that the origin of Greek politics is commemorated by the legislation of Lycurgus, Solon, and so on, who appeared straight out of the necessity to put an end to the bitter struggle of parties which had strengthened their equality in the form of law.³

But the pre-Christian State of the West found its full expression in Rome. The Roman system of the State was produced during many centuries of uninterrupted struggle for rights between Patricians and Plebs and was always clothed in the form of precise and strict legislation. Yet this lawful and legitimate State achieved its crowning achievement at the moment the struggling parties came

to a definitive equality through a full leveling of rights. This moment was marked by the creation of *Empire*. If the State was to be the balance of real, living forces, then it could not seem to be one abstract, dead formula of law. The law had to be embodied and personified. *The embodiment and personification of the law was authority*. Authority as a living, actual power that levels all had to be concentrated in one living person. Authority, or empire (*Imperium*), had a real practical meaning only in an emperor.

Thus the western State at the end of its development came to the same point that the East occupied from the beginning. But the vast difference between western empire and eastern despotism—the *fateful difference* for the West—consisted in the fact that the Roman Empire was the crowning achievement of all the historical development of the ancient classical world. It was the utmost goal to which the impudent tribe of Japheth had unconsciously strained and strived during its millennia of struggle, both in its wanderings and in its exploits. For eastern peoples, their despotic State appeared as a necessary evil, as one of the burdensome but unavoidable conditions of earthly existence—and nothing more. But for western paganism, with its purely humanistic religion, the State, as the embodiment and personification of human reason and human truth, was *everything*. Into it pagans put their entire soul, in it they saw both a higher norm and a higher purpose for their lives. And now the goal was achieved fully: the consummate, all-embracing State was created, an invincible State—the world-wide Roman Empire. And at the very moment it was created, the total emptiness of this formal greatness, of the hopeless poverty of this personified and embodied reason, was revealed. The question was raised: what is the purpose of all this, and what lies ahead? There was no one to answer: the oracles had already long since fallen silent. And such an awful yearning took possession of the rulers of the world that even the burning of Rome itself appeared for them only a fleeting diversion.

At that point when the embodiment and personification of human reason—the Empire—turned out to be completely bankrupt, came time for the incarnation of Divine Reason. Christianity, coming into the world in order to save the world, also saved the supreme manifestation of the world—the State—having revealed to the State the true goal and meaning of its existence. The difference between a Christian and a pagan State consists in the latter thinking it had a purpose in itself, and it therefore turned out to be aimless and meaningless. A Christian state acknowledges over itself a higher goal, which is given by religion and is represented by the Church, and a Christian State finds its higher mean-

ing and purpose in voluntary service to this goal, that is to say, the kingdom of God. A Christian State unites in itself characteristics of eastern and western secular State life but moves them to a secondary place, bringing to the forefront spiritual or religious life. But, on the other hand, Christianity acknowledges together with the West the positive mission and the active progressive character of the State: it not only calls the State to struggle with the evil forces of the world under the banner of the Church, but also requires from the State that it put into practice in political and international life moral principles, gradually lifting worldwide society to the level of the Church ideal and recreating it according to the image and likeness of the Church of Christ.

Everything found in both the eastern and western pagan State is also found in a Christian State, but this all receives a different meaning and is revived in the spirit of Truth. There is dominion in the Christian State, but dominion not in the name of its own power, rather, in the name of the common weal and according to the directions of Church authority. There is in the Christian State subordination, but not out of slavish fear, rather, voluntarily and according to conscience, for the sake of that common cause which sovereign and subject alike serve. Rights exist in a Christian State, but rights which flow not from a boundless human egoism, rather, from the moral infiniteness of man as a godlike being. In a Christian State there is law, but not in the sense of simple legitimation of existing relationships, rather, in the sense of their reform according to the ideas of supreme Truth. There is supreme authority in a Christian State, but not as the deification of the rule of human will, rather, as a special service to the will of God. The representative of authority in a Christian State is not only the possessor of all rights, as a pagan Caesar is; in the main, he is the bearer of all the duties of Christian society relating to the Church, that is, to God's purpose on earth.

State authority, according to the nature of its activity and according to its origin, is completely independent of spiritual authority. Therefore, their relationship can only be free, (and) moral—*according to faith* and conscience. The major question is *whether* earthly government *believes* in the Church or not. The government of a Christian State is obliged to believe in the Church. By virtue of this purely moral, and not legal, duty it must voluntarily subject its activity to the higher authority of the Church, not in the sense that this authority would interfere in worldly State affairs, but in the sense that the State itself would subordinate its activity to higher interests, and not lose sight of the kingdom of God.

In the Christian West the Church sometimes attempted to be embodied in State form. In the Christian East, on the contrary, State authority concentrated

in its hands not only secular, but also very often the highest clerical administration. In the ideal of free theocracy both attempts would combine in a new moral sense. Here the church would be embodied in the State only insofar as the State itself *were inspired* by Christian principles; the Church would descend to worldly reality according to the degree to which the State ascended to the Church ideal.

The State would be inspired through service to religious interests and through *free* service besides. Higher religious interests, which proceed from the Church and which a Christian State must serve under the leadership of the Church, can be reduced to the following three (in order from external to internal):

1. The propagation of Christianity in the world;
2. The peaceful drawing together of nations within Christianity itself;
3. The arrangement of societal relations in accordance with the Christian ideal within each nation.

For the elucidation of this last task one can take the sphere of criminal law, or the attitude of the state and society toward the criminal. In a Christian State, one must find a place for the Christian principle of *compassion* for the victim and those who may suffer from crimes and also for the criminal himself, in place of the pagan principle of *deterrence* and in place of antiquated Old Testament *retribution*. Protecting itself against the criminal and in no case justifying the crime, a Christian State must not forget about the criminal's human soul, which is capable of rebirth. The State itself cannot directly occupy itself with the reform and regeneration of criminals, just as it cannot itself heal the sick. But it builds hospitals and materially assists physicians, who dedicate themselves to this work according to calling. Those who suffer from infectious diseases without a doubt bring great danger to society, but the State sees the true unhappiness of the sick apart from the danger to others and thus does not confine itself to isolating them from society for the sake of society's benefit, for protection from contagion. Rather, it transfers them to physicians for the sake of the sick themselves, for their own recovery. In whatever sense the State concerns itself with the national health and fights disease, in that same sense it must concern itself with national morality and must fight crime. Thus, here also state police measures with all their practical importance have, strictly speaking, only an auxiliary or a secondary significance. And, just as the matter of physical healing is achieved not by health policy but by medicine, so also the task of the moral recovery or correction of criminals belongs (in a model order) not to the courts and prison but to the Church and its servants, to which the State must give the

material resources to influence the criminal. This moral-educative impact of the Church on the criminal begins where the impact of the State leaves off, and it must trust the Church in this matter in the same way it trusts the medical institution in medical affairs. However, I introduce all this comparison of crime with disease not at all in order to say that crime is just a disease, for which the stricken himself is not to blame. On the contrary, it is absolutely imperative to acknowledge and differentiate three aspects of crime: first, crime is a *lawless* thing, which results from the evil will of the criminal—within him is sin or guilt; second, crime is a thing *harmful* to others—for the victim and for all of society; and third, it is a *misfortune* for the criminal himself as a human being. In accordance with this, three qualities must be acknowledged and differentiated in the criminal himself: he is a guilty human being, he is a harmful human being, and he is a wretched human being.

The State must restore the law which is violated by the guilty party and it must protect society from the harmful member. Both these goals are achieved by punishment, which according to justice and necessity consists in depriving the criminal of freedom and full civil rights and in removing him from the rest of society. But after these first two interests—legal justice and societal security—have been satisfied, there remains the question of the criminal himself. Pagan Sparta cast its crippled children from a precipice. A Christian State cannot act in a similar manner with its morally crippled children. For a Christian State there exists the question of the criminal himself as a wretched person, of his future fate; however, being incapable of solving this problem by its own police methods, a Christian State must transfer it to the jurisdiction of the Church. The Church must now occupy itself not with the judgment and punishment of the criminal, but with his salvation, as she herself is built on the foundation of salvation. The Church mainly looks not at the lawlessness of the criminal and his harm to others, but at his own wretchedness, at the aggregate of internal and external, mental and physical, conditions which led the person to sin. Although the Church cannot always do away with the power of these conditions, she will always be able to weaken its hold. Although the Church cannot always return the criminal to the world morally healed and renewed, she can and must place him in the best environment to save him from bad influences and temptation. Then, as now, prison and jail lead usually to just the opposite result, converting the often casual criminal into an inveterate and incorrigible villain.

While not at all disputing the lawfulness of social and particular interests which are preserved by criminal courts and the police, it is necessary to acknowledge that the *ultimate* goal of a Christian State in relation to criminals is

their own moral healing, that is, the kind of goal for the achievement of which only the State can serve the Church. A similar service is required from a Christian State with respect to other aspects of its activity. It serves the Church, carrying into international relations the principle of Christian solidarity instead of national rivalry and enmity. It serves the Church, spreading Christian culture to barbarian and uncivilized people, restraining the proud, disarming predators, helping the oppressed. From the Church, the State obtains a higher goal and a positive meaning for its activity. In the pre-Christian world, the State, that is, the balance of social forces, was a goal in itself. The ancient world was attracted to absolutism in the State and found it in the Roman Empire. But humanity could not have stopped here, even if the discovered equilibrium had also been absolutely stable (which, of course, it could in fact not be). In any case, the question then arose: what must the balanced forces governing society effect? What purpose must the State serve? Until a positive mission for societal forces was supplied, until a higher purpose for the State was pointed out, State and public activity, despite their *practical* absolute power over the individual, were for the thinking mind purposeless and meaningless vanity. The last representatives of the ancient world—the Alexandrian philosophers—viewed political activity in just this way.

Only the Christian religion gave meaning and significance to the State precisely because it towered above the State. The higher the sun over the earth, the more it illuminates and heats it.

In giving meaning to the State, Christianity at the same time created society. While the State was everything, society was nothing. But as soon as the purpose of life was placed above the State, the living forces of society were liberated and ceased being slaves of the State. They no longer were content with an external equilibrium but strove to the higher ideal of a free, internal moral reciprocity for which the State itself with its external contours and limits served only as a transitional, intermediate stage.

Properly speaking, there was no society in the ancient world.⁴ On one hand, the basic social class, the rural or agricultural people, were slaves. On the other, free citizens too, having for their common life no absolute goal whatever, not knowing anything higher than the State, were associated with and absorbed by the latter. Where economic labor was humiliation, where the land was worked by slaves and religion was managed by State bureaucrats, there public life was devoid of its most vital material and spiritual interests and was completely delimited by formal State interests, by the legislative equilibrium of private forces. The high development of ancient philosophy does not contradict this in the

least, for this philosophy related to ancient life not organically, but critically and comprised a transition from paganism to Christianity. In their positive ideals, classical philosophers did not elevate themselves above State truth (Plato's *Republic*). In the ancient world, there was neither nation nor church, but only the City, which coincided with the State (*polis, civitas*—the City and the State). Even there, where the city was governed by a few clans, they did not comprise aristocracy in our sense of the word; they were not a special class, independent of the State and living outside of the City; they were only leading townspeople.

In elevating religion above the State and creating the Church, Christianity also liberated society from absolute State power, forming a free, independent society. On the one hand, it created “the people” in the narrow sense of this term, that is, the lowest and, at the same time, the basic social class. It was without the formal abolition of slavery, and only with a recognition of slaves as Church members who enjoyed full religious rights, that Christianity brought them into society and gave the Church its present foundation. In becoming Christians, former slaves entered the corpus of society—and the peasantry appeared. On the other hand, free citizens (free relative to their slaves, but themselves slaves of the State), in becoming members of the Church, by the same token also ceased being *exclusively* members of the State, liberated themselves from its absolute authority and by developing in themselves a principle of individuality which was suppressed by the State, formed the higher social class. Thus, society in the ancient world, bound from below by slavery and suppressed from above by the absolutism of the State, obtained its freedom and mobility from Christianity.

True human society is made up only of free individuals. In the ancient world, there was no real society because there were no real individuals. True, the ancient West in both its philosophy and its art, and in its politics, gravitated toward the Idea of the Human, but it could achieve in all this only a *form* of humanity. The fullness of the human being required absolute freedom, but absolute freedom cannot belong to a person outside of God—it belongs only to Godmanhood. With the appearance of God-incarnate in Christianity, humanity obtained a point of rest above the world in a truly absolute realm and liberated itself from the world. A free individual appeared as well as the possibility of a free, divinely human society.

This possibility, given in Christianity, must be implemented by humanity itself. The individual, internally liberated by the Grace of Christ, must apply this freedom to the mission of creating a Christian society.

Human society is not simply a mechanistic aggregate of separate individuals: it is an independent whole, having its own life and organization. And from this

aspect, the mission of Christianity consists in introducing into life the organization of social forces, the Christian principle of moral solidarity or true brotherhood.

The structure of human society in its essential characteristics is extraordinarily simple and completely rational. It takes shape under three main conditions, to which the threefold composition of society also corresponds. Human society must first of all firmly establish and secure on earth its material existence; it must live a *natural* existence. But since this natural existence of humankind is imperfect and does not include within itself its purpose, then society must, second, have the means to transform its life, to advance and develop its strengths. The conditions of such mobility and variability (of development and progress) are produced by so-called civilization, which forms the *artificial* existence of society. But the changes and advance of civilized life must not be aimless and meaningless. Social progress, in order to be real progress, must lead society toward a definite purpose and to an absolutely worthy purpose besides, to an ideal of perfection. Society should not only exist and advance, but also perfect itself.⁵ Thus beyond its natural existence on earth and its artificial development in urban civilization, society must live a third, spiritual existence. It must through its best efforts produce those higher goods for the sake of which it is worth living and acting at all.

In conformity with this threefold existence, society itself is presented to us in three compound parts, or classes: *the people* in a narrow sense (the class of chiefly rural or agricultural people), next the *urban* class, and finally, the class of the *nobility*—the public representatives and leaders of the people, those who show the way. In other words: *the village*, *the city*, and *the nobility*.

These three main formative elements of society in the ancient world were tied to the absolutism of the State; Christianity liberated them, and the task of Christian politics consists in placing them in a proper positive relationship to the Church, to the State, and mutually to one another.

This proper relationship directly depended on the noble class—the ruling class—which guided society and possessed the initiative for every activity. For the people themselves always related properly to the Church, to the State, and to other classes; they always fulfilled their purpose, cultivated the land for the common benefit while preserving fully their solidarity with the higher religious and civil interests. By its very purpose, the urban class was intermediate, second rank, and it was always guided by the example of the higher class in the direction of its activity; but it was not its fault it did not have a good example. Generally speaking, the nobility in Christian society still has far from conformed to

its purpose—the general character of their activity in European history often expressed itself on the one hand in the oppression of the people, and on the other—in criminal rivalry with State and Church authority. Instead of being leaders of the people, free servants of State and Church, they too often desired excessively to be masters in everything and over everything.

This direction of activity finds itself in direct contradiction to the purpose of “the best people” in Christian society with their calling to a common Christian mission. In this mission of creating a free theocracy, the most important, honored, and responsible role belongs to “the best.” Freely bowing before Church authority, taking from the Church the unshakeable source of Truth and goodness, “the best people” of Christian society must in conformity with these principles and under the protection and patronage of the State, direct and guide all social forces to their higher purpose. But this purpose is not arbitrary and casual and not set by people. This purpose is inviolably determined by the Church, and the State also serves it with its coercive organization; a Christian nation also desires it in the depths of its soul. This purpose is the realization in practice of that which we believe, the recreation of our human and worldly reality according to the image and likeness of Christian Truth, the Incarnation of Divine-humanity.

**Conclusion: “The Image of Christ as
Verification of Conscience”**

The final task of individual and social morality is that Christ—in whom physically dwells the entire fullness of Deity—be imaged in everyone and everything. It is dependent upon each of us to contribute to the achievement of this goal, imaging Christ in our personal and public activity.

Everyone is in agreement that the framework of juridical law does not in the least determine the activity of a person striving toward perfection. One can never murder, steal, and break criminal statutes and still be hopelessly far from the kingdom of God. The juridical law also does not have as its direct aim the perfection of the human being and humankind—its mission is only to preserve as lastingly as possible their outer existence, while it is needed for higher purposes—more firmly to restrain the flesh minimally on the primary, lowest level of communal life, from which the actual purpose is not yet even visible, but without which it cannot be achieved. However, both the framework of moral law and the Gospel commandments, taken as separate external injunctions—according to the letter and not the spirit—are also inadequate for positive guidance toward perfection. Even the supreme commandment of love, which in-

cludes in it everything, can be understood and taken in a false sense—and not only can, but was and is. Some say that Gospel love is first of all love of God—and in the name of this love, they consider themselves right and even obligated to torture their brothers who do not confess faith in God as they do. Others maintain that Gospel love requires uniform, impassive goodwill to each and all and thus allows ostensibly no coercive defense of peaceful and innocent people from murderers, rapists, and predators.⁶ Some, in the name of love of God, disgrace God's name by their bigotry, others in the name of the love of one's neighbor would like, without impediment, to give a multitude of their neighbors over to destruction.

I won't deign to say that these people consciously go against their conscience: but it is clear that they did not verify, as one ought, their conscience.⁷ And the best and only test is so close.

Before resolving on any deed that has significance for personal or public life, one has only to call forth in one's soul the moral image of Christ, to focus on him and to ask oneself: could He commit this act, or in other words—will He approve of it or not, bless me or not in its accomplishment?⁸

I recommend this test to all—it will not deceive you. In every questionable case, when there is a possibility of first collecting one's faculties and reflecting, remember Christ, imagine to yourself Him alive, which He indeed is, and lay on Him all the burden of your doubts. He already has agreed in advance to take this burden too, along with all others, not in order, of course, to unbind your hands for every kind of abomination, but in order that you, having returned to Him and leaned on Him, could refrain from evil and become in this questionable matter guides of His unquestionable Truth.

If all people of good will, both as private individuals and as public actors and leaders of Christian nations, began to turn now to this reliable method in all questionable cases, then this would be the beginning of the second advent and the preparation for the Day of Judgment by Christ—*whose time is near*.

4 The Social Question in Europe

In the great and increasingly aggravated struggle between revolutionary socialism and adherents of the established order, we see that from both sides the abuse of principles plays a larger role than the principles themselves. Socialists want to overturn the contemporary social order; this is abuse of the principle of equality and not implementation of it in a true sense; militant conservatives struggle for their interests, deplorably abusing the principle of ownership. Thus, in these two points it is necessary first of all to establish the truth, which has been distorted by both parties.

The principle of equality in its true sense is that all men are equal *as men*, as moral individuals. Moral individuality appertains without dis-

Source: “La Question Sociale en Europe.” This essay has a date of August 6, 1892, appended to it. The noted French sociologist and journalist Jules Huret had asked leading intellectuals across Europe to respond to a questionnaire, the final results of which were published five years later as *Enquête sur la question sociale en Europe*, prefaces by Jean Jaures and Paul Deschanel (Paris: Didier, 1897). This translation is from the original French (307–14), but a Russian version appears in *Pis'ma* 4:275–80.

inction to each human being. Hence it follows that no man can be considered as the instrumental means for achievement of anything whatsoever (the production of wealth, for example); rather, each man represents intrinsic value, and he possesses an inalienable right to an existence corresponding to his human dignity. The *raison d'être* of society in relation to its members is to assure for each not solely a material livelihood, but moreover a *dignified* livelihood. Now it is clear that poverty beyond a certain threshold—when it becomes repulsive or compels a man to sacrifice all his time and all his strength to mechanical labor—is contrary to human dignity and therefore incompatible with true public morality. Therefore, society must ensure all its members against this degrading poverty in securing for each a *minimum* of material resources.

It is not up to me to determine what can and what must be done toward this end. Happily, public authorities of Church and State are deeply absorbed in the question. Social duty in relation to the poor and unfortunate is gradually being acknowledged universally, and we see serious attempts directed at its performance everywhere.

However, egalitarian socialism is not satisfied with the abolition of economic slavery. It calls for equality in the distribution of goods, the abolition of individual and hereditary ownership—a wretched ideal which would be dreadful if it were feasible. Equality is understood here in its exterior and mechanical expression, and not in its moral principle, which is human solidarity. This higher principle of collective life requires that everyone be equally protected against economic *evil* (degrading poverty), but does not require that each have an equal quantity of material goods, just as it does not insist on equal height or equal thickness of hair. From a moral point of view, it is important to us that all our fellow creatures be equally free from destitution, but not at all that they all be equally wealthy. Outside of economic slavery, which must disappear just as personal and civil slavery disappeared, the difference in wealth is no more than an external fact, absolutely foreign to any idea of moral order. The solidarity of a living body does not permit, without resistance, that its members be *sick*; it requires that all of them be equally healthy, but it in no way insists on—the contrary, it is *incompatible* with—the equality of form and size of all the members of the organic unity.

The principle of ownership, in its true sense, can be maintained without renunciation of the great social duty about which I spoke above.

For the fulfillment of this duty, for the securing for each a *minimum* of material means indispensable to the preservation and free development of its moral and intellectual powers, the State, as the bearer of the executive power of soci-

ety, will undoubtedly be forced to concentrate in its hands the principal instruments of production and distribution—factories, banks, lines of communication, business enterprises, and so on. But this change—which in part is already taking place and should definitively be accomplished either by means of an obligatory redemption-fee or a systematic competition—by no means signifies the abolition of private property because it is related only to a particular type of ownership incapable of taking on an individual character. Here it is no more than a question of purely instrumental things not having meaning independent of their material usage, and not having any connection with the moral person. Thus nothing impedes these things—which, incidentally, for the most part already appertain to *collective* ownership—from ceasing to be private property and becoming, with a view to the common good, public property.

It is completely another matter when the meaning of property is not limited to its external usage. The bond that attaches a man to his inheritance is—or can become—a connection of personal sentiment, of profound reverence, and not one solely of material interest.¹ It is important for humankind that this connection be maintained and developed where it already exists, and that it be established where it has not been formed previously—its abolition would be an assault on human individuality, an injustice and a contradiction from the point of view of universal brotherhood. Materialistic and crudely egalitarian socialism does not note the difference which can exist for an owner between the machines of his factory and the graves of his ancestors. This is a subtle distinction, perhaps, but it is nevertheless important.

On the other hand, it would not only be completely erroneous but also extremely imprudent from the point of view of conservatives themselves to exaggerate excessively the meaning of property, *as such*, to elevate this abstract and formal right of the use and *abuse* of anything whatsoever to an absolute principle.

They rank property in and of itself among the highest goods, making out of it almost the summum bonum and, at the same time, persist in wanting to leave a great portion of the people without the enjoyment of this “supreme good.” This is a risky game, one that in the end can exasperate the strongest. I very much admire the more elastic conservative spirit of the privileged of the Middle Ages, who, despite their cupidity, luxury, and excessiveness, were careful in erecting their material interests as an idol and encouraged, with as much good judgment as dignity, monastic mendicant orders to preach contempt for wealth and to exalt poverty, “this Christian virtue *par excellence*.” The poor abominated wealth, did not envy the rich, and everyone was content. But it would be useless to want to return to this social equilibrium, which is based on error—on an asceticism

more Buddhist than Christian—and which has seen its day. It would not be possible without being revoltingly hypocritical to profess and practice the ideas of St. Francis of Assisi concerning the poverty of the Gospel. Better to cling to the Truth, pure and simple. Property is nothing absolute in itself; it is neither a sacred good which must be defended at any cost and in all its forms and manifestations, nor an evil which must be denounced and suppressed—it is a relative and conditional principle which must be regulated by an absolute principle—the principle of the moral person.

A moral person cannot have rights without corresponding responsibilities. It is universally recognized that the right of property entails certain social responsibilities; but it would be erroneous to ignore the fact that man has duties not only with regard to his fellow creatures, but also with regard to the lower world—to the earth and to all that inhabit it. If he has the right to exploit nature for his use and for that of his fellow creatures, he also has a duty to cultivate and perfect this nature for the good of the lower creatures themselves, who must consequently be considered not as a simple means, but also as an end.* Now, if the exploitation of the earth on a large scale, for the extraction of the most utility possible and for providing for the needs of everyone—if this *quantitative* exploitation can be successful only under conditions of collective or public ownership, then the *qualitative* cultivation and improvement of nature requires, on the contrary, a personal connection between man and the object of his labor. In order to be able to be developed, in order to become more profound and intimate, this connection must be fixed and constant, that is to say, it requires individual ownership. It is necessary, then, to maintain the two forms of ownership as equally indispensable to truly human life: communal ownership, in order to assure a *minimum* of material resources, and individual ownership—in order to elevate nature to the *maximum* of its perfection.

This moral conception of true ownership is tied to some mystical ideas and generates practical problems. For me it is also impossible, though for different reasons, to get into these two categories of ideas here. I stress the principal point: it is absolutely necessary that ownership not be based on material interest only, but that it also be tied to the duty of man toward the lower world—instead of being *egoism*, extended out to things, it should bring about *universal solidarity concentrated* within fixed boundaries.

You see that from this point of view the principles of equality and property,

* This truth was disregarded by Kant himself, who better than any other philosopher established the principle of the moral person.

which seem to be so antithetical, excellently agree in one and the same moral obligation. This obligation, to the extent to which it relates to our fellow creatures, does not permit the utilization of a man as a simple instrument but requires a certain equality of material conditions—not an arithmetical equality of goods, which would be unrealizable and undesirable, but an assurance, equal for all, against destitution and economic slavery. The same principle applied in a much wider sphere does not allow inferior creatures of material nature to be for us simply resources. It imposes on man a moral duty with regard to them—to ennoble them, to individualize, to mollify them—a duty that can be discharged well only under conditions of individual ownership.

The sure means by which owners can defend their acquired rights against egalitarian and materialistic socialism are in the acknowledgment and discharge of their private duty to the fullest.

Of the two struggling parties, the first one that sincerely and without reservation defers its egoistic interests to a principle of moral order will be the victor. Lacking this, it would be vain to search for any external help in religion, which is not a crutch for decrepit institutions but a source of regeneration for all humankind.

5 Nationality from a Moral Point of View

I.

In our era, a person's attitude toward nationality is formed by two opinions: *the nationalistic* and the *cosmopolitan*.¹ There can be nuances and back-and-forthing in the realm of taste and the senses, but there are only two clear and distinct points of view before us on this issue. The first can be reduced to the formulation *we should love our nation and serve its good with all our means, but we have the right to be indifferent to other nations; in the event that their national interests clash with ours, we are obliged to treat these foreign nations hostilely*. The essence of the other, the cosmopolitan, point of view is expressed as follows: *nationality is only a fact of nature, which does not have any kind of moral significance; we have no duty to the nation, as such (neither to our own, nor to someone else's), but only to individual people, without any distinction of nationality*.

Is it, however, necessary to choose between these two views, which

Source: "Narodnost' s nraavstvennoi tochki zreniia," *Vestnik Evropy* 1 (January 1895): 337–55.

are contradictory to each other, or is it possible to hold a third point of view which elevates us above this contradiction and allows us to reconcile love for and duty to one's nation with a positive moral attitude toward someone else's nationality?

Every healthy thinking cosmopolitan reproaches adherents of nationalism not, of course, because they love their nation but because they consider it permissible, and in some cases even obligatory, to hate and despise foreigners and non-Russians. In the same way, the most fervent nationalist too, if he is not bereft of reason, attacks cosmopolitans, not because they demand justice for foreigners but because they are indifferent to their own nation. So, in each of these views even the direct opponent unwittingly differentiates a good and bad side, and the question naturally arises as to whether these two sides are necessarily connected, that is:

(1) Does it follow from love of one's nation—that all means should be permitted for the sake of its interests, and that indifferent and hostile attitudes toward foreigners should be legalized?

(2) Does it follow from an identical moral attitude toward all people—that there should be indifference to nationality in general and to one's own in particular?

The first question is easy to resolve if only we investigate what is contained in the concept of true patriotism or love of one's nation. The necessity of such elementary analysis should be acknowledged by all, for everyone will agree that there exists *irrational* patriotism, which leads nations to destruction, *hollow* patriotism, which expresses only empty claims, and finally, *false* patriotism, which serves only as a guise for base, self-seeking motives. What does real or true patriotism consist of?

Real love expresses itself in our desire and aspiration to give the loved being all good things, not only moral, but material as well. However, the latter are absolutely conditional on the former. I wish material well-being incidentally as well to anyone whom I love, but of course only as long as he achieves it by honest means and uses it well. If my friend is in need, and I assist him in the unscrupulous acquisition of a fortune because of this, even if he is guaranteed to get away with his crime, or if he is a writer and I counsel him to enlarge his literary reputation by means of plagiarism—then anyone would be right to consider me either crazy or a villain, but in no way a good friend.

Thus clearly the good things which love makes us desire for another differ not only in their extrinsic attributes but also in their intrinsic significance for the Will: spiritual blessings, which by their very conception exclude the possi-

bility of evil means for their acquisition, are *unconditionally* desirable—since one cannot steal moral virtue or amass justice by robbery or gain the love of fellowmen by lawsuit. Material blessings, which according to nature allow for evil means, are, on the contrary, desirable only *on condition* of the nonutilization of such means, that is, on condition of the subordination of material goals to a moral goal.

To a certain extent, everyone agrees with this elementary truth; all are in agreement that it is impermissible through crime to enrich either yourself, your friend, or your family or his family, or even your city or the entire region in which you live. But this clear-as-day moral truth suddenly grows dim and becomes murky when the matter comes to *one's nation*. For its proposed welfare, in the service of its proposed interests, suddenly everything turns out to be permitted, the end justifies the means, black becomes white, lies are preferred to the truth, and violence puts on airs as valor.² Instead of being indignant with such a metamorphosis, it is better to give oneself a clear accounting of its meaning, that is, what is logically assumed by such a point of view.

If that which is generally prohibited by moral law—for example: fraud, coercion of someone else's conscience, murder—is permissible in the interests of one's nation, then this means that moral principle loses its absolute meaning. This meaning is transferred entirely here to nationality, which turns out to be a supreme absolute principle not subject to any condition but, on the contrary, which makes everything else conditional upon itself.

Virtuous conduct is determined now not by its relation to moral principle but by its relation to nationality, which thus also receives all the power of a supreme practical criterion. But can such significance in essence pertain to the fact of nationality? Logically, the answer is clear, for in the concept of nationality there is nothing absolute and supramoral. But let us see what the subject of history says about this.

II.

In the human race, the segregation of certain groups by national character is not a universal and primary fact. Divisions into nations never had exclusive predominance even in the civilized part of humanity, not to mention those savages and barbarians who up to the present time live in independent tribes, clans, or roving bands. In the ancient world, almost nowhere do we encounter such a division; we see either independent civic communities, that is, groups smaller than nations and united not nationally but politically—such as the cities of Phoeni-

cia, Greece, and Italy—or, on the contrary, groups more extensive than nations, multinational states, so-called worldwide monarchies, from the Assyro-Babylonian to the Roman, crude precursors of a panhuman union. The idea of nationality as the supreme principle of life was applied at almost no time and in almost no place in the ancient world. The contrast between one's own and foreign peoples existed then even more strongly and more mercilessly than with us, but it was not determined by nationality. In the kingdom of Darius and Xerxes, people of diverse tribes and countries were quite at home—as equal subjects under one common power and one supreme law. And to them, foreigners and enemies were only those people who had not *as yet* submitted to the “great emperor.” On the other hand, in Greece, Athenians and Spartans, although speaking one language and having identical gods, clearly acknowledged their national communities. However, this did not impede them in the course of their entire history from being foreigners and even mortal foes to one another.

Similar attitudes existed among other cities or civic communities of Greece as well, and only once in a thousand years did there actively appear a real national or pan-Greek patriotism—at the time of the Persian invasion. But this coincidence between the boundaries of practical solidarity and the boundaries of national particularity did not last even forty years, having given way to a more bitter and protracted destruction of Greeks by Greeks in the Peloponnesian War. And this state of bloody struggle among small communities in the midst of one nation, which was thought to be completely normal, continued right up to the moment when all these communities together lost their independence. But this was not in favor of national unity, rather, only so that out of its political division and under the authority of foreign rulers, the Greek nationality could immediately turn to the role of cultural unifier of the known world of that time. The distinction between fellow citizens and strangers (that is, inhabitants of another city, even if Greek) now lost its meaning (in the sense of a supreme practical principle) but was not replaced by a contrasting national distinction between one's own nation and foreign ones. There remained another, broader contrast between Hellenism and the barbarian world, by which membership in the former was not defined absolutely by descendency or even language but only by the terms of the superior intellectual–aesthetic culture. Of course, the most exacting of Greeks did not consider Horace and Virgil, Augustus and Maecenas as barbarians, and before that time the founders of the Hellenic “worldwide monarchy,” the Macedonian kings themselves, were not Greeks in the ethnographic sense.³ And here, thanks to these two foreigners, the Greeks directly

crossed over from the narrow parochial patriotism of separate civic communities to a universal—cultural self-consciousness, not returning at all to the time of the national patriotism of the Persian wars.

As to Rome, all of Roman history was an uninterrupted passage from the politics of the city to the politics of worldwide monarchy—*ab urbe ad orbem*—without at any time stopping at a purely national point.⁴ When Rome defended itself against the Punic invasion, it was but the strongest of the Italian city-states; however, when it destroyed its adversary, it imperceptibly crossed the ethnographic and geographic frontiers of what was Latin and now recognized itself as a world-historical force, anticipating by two centuries the reminder of the poet:

Remember your destiny, Oh Rome: to rule
the powerful nations,
To defend those who submit,
Subduing by force the proud.⁵

Roman citizenship was soon made accessible to all, and a “Rome for the Romans” formula did not attract anyone on the banks of the Tiber: Rome was for the world.

At the time the Alexandrians and the Caesars eliminated the insecure political frontiers of East and West, cosmopolitanism was elaborated and disseminated as a philosophical principle by representatives of the two most popular schools—wandering Cynics and imperturbable Stoics. They preached the guidance of nature and reason, the singleness of essence of all that exists, and the insignificance of all artificial and historical divisions and boundaries. Man by his very nature, consequently *any* man—they taught—has higher value and meaning consisting of freedom from external attachments, delusions, and passions—in the steadfast valor of that man who

when the whole of the world, having given
signs of cracking—collapsed—
Remains dauntless among the ruins.⁶

Hence the unavoidable acknowledgment of any given, imposed divisions—civic, national, and so forth—as conditional and illusory. Roman jurisprudence supported in its sphere and from its point of view this philosophical idea of a natural and thus universal reason, of virtue and law.* And, as a result of this com-

* For corroboration of these latter points: see my second article “Russia and Europe,” *Vestnik Evropy*, Apr. 1888, and also *The National Question* 3d ed., last chapter.

mon intellectual labor, the concept of Roman was identified with the concept universal not only according to outward size, but also according to inner content.*

III.

Up to the time of the appearance of Christianity within the boundaries of the ancient cultural world, a robust national consciousness manifested itself only in the Hebrew nation. But here it was indivisibly tied with religion, with a certain sense of faith in the intrinsic superiority of this, their religion, to paganism and its world-historical purpose. The national consciousness of the Hebrews had no realizable fulfillment; it lived on hopes and expectations. The brief greatness of David and Solomon was idealized and transformed into a Golden Age. However, the enduring historical significance of the nation that had created the first philosophy of history in the world (in the Book of Daniel regarding world monarchy and the kingdom of truth of the Son of Man) did not allow it to rest on an embellished image of the past, but compelled it to propel its ideal into the future. But this ideal, from the outset having several traits of universal significance which were carried forward by the inspiration of the prophets, freed itself definitively from everything of narrowly national significance: already Isaiah proclaims the Messiah as a banner which has to gather around itself all nations, and the author of the Book of Daniel speaks squarely from the point of view of *universal* history.

But this messianic universalism, which expressed the true national consciousness of the Hebrews as the highest ideal of the national spirit, was the property only of chosen sages, and when in Galilee and Jerusalem the banner foretold by the prophets was raised for all nations—the majority of Hebrews with their official leaders (the Sadducees) and partly also with unofficial teachers (the Pharisees), turned out to be on the side of a national religious exceptionalism against the supreme realization of the prophetic ideal. The inevitable conflict and break between these two aspirations, as though with “two souls” of the Hebrew nation, explains sufficiently (from a purely historical point of view) the great tragedy out of which came Christianity.^{†7}

* Although Stoic philosophy was born in Greece independently of Rome, it was developed only in the Roman epoch. It was especially propagated among the Romans and exerted its practical influence principally through Roman jurists.

† On the greater part of Pharisees not taking part in the persecution of J. Christ and initially favoring Christianity, see the excellent research of Prof. Khvolson in the *Annals of the Academy of Science* (1893).

It would be, however, a manifest error to associate the principle of cosmopolitanism with Christianity. There was no cause for the Apostles to preach an idea of non-nationality. The harmful, immoral side of national activity, namely, mutual hate and armed struggle, no longer existed within the boundaries of the “universe” of those days—the Roman Peace (*Pax Romana*) abolished the war of nations.*⁸ The spearhead of Christian universalism was directed against other, deeper divisions, which preserved all their practical force despite the ideas of the prophets, philosophers, and jurists. The divisions which remained in force were: first, the religious—between Judaism and paganism; next, the cultural—between Hellenism (to which educated Romans also belonged) and barbarism; and finally, the worst socioeconomic division—between slave and freeman. These divisions found themselves in direct contradiction with moral principle—which the national differences of that time did not at all represent (these differences were as innocent in the Roman Empire, as for example contemporary French provincialism in Breton or Gasconne). A denial of any solidarity lay between Hebrews and pagans, Hellenes and barbarians, freeman and slave; this was an opposition of superior and inferior beings in which moral virtue and human rights were lost by the inferior.†

This is why the Apostle had to pronounce that in Christ there is neither Jew nor pagan, neither Hellene nor barbarian, neither freeman nor slave, but a new creation.⁹ The Apostle replaces the negative Stoic ideal of an impassive man, indifferent to the destruction of the world, with the positive ideal of a man intrinsically in solidarity with all of creation. A man who, having adopted as his own the sufferings and death which were endured by the universal man, Christ, for the world, now participates in His triumph over death and in the salvation of the whole world. From the philosophical and juridical consciousness of *humanity in general*, there is in Christianity a transition to *universal humanity*, and with this, the old enmity and alienation between different categories of people is completely abolished. *Any* man, if only he will allow in himself the “image of Christ,”‡ that is, will be permeated by the spirit of Christ, will define Him by emulation as the ideal norm, and all his life and activity will become connected to the Deity by the strength of the Son of God abiding in him.¹⁰ For a man in

* *oikhoumene*—the Greek name for the Roman Empire.

† Relative to the contrast between Judaism and paganism, I have in view not the teaching of Moses, the prophets, and the sages—all of them in principle recognized human rights for the pagans. I have in view only the disposition of the mob and its leaders.

‡ “Until Christ is formed in you,” an expression of the Apostle Paul.

this reborn condition, individuality ceases to be a *boundary* and becomes the foundation of a positive unification with collective universal humanity or the church (in its true essence).

Although a peculiarity in the structure and function of a certain organ, for example, the eye, distinguishes it from other organs, it does not separate it from them and from the entire body. On the contrary, it constitutes the basis of its positive participation in the life of the whole body and its irreplaceable significance to all other organs and to the whole organism.¹¹ So, too, in the “Body of Christ” the individual peculiarity does not separate each from all, but unites it with all, being the basis of its special significance for all and positive cooperation with all. Panhumanity (or that Church which the Apostle preached) is not an abstract concept, but a harmonious plenitude of all the positive attributes of the new or reborn creation—and not only of individual but of national attributes as well. The Body of Christ is a perfect organism, one that cannot consist only of simple cells but also must include more complex and larger organs, which here are naturally represented by different nationalities. The national character differs from the individual in size and durability, but not in principle,* and if Christianity does not require *impersonality*, then neither can it require *nationality-lessness*.¹² Spiritual rebirth or renewal, as the term itself demonstrates, is not destruction of natural attributes and strengths, but only a variation of them, their announcement of new substance and direction. Just as Peter and John, after their rebirth with the Spirit of Christ, preserved the positive particulars and distinctive traits of their characters and were not deprived of individual characteristics at all but, on the contrary, strengthened and developed their individuality, so too it must be with entire nations which receive Christianity.

* It is all the more apparent that the single rational method of explaining genetically any stable national character, for example, the Hebrew, while not denying any external influence of climate, and so forth, consists in recognizing within it the inherited individual trait of the father of this nation. The inherent truth of the biblical characteristic of Jacob, the father of the Hebrews (and also Ismail, father of the northern Arabs), must be acknowledged by any impartial mind, no matter what its attitude to the historical, factual aspect of these genealogies and legends. Let us grant even that a man with the name Jacob, having done that which is related in the Book of Genesis, never existed at all. However, the Hebrews, or at least the main branch of Judaism, had to have some common ancestor. And proceeding from the given national character of Jews, we must conclude that this ancestor was distinguished by those typical particulars attributed to Jacob in the Bible. See S. M. Soloviev “Observations on the Historical Life of Nations” (*Works*, I) and also my “Philosophy of Biblical History.”

The actual adoption of true religion should destroy much in national life (as in personal life), but all that is subject to destruction by virtue of a higher principle does not constitute a positive particularity or trait. Historical sins, which weigh upon the national conscience, occur, as do erroneous directions in national life and activity. And there is always the danger of an evil collective will; it is necessary to be freed of all this, but such a liberation can only reinforce nationality, strengthen and broaden the manifestation of its positive character.

The first preachers of the Gospel had no reason to occupy themselves with the national question, which as yet had not entered the life of humankind, since clearly defined, independent, and self-conscious nationalities practically did not exist at all at that stage in history. Nevertheless, we find in the New Testament clear indications of a positive attitude toward nationality. In words to the Samaritan woman: *salvation is of the Jews* (John 4:22) and in the preliminary admonitions to the disciples—go first to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matthew 10:6), Christ sufficiently displays preference for his nation; and His final commandment to the Apostles: go, teach *all nations* (Matthew 28:19), suggests that He foresaw not only individual people but whole nationalities outside of Israel also. And Paul, having become the Apostle of tongues, did not, however, make himself into a cosmopolitan; having distanced himself from the majority of his countrymen in the most important matter of religion, he did not become indifferent to his nation and its special purpose:

I am speaking the truth as a Christian, and my own conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, assures me it is no lie: in my heart there is great grief and unceasing sorrow. For I could even pray to be outcast from Christ myself for the sake of my brothers, my natural kinsfolk. They are Israelites: they were made God's sons; theirs is the splendour of the divine presence, theirs the covenant, the law, the temple worship, and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them, in natural descent, sprang the Messiah. . . . Brothers! My deepest desire and my prayer to God is for their salvation. (Romans 9:1–5; 10:1)

IV.

Before realizing within themselves the idea of a universal humanity, nations had themselves to be formed and to take shape in their independence. Let us have a look at this process where it was fully achieved—in western Europe. The Apostolic successors, to whom was passed on the legacy to teach all nations, soon had to deal with nations in their infancy, in need of primary education before real

teaching. The Church brought them up conscientiously and self-sacrificingly. And later, continuing its tutelage, it compelled them to pass through schooling, which although one-sided, was not a bad thing. The historical adolescence and youth of the Germano-Romanic nations under the tutelage of the Catholic Church—the so-called Middle Ages—ended not entirely correctly because the spiritual authorities did not notice the maturity of their pupils and insisted on the preservation of former attitudes. The anomalies and revolutions which took place after this do not pertain to our subject. But one phenomenon is important to us, one which repeated itself in the national development of each European nation in spite of the most diverse and, in other respects, antithetical conditions, so that this phenomenon undoubtedly indicates some ethico-historical law.

For self-evident reasons, Italy achieved national self-consciousness before all other European nations. The Lombard League in the first half of the twelfth century marks this national awakening. But this external struggle was only a jolt which called to life the true forces of Italian genius. At the beginning of the next century the newborn Italian language on the lips of St. Francis already expressed feelings and thoughts of universal significance, understandable to Buddhist and Christian alike; here Italian painting was conceived (Cimabue) and afterward, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, appeared the work of Dante, which would alone be enough for the greatness of Italy.¹³ In this century and those following (up until the seventeenth), Italy, torn apart by the enmity of city-states and local rulers, by pope and emperor, by French and Spanish, produced all that is meaningful and valuable to humanity and of which the Italians can rightfully be proud. All these eternal philosophical and scientific works, works of poetic and artistic genius, had the same value to other nations, to the whole world, as to the Italians themselves. The authors of the true greatness of Italy without a doubt were its real patriots; they attached an absolute significance to their native land. But this was not on their part empty pretense which led to false and immoral claims—they actually achieved an absolute significance for Italy in works of absolute value. They did not consider the affirmation of themselves and their nationality as true and beautiful; rather, they *directly* affirmed themselves in the true and beautiful. These works were not good because they glorified Italy, but on the contrary they glorified Italy because they were *good in themselves*—good *for everyone*.

Patriotism has no need of defense and justification under these conditions: it justifies itself in fact, appearing as a creative *force* and not as fruitless reflection, or “an irritation of idle thought.”¹⁴ The vast extensiveness of the Italian element corresponded to the intrinsic intensiveness of creativity in this flowering epoch:

the boundaries of its cultural influence in Europe were the Crimea in the east and Scotland in the northwest. The Italian Marco Polo was first among Europeans to break through to Mongolia and China. A second Italian discovers the New World, and a third, extending this discovery, leaves it his name. The literary influence of Italy prevails across Europe for several centuries; the Italians are emulated in epic literature, lyric poetry, the novel. Shakespeare takes from them the subjects and the form of his dramas and comedies; the ideas of Giordano Bruno awaken philosophical thought both in England and in Germany; Italian language and Italian fashions prevail everywhere in the higher strata of society. During all this flowering of national creativity and influence, the Italians evidently did not worry that Italy be for Italians (it was, on the contrary, for whomever you please) but only that it also make of them something for others that would add universal significance to them, that is, they worried about those objective ideas of beauty and truth, which by means of their national spirit received new and worthy expressions.¹⁵

The Spanish nationality developed under completely special conditions. Over the course of seven centuries the Spanish represented the right forward flank of the Christian world in its struggle with Islam, and just after the left flank—Byzantium—was overthrown by the enemy, the Spanish on the right gained a decisive and final victory. This stubborn and successful struggle constituted the national pride of the Spanish, and they were right. For to the degree that Christianity, even with all its historical distortions, includes in itself absolute truth to which the future pertains, to that extent also a defense, even if only of the external borders of Christian creed and culture, is already an indubitable service to humanity. If the fate of western Asia and the Balkan peninsula had befallen western Europe, then from the purely cultural point of view and apart from religious beliefs—would this have contributed to historical progress?* In defending themselves from the Moors, the Spanish served, and knew that they served, the common cause: it would not even have come into their heads to say, “Spain for the Spanish”—they sensed, realized, and stated: Spain

* At one time the culture of the Moors was not inferior, but in certain respects superior to Christianity of those days. But history sufficiently demonstrates the lack of durability of any Islamic culture; and the fate which befell it in Damascus, Baghdad, and Cairo without a doubt would have repeated itself in the West: and here it would have been replaced by lasting barbarism of the Turkish kind. And if in this way the *bash-buzuk* [‘irregular Turkish troops’] had begun to make themselves at home in London and the Saxons had had to undergo continuous incursions by the Kurds, then what would have happened to the British Museum and to the Leipzig Book Trade?

for all of Christianity. They were completely sincere in this; they really wanted to serve their religion as being a universal and higher good for all, and they can only be blamed for an incorrect conception of Christianity. The uninterrupted seven-century struggle, although for a common and just cause, was a unilateral struggle mainly with weapons in hand, which created both the stubbornness and the narrow-mindedness of the Spanish national spirit.*

The Spanish in their practical conception and activity distorted the truth of Christianity more than other nations did; they gave violence a more decisive place in it than anyone else. Just as everyone else did in the Middle Ages, the Spanish constructed their worldview on the difference of the two swords—the spiritual sword, by which monks ruled under the command of the Pope, and the earthly sword, by which Knights ruled under the command of the King.¹⁶ But in Spain, these two swords associated with each other more closely than in other nations to the detriment of an essential distinction: the spiritual sword finally turned out to be not only as outwardly violent but also more tormenting and less noble than the earthly sword. The unique role of the Spanish element in this matter is sufficiently visible from the dual foundation of the Spanish Inquisition—by the monk Dominic in the thirteenth century and King Ferdinand in the fifteenth.[†] But with this sad glory we will not forget that even after its triumph over Islam, Spain still rendered a positive service to the common cause on its own path of outward service to Christianity—namely, spreading it across the ocean. The Spanish oceangoing knights, or naval pirates, subjugated the greater part of the New World to Christian culture, whatever its form. They saved an entire country (Mexico) from such terrifying things as cannibalistic paganism, before which even the horrors of the inquisition (which soon had been abolished) pale. They founded in South and Central America a dozen new states,

* Mainly, but not exclusively, because there were also in Spain truly spiritual advocates of Christianity, for example, Ramón Lull, who dedicated his life to the preaching of true religion by reasonable conviction. At first he contrived for this a separate method, by means of which, as it seemed to him, the dogmatics of faith could be communicated with the same apparency as the truths of pure mathematics and formal logic; afterward he became a missionary and was killed for peacefully preaching the Gospel in a barbarian land.

† We note, as a curious coincidence, that the first inquisition in matters of faith, namely, that against the Manichaean heresy, was also instituted *by a Spaniard*, Theodosius V in Byzantium in the East. It is also curious that Albigensianism, against which the Dominican inquisition was primarily directed, was a direct outgrowth of that same Manichaean heresy, for the sake of which nine centuries earlier Emperor Theodosius had appointed his “inquisitors.”

which participated, albeit weakly, in the common life of humanity in history. And it was at that very time that Spanish missionaries (among them such a true saint as Francis Xavier) first brought the Gospel to India and Japan.

But Spain continued to regard its true purpose as the defense of Christianity (as she understood it: that is, the Catholic Church) against its closest and most dangerous enemies. In the sixteenth century, protestants appeared in place of Islam. Today, we can view the Reformation as a necessary critical moment in the history of Christianity itself. But such a perspective was impossible for the contemporaries of this revolution. People either became protestants themselves or saw in Protestantism a hostile attack on Christianity embodied in the Church—an attack proceeding from the devil himself. There was no choice for the Spanish, who had lived only by the Catholic idea from the beginning of their history. All the forces of what was at that time the mightiest power were directed toward the suppression of the new religious movement. A business which was incorrect in principle, shockingly bloody in its execution, and a hopeless failure in its outcome was, however, entirely conscientious on the part of the Spanish. They were sincerely confident that they stood for the common good, for the most important and precious good of humanity—for the single, true religion, which godless apostates who were afflicted with the spirit of evil wanted to take away from the people. In their national struggle against Protestantism the Spanish stood for a certain universal principle, namely, for the principle of external guardianship of the divine institution over humanity. This was a false and baseless universalism, but its defenders believed in it sincerely and served it unselfishly apart from any national—political or personal egoism.

At that time, the Spanish genius Ignatius Loyola founded the Order of Jesuits for the struggle with Protestantism on peaceful grounds. One can think whatever one likes about the Jesuits, but one cannot take away from them one thing—their universal, international character. The external, unsuccessful struggle for Catholicism did not exhaust the spiritual forces of the Spanish nation; moral energy, revealed in defense of the common, if badly understood cause, found for itself another, better ideal expression. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spain made its not insignificant *national contribution* to the common treasury of higher culture—in the spheres of art, poetry, and contemplative mysticism. In all this, the Spanish genius addressed itself to subjects which were important not only for this nation, but for all. The products of this genius were to the highest degree national in character. They acquired this character naturally, without any premeditation on the part of their creators, but they

had an essentially universal interest and affirmed the glory of Spain at a time when her external power was collapsing and her armed forces suffered justified defeats. It is precisely in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in spite of the national enmity which had been awakened in half of Europe against the terrible defenders of the old religion, that Spanish cultural influence competed with that of the Italians, and not unsuccessfully.

The first dawning of the English national spirit can be, for brevity's sake, designated by five names: Bacon, Shakespeare, Cromwell, Milton, and Penn. That which is important and precious to all humanity is connected with these names; all nations are indebted to England for them, and the claims and requirements of exclusive nationalism are incompatible with them. The people who created the national greatness of England did not even think of this. The first one reflected on true knowledge of nature and man, of the best method and system of science; the second on the artistic reproduction of the human soul, passions, and even the principles of vivid fate, not hesitating to take subjects from foreign literature and to transfer the place of action to foreign lands. There is as little outward nationalism here as in the biblical ideas of Cromwell or Milton; even if these two had in mind some nation, then it was only the ancient Hebrew, and in no way the English nation. A wide world of scientific experience open on all sides, a profound artistic humanism, the high ideals of religion and civic freedom—here is what the English nation created in the person of its heroes and geniuses. “England for the English”—this would have been for them too little; they thought that the whole world was for the English; and they had the right to think this because they themselves were for all the world. The outward propagation of the English element corresponded to the merit of its intrinsic substance. Of course, British merchants observed and continue to observe their interests; but not all merchants would have been successful in the colonizing of North America, forming from it a new great nation. It was not on red-skinned Indians and not on Negroes, but on English people and English religious and political ideas—ideas of universal significance—that the United States was founded; not all merchants could have firmly ruled India and created in a completely uncivilized soil a cultured Australia.*

* Those Hindus who were taught in English schools now begin to speak (in English and in local language newspapers on the English model) about the burden of English rule and of the necessity of unification and liberation. Why didn't they surmise this earlier? The point is that such conceptions as nationality, national spirit, national dignity, patriotism, solidarity, development—were received by them only from the English, and they themselves, de-

The culminating point in the national development of France is represented by the epoch of the great revolution and the Napoleonic wars, when the universal historical significance of this country was expressed more clearly than anything else.* Of course, the rights of man and the citizen that were announced to the whole world turned out to be half-imaginary, and the universal revolutionary trinity, *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, was implemented in a rather strange way. But, in any event, the enthusiastic passion of the nation demonstrated only too clearly by these universal ideas that it was foreign to narrow nationalism. Did France desire to be only “for the French” when she was given over to Napoleon, so that he, controlling her forces, challenged the old order across all Europe and introduced everywhere universal principles of citizen equality, of religious and political freedom? And quite apart from this epoch, France had always distinguished itself by expansiveness and universalism of a separate kind, by the capacity and aspiration to adapt foreign ideas in order to give them a finished and more popular form, and to launch them back into circulation over the whole world. This peculiarity, which makes out of French history a glaringly clichéd *résumé* of common European history, is too striking and has been pointed out too often to make it necessary to enlarge upon here.

In modern times,† Germany, having manifested the great strength of its national spirit in the Reformation, acquired in the sphere of higher culture—intellectual and aesthetic—that superiority which belonged to Italy at the end of the Middle Ages and at the beginning of more recent times. The universal character and significance of the Reformation—the poetry of Goethe, the philosophy of Kant or Hegel—do not require evidence and explanation. We will note only that for Germany, as for Italy, the time of the higher spiritual blossoming of national forces coincided with an epoch of political impotence and collapse.

One ought to mention here Holland and Sweden from among the smaller nations of Europe. For the first, national glory and prosperity were a result of its ideological struggle for the faith against Spanish coercion, after which the small state did not isolate itself in its preciously obtained independence, but became an open refuge of free thought for all Europe. Sweden, in its turn, displayed national significance when, in the reign of Gustav Adolphus, it devoted its forces

spite their ancient wisdom, could not hit on all this in the course of two and a half thousand years of their history.

* If not the culminating point in terms of content, then in terms of the internal stress of national life and the extent of its external usurpation.

† From the last half of the past century up to the first half of the present one.

to the service of the common cause of religious freedom against the politics of forced unification.

V.

The history of all nations—ancient and modern—that had an influence on the destiny of humanity tells us one and the same thing. They all assumed their significance and affirmed their nationality not in itself, taken abstractly, but in the universal, the *supra* national, which they believed in and which they served and realized in their creativity—national in origin and means of expression, but entirely universal according to content or according to their objective results. Nations live and act not in their own name or their material interests, but in the name of an idea, that is, that which is for them more important than anything—something that is necessary for the whole world, by which they can serve it. They live not only for themselves, but for all. What the nation believes and does in faith, it absolutely acknowledges as unconditionally good—good not because it is its own, but in itself, and hence, good for everyone—and this is the way it usually turns out to be. Historically, representatives of the nation can sometimes falsely understand one or another aspect of the national–universal idea which they serve, and then their service turns out poor and unsuccessful. Philip II and the Duke of Alva very badly understood the idea of Church unity, the Paris Convention understood the idea of human rights no better.¹⁷ But while poor understanding passes, the idea remains, if it only is really rooted in the soul of the nation.

National creativity, that is, that which the nation actually realizes, is universal to the extent that its true national *self-consciousness* is also universal in its object. A nation does not conceive itself abstractly as some empty object, separately from the substance and meaning of its practices. On the contrary, it conceives itself precisely in, or with respect to, that which it does and wants to do, in what it believes and what it serves.

And, as is clear from history, if the nation itself does not set as a goal its own self taken abstractly, or its material interests separate from its higher ideals, then each of us also does not have the right to set the service of material interests higher than moral requirements in the name of the love of one's nation. And if the nation itself, by its own true creativity and self-consciousness, asserts itself in the universal, that is, in that which has significance for all, or in which it is in solidarity with all, then how can a true patriot rip apart solidarity with others and hate or despise foreigners for the sake of the interests of his nation? If the

nation itself sees its true good in the common good, then how can patriotism set up the good of the nation as something separate and in opposition to all else? Obviously, this will not be the moral ideal good which the nation itself desires. And illusory patriotism will turn out to be in contradiction not to a foreign nation, but to one's own in its best aspirations. But don't national enmity and struggle exist? Of course they exist, just as cannibalism once existed everywhere—it exists as a zoological fact condemned by the better human consciousness of people themselves.

Cosmopolitanism, which requires the absolute application of moral law without any respect to national differences, will be correct over against false patriotism or nationalism, which maintain the predominance of animal instincts in the nation over a higher national self-consciousness. But it is precisely moral principle, if we take it to its logical conclusion, which does not allow us to be satisfied with this negative requirement of cosmopolitanism.

Let an individual person be the direct subject of a moral attitude. But in this very person, one of the most important positive traits is nationality. This is not only a physical fact, but also a psychological and moral attribute. On the level of development that humanity has achieved, the belonging of a given person to a certain nationality is consolidated by his personal act of self-consciousness and will. Thus nationality is this person's intrinsic, indivisible sense of belonging, which for him is precious and important to the highest degree. And how can I have a moral attitude to this person if I don't want to acknowledge the existence of what is so important to him? Moral principle does not give me the right to transform an actual person, a living human being, into some empty, abstract object, arbitrarily separating from him the essentials of his individuality. If I must acknowledge the special worth of this person, then I am obliged to acknowledge all that is positive which he connects his dignity with. And if I love the person, then I must love his nationality, which he loves, and from which he does not separate himself. The higher moral ideal requires that we love all people as ourselves, but since people do not exist outside nationality (just as nationality also does not exist outside individual people), this connection too has now become an inner, moral one and not just physical; and hence the direct logical conclusion is that *we must love all nationalities as our own*. Here is yet another positive application of Christian principle, which is being called forth by the current development of national health and self-consciousness. This point of view abolishes both nationalism and cosmopolitanism, while preserving what is positive in them; and no matter how strange this will seem, there are signs that humanity is embarking on a *path* leading to the realization of this ideal.

6 The Significance of the State

I.

Every individual being, by virtue of his absolute significance (in the moral sense), has an *inalienable* right to existence and perfection.¹ But this moral right would be empty words if its actual implementation depended *entirely* on external *chance* and someone else's will. A real right is that which includes in itself the conditions of its realization, that is, protection of itself from violation. The first and fundamental condition for this is social intercourse, or community. For man is a solitary creature and obviously rendered powerless against the *elements* of nature, against beasts and inhumane people.² However, the protection of personal freedom or the natural rights of man being necessary, the organization of social life is at the same time a restriction of these rights; but not restricted in an extrinsic and arbitrary way, rather, intrinsically proceeding from the essence of the matter. Making use of the organization of society for the protection of my existence and activity, I must and do

Source: "Znachenie gosudarstva," *Vestnik Evropy* 12 (December 1895): 803–14. See also *Sobranie sochinenii* 12:321–31.

recognize as well its right to existence and development, and therefore I subordinate my activity to the essential conditions of community existence and development.³ If I desire to realize my right or guarantee to myself a sphere of free action, then, of course, I must make the measure of this realization or the volume of this free sphere conditional on those fundamental requirements of the community interest or the common good, without the satisfaction of which there can be *no* realization of my rights and *no* guarantee of my freedom whatsoever.

A restriction of personal freedom determined by the requirements of the common good in given circumstances, or more precisely, the balance of these two principles, which is determined in given conditions, is positive right or *law*.

Law is the generally recognized and impersonal (that is, independent of personal opinion and desires) determination of right, or of the conception of what ought to be, in given conditions and in a given relationship, the balance of personal freedom and the common good—a determination or a *general understanding brought about through particular judgments in individual cases or matters*.

Hence there are three distinct features of law: (1) its *publicity*—decrees, not promulgated for general knowledge, thus cannot have the force of law; (2) its *concreteness*—law expresses norms of real life relationships in a given community environment and not any kind of abstract truths and ideals; and, (3) its *realistic applicability*, or convenient practicability in every single case, for the sake of which there is always connected with it a so-called sanction, that is, a threat of coercive and punitive measures—in the event of unfulfillment of its requirements or violation of its prohibitions.⁴

In order that this sanction not remain an empty threat, there should be in the execution of the law real force, sufficient for carrying it to its conclusion in any case. In other words, law must have in society real bearers or representatives, sufficiently empowered so that the laws and pronounced judgments issued by them can have coercive force. Such a practical embodiment of law is called *authority*.

Requiring of necessity from the whole community a guarantee of my natural rights not possible for me to achieve for myself, I must grant to this societal whole, according to reason and justice, the positive right to those means and methods of action without which it could not fulfill its own objective—an objective which is for me desirable and necessary. I must specifically grant to this community whole (1) the authority to issue laws, necessary for all, and therefore for me as well; (2) the authority to judge according to these common laws concerning personal matters and behavior; and, (3) the authority to compel each and every individual to fulfill both these judicial verdicts and also all legal measures necessary for the common security and prosperity (and hence mine also).⁵

It is clear that these three distinct powers—legislative, judicial, and executive—are only particular manifestations of a single supreme authority in which is concentrated the entire positive right of the community whole, as such. Without the unity of a supreme authority, expressed in this way or otherwise, neither common laws nor law courts nor actual administration would be possible, that is, the very purpose of the organization of a given society could not be achieved.

A community body with permanent organization, containing within itself the plenitude of positive rights—or the united supreme authority—is called *the State*. In every organism (1) the organizational principle, (2) the system of organs or instruments of organizational activity, and (3) the aggregate of organizing elements, essentially differ. Corresponding to this, in the collective organism of the State: (1) the supreme authority, (2) its various organs or subordinate authorities, and (3) the substratum of the State, that is, the mass of population consisting of individual persons, families, and wider private associations, which are subordinated to State power, also differ. Only in the State does right find all the conditions for its realization, and in this respect the State is *embodied right*. However, the conception of the State is not exhausted in this basic definition.

II.

Of course such a complex organization as the State is represented by highly diverse types, according to time and place. While I won't go into the question of the forms of government—a question which, beginning with Aristotle, was the favorite theme of writers on politics and State right, and which can be considered theoretically exhausted—I will recall only how the idea of the State was reflected in the major languages of cultured humanity. The root meaning of the word that a certain nation uses for the designation of the State certainly contains, if not a direct indication, then a clear suggestion of the aspect or problem of collective life that it considered or considers the most important for itself. Without a doubt, not one great historical nation would emphasize in its conception of the State an aspect or feature which has no essential meaning in this conception at all.

A comparison of these diverse national methods of conception thus will help us deepen and broaden our own conception of the meaning of the State.

For the ancient Greeks, the State was a *city*, or an independent civic community (*politeia*—from *polis*). This conception is forever rooted in the memory of humanity, as such words as *citizen* and *civic* valor attest; corresponding terms are found in all European languages.⁶ But what common meaning does the city

have here? Certainly, this meaning is not exhausted by the notion of a protected, inhabited place. The city was always, and is now, the center of education, intellectual and material culture, vital activity, and progress.* All this requires the organized cooperation of many people and their gathering in one place, that is, the city, is necessary for this. Education has never originated and prospered outside of State organization, and so many important states have always issued forth from a city or were connected with a city. The great Eastern despotisms came out of expanding cities—Babylon, Nineveh, Memphis, Thebes, and so forth; the greatest State organization in the world arose from the city of Rome, and before that two small cities were for a long time at the center of universal history—Jerusalem and Athens. Three great moments in the historical process (from an extrinsic aspect) are commemorated by the founding of cities: the combination of eastern and Hellenic culture (Alexandria); the manifest victory of Christianity over paganism (Constantinople); and the appearance on the world-historical stage of a new intermediate force between West and East—Russia (Petersburg).

In calling the State a city, the Greeks—the first creators of purely humanistic culture—pointed to the State's *cultural* purpose as being of vital significance for it, and the correctness of this indication is supported by reason and history. If free races and tribes accept a coercive organization, if private interests are subjected to conditions necessary for the existence of the whole, then this is, of course, not done in order to maintain a wild, semibestial existence of people. The State is the necessary condition of human education, of cultural progress. Therefore, the principal adversaries of State organization are also necessarily the principle adversaries of culture and education. But since only a few resolve to preach savagery and the simplicity of bestial existence directly, then an ad hoc sophistic distinction between outward material culture and inner spiritual enlightenment of man is devised. There is no argument about the fact that these two aspects of the historical process differ from one another and that the high development of one of them does not always coincide with a similar development of the other in individual cases; and there would be nothing interesting in dwelling on this obvious truth. Everyone is in agreement that a godly man of little education is incomparably better than a highly cultured scoundrel, as a precious stone is a much more desirable object than a human finger stricken with

* *Civic*—means educated, just as *rural*—the opposite, wild, ignorant. And this conception, first elucidated in the consciousness of the Greeks, was passed on from them to other nations as well: *urbanus, urban, poli, civil, civilise*—and the opposite: *agrestis, rudis, rusticus*, and so on.

gangrene; but it does not follow from this that education is completely unnecessary and that inorganic matter is something better than an organic body. Certainly a stone has the advantage over a man in that it cannot fall ill and does not need medicine.

Opponents of culture, who imagine that the existence of uneducated, godly men proves to be something useful for their opinion, close their eyes to the fact that we have here only very relative examples of a lack of education. But a question has key significance here: could such godly men even appear among the absolutely uncivilized? Could, for example, the notorious Akimich from "The Power of Darkness" turn up among cannibals? and even if he appeared among them, then would he not be quickly eaten, so that his cunning would be completely useless to the Russian theatergoing public?⁷ Why did the historical Buddha preach his teaching not to the half-savage Aryans, for whom dairy butter was a higher good, but to the inhabitants of cultured Indian States? Why could the God-man himself be born only when the "fullness of time" had arrived? Why did he appear only in the eighth century after the foundation of the eternal *city* within the borders of the great Roman *State*, among the *educated* population of Galilee and Jerusalem? When they reiterate the common reference to "Galilean fisherman," they forget, first, that the learned scribe and educated Roman citizen Paul "more than anyone exerted" himself for Christianity (both for the Church itself and for its enemies), citing Hellenic poets and Roman laws.⁸ Second, neither were the fishermen-apostles ignoramuses at all but were schooled in the Book of Laws and the Prophets. Third, and finally, for the fulfillment of their work they still had to learn to write in Greek.

III.

If the greatest representatives of intellectual and aesthetic education—the Greeks—placed the creation of a culture by the city at the forefront in calling the State a city, then people of a practical character—the Romans—placed higher than anything else another aspect of the State, namely, its mission to unify people for the *common good* or to realize their solidarity in this matter. For them the State was—*res publica*, that is, a common concern or a matter for all the people. In defining the State in this way, the Romans bestowed on it at the same time an absolute significance; they saw in it the supreme principle of life. The security of the common concern, the preservation of the community whole from disintegration, is the highest interest to which all else should be unrestrictedly subordinated: *salus reipublicae summa lex*.⁹

In the Roman conception of the State as a common concern, as the embodiment of human solidarity, its moral character is certainly reflected in a more direct and narrow way than in the Greek conception of cultural citizenship. If, from the moral aspect, the typical highly cultured Athenian or Corinthian could be a scoundrel, if the appellation of *Sybarite* (citizen of Sybaris) became a negative term for refined, egoistical, and dissolute people, then a typical citizen in the Roman sense (that is, a person putting the good of the fatherland higher than anything else and always ready to sacrifice his life and all his private attachments for its preservation) now could not be called an immoral person. It is not for nothing that "Roman virtue" became a proverb, and nobody will get it into his or her head to say about a moral scoundrel, "Here's a real Roman!" This name calls forth the integrated image of a man who is, first of all, virtuous or morally steadfast, law-abiding, and, last, a man of the State—graphic evidence of a close connection between morality, law, and the State.

IV.

The State, as the authentic historical embodiment of human solidarity, is the practical condition of humanity's universal concern, that is, the realization of Good in the world. This practical moral character of the State emphasized by the practical spirit of the Romans does not signify, however, that it alone already is the absolute principle of morality, the highest goal of life, the supreme Good and blessing, as the Romans thought. The fallacy of such a view deifying the State manifested itself vividly in history when an authentically absolute principle of morality came forth in Christianity. The Roman authorities had to persecute the new teaching not out of religious exclusiveness or fanaticism, which they were generally free from, but simply owing to the Roman political idea of State absolutism, which left to itself could not recognize together with it another higher principle in any sense whatsoever. For its part, Christianity never rejected State organization and the moral duty of subjection to authorities as the necessary implement of Divine Providence; but in ascribing to the State its proper place, Christians inevitably collided with the Roman idea which deified the State, that is, put it in its improper place. A collision had to occur, in spite of the sincere desire of Christians to be good citizens and subordinate themselves to the State in its sphere. The intrinsic advantage of Christianity consisted in the fact that it was broader, more magnanimous than its adversary and that it could, while remaining true to itself, recognize the State's right to exist and even to supreme authority in the worldly sphere (on the strength of this advantage it had

to triumph even from a purely humanistic point of view). Christianity gave to the State its full and proper measure, and this was at precisely the same time that the Roman authorities had to deny willy-nilly to Christianity that which belonged to it by right, namely, its significance as the supreme absolute principle of life. The victory was secured for a broader, more humane and progressive direction, and since then, no matter what the historical changes, an actual return to Roman State absolutism is an impossibility.

Two new political ideas of general significance appeared in its place in the Middle Ages: the west European and the Byzantine. The first of these passed through a multitude of phases in its development—from feudal kingship to the contemporary French or American Republic (with temporary and weak reactions in the direction of absolutism). In it, the *relative* character of the State in particular is stressed. In all major European languages the concept of the State is signified by words which come from the Latin word *status* (which was *not*, however, used by the Romans themselves in this sense): *état*, *estado*, *Staat*, *state*, and so forth; *Status* means *condition*, and in naming the State thus, European peoples see in it only a relative condition, the result of the cooperation of diverse social forces and elements. Thus it was in the Middle Ages when the State in Europe was only an equal balance of hostile forces and elements: the central royal power, the clergy, feudal authorities, and municipal communities. It is the same now when this State is only an equal balance of competing class and party interests. The common character of the western State also determined over the entire course of medieval and modern history the distinguishing character of European civilization (first precisely indicated in Guizot's well-known work)—namely, its complex composition of elements, which are not only heterogeneous, but also nearly equally balanced, independent, capable, and ready to defend themselves.¹⁰

The common good requires that the struggle of opposing forces not carry over into continuous violence, that they be peacefully and equally balanced as much as possible according to general agreement—implicitly or directly expressed in treaty. Therein lies the fundamental formal sense of the State, namely, its legal significance. Law, according to the idea itself, is the *equilibrium* between individual freedom and the common good. The concrete expression or embodiment of this equilibrium, with all the conditions necessary for its realization, is, in fact, the State.

But this balance of *countervailing* forces and interests embodied in the State is not permanent, it is dynamic and variable: the forces which act are themselves changed, their relationship changes, and finally, the balancing methods them-

selves also change. How do these changes take shape? If legal relations are being perfected, in fact, are becoming more just, more humane, then—one may ask, What force governs this perfection? The plenitude of legal representatives is the State—but, according to western conception, the State itself is only the expression of a given legal condition—and nothing more. Therefore, either it is necessary to recognize that the progress of law and the perfection of humanity, which is bound up with it, not only have taken place and are now taking place, but will always take place *on their own*, as a physical process, during which any assurance that this process will lead to something better is lost; or it is necessary to acknowledge that the west European conception of the State is inadequate and to search for another.

V.

The Byzantine political idea is characterized by the fact that it acknowledges in the State a *supralegal* principle, which, *not being the creation of given legal relations, can independently change them, and is also called independently to change them in accordance with the requirements of supreme truth*. Until recent times, this idea was not alien even to western Europe, but here it was strictly only a tendency of one of the political elements along with others that struggled for predominance—to wit: royal power. The triumph of this element over others was only temporary and incomplete, and the idea of absolute monarchy currently has no roots whatsoever in the life and consciousness of west European nations.

Although the idea of absolute monarchy or Christian empire in Byzantium was affirmed in abstract form, it could not receive appropriate development either in the consciousness or in the life of the Greek “Romans,” upon which the tradition of Roman State absolutism, having only a superficially embellished Christian character, still weighed excessively. In the meantime, these two ideas are not only not identical at their heart, but to a certain extent find themselves in direct contradiction with one another. According to the Roman idea, the State, as the supreme form of existence, is everything; it is in itself the purpose, and when the entire fullness of State power—the entire *res publica*—was concentrated in a single emperor, then he, despite all flattery and servile sentiment, was acknowledged as the possessor of Divine value, or a man-god by virtue of the idea itself. The apotheosis of the emperors constituted, without a doubt, the most essential and the most sincere component of the Roman religion of that time. This religion had its own terminology, which to a significant degree was also transferred to Byzantium. And here, everything that concerned the monarch or every-

thing that came from him (for example, letters, decrees) was called holy or sacred. For all that, the idea of a man-god could not be reconciled with the religion of the God-man. In Christian Byzantium, the imperial power could be considered holy only as a particular service to the true God. Before his departure from the realm of the visible world, Christ told His disciples, “*All authority on heaven and earth has been granted to me*” (Matthew 28:18). Consequently, from the Christian point of view, the power of the emperor could be understood only as the *delegation* of Christ’s authority or a commission from Christ to rule the “world” (*oikhoumene*, as these successors to the Romans called their empire).¹¹ By this conception of State authority as delegation from above, the possibility of personal despotism in principle is eliminated and the guidance of an absolute moral ideal affirmed. It is clear that the commission should be fulfilled in the sense in which it was given or in the spirit and in the interest of the empowered trustee. The question of what corresponds to the spirit of Christ, what should be done in His interest in given conditions and circumstances, is with sufficient definition resolved for the Christian by his conscience; and the ultimate significance in governance by the State, in accordance with the Christian idea, pertains to this resolution of personal conscience. This is the new thing that is contributed by Christianity to the political sphere. The Eastern despot is restricted by fixed traditional institutions and is absolute only in the satisfaction of his passions. The Roman emperor knows only physical limits to his tyranny; not accountable before the people, he is not accountable before God either, for he himself is a god, although a rather wretched one. In contrast to both these ideas, Christian monarchy is *autocracy of conscience*. The bearer of supreme authority, which has been commissioned to him from the God of Truth and Mercy, is not subject to any limitations besides moral ones; he can do everything that accords with conscience, and nothing that is against it.

He should not depend on “public opinion” because public opinion can be false; he is not a servant of the people’s will because the will of the people can be immoral; he is not the representative of the country because the country can be swallowed up by a sea of death. He is placed above all of this; he is a subject, a servant, and a representative only of that which in essence cannot be bad—the will of God, and the grandeur of such a position is equal only to the grandeur of its responsibility.

VI.

To act in conscience and only in conscience is the right and duty of every man, and in this sense *every man is a moral autocrat*. The distinction among people is

not in the moral principle of their life and their actions—this principle is for everyone one and the same—but only in the extent, the conditions, and the methods of the application of this principle. The particular problem of supreme state authority takes shape with its position as the mediating force between the absolute moral ideal and the given legal organization of society. Law is, as we know, the balance of individual and common interest. But both sides are interested not only in the maintenance of their existence or in the preservation of the given status of the community, but also in its *perfection*. Law is the conditional realization of moral principle in a given social sphere. Being conditional, it is imperfect, but as the realization of moral principle, which is in itself absolute, it is subject to perfection. Positive laws, which govern the life of society, should more and more become conformed gradually to the moral law, that is, become gradually more and more just and philanthropic, both in themselves and in their application.

In order for this progress of the legal situation in a moral sense, or the transformation of community relations in the direction of the social ideal, to be both successful and worthy of its objective, it should be the concern of human freedom; and at the same time it cannot be left to the arbitrary will of individual people. Therefore, a delegation of divine authority to a Christian autocrat, with his absolute freedom and absolute responsibility, is necessary.

But given the actual condition of humanity, which is divided into many independent States, the problem of supreme state authority cannot be restricted to the preservation and perfection of legal relations within a given community whole—the problem inevitably extends also to cooperation of individual states. Here it consists in applying moral principle also to international relations, to transform them as well in the sense of greater justice and philanthropy. The delegation of a Christian autocrat is related, of course, to this historic work also. And here he is the servant of God's Truth and must do that which in given conditions most contributes to the ultimate unification of the entire world in the spirit of Christ.

VII.

If we return from this idea of Christian autocracy that results from the essence of the matter to its performance in the Byzantine empire, then we must acknowledge this performance as utterly inadequate. The activity of the emperors was in the main threefold: legislative, military, and religious. The laws enacted by them had the goal of preserving and consolidating the State and social sys-

tem inherited by them from Rome, despite the pagan foundation of this order; slavery remained unrescinded, and barbaric punishments of actual and supposed criminals were even reinforced. In their wars, which were waged with more and more ferocity and less and less success, the emperors attempted to preserve the borders of the Christian world, particularly on the Eastern side, at first against the pagan Persians and then against Islam. Inasmuch as these wars safeguarded the seeds of Christian religion from external destruction in the Near East and on the Balkan peninsula—they make up, certainly, the historical merit of the Byzantine empire; the second of its great international merits consists in its transmission of Christianity to Russia. The religious activity of the emperors especially, besides being praiseworthy examples of personal virtue, had in general a far from laudatory goal: to adapt as much as possible Christian truth to the external requirements and temporary needs of the semipagan state; hence, by the way, resulted patronage to various heresies (partly of their own creation) such as monothelitism and iconoclasm, for the sake of supposed state utility.

The task of historians is to evaluate the individual merits of the “Second Rome” and find mitigating circumstances for its sins. In the final analysis, it must be said that Byzantium did not fulfill its historical calling. In its internal politics it protected excessively the semipagan *statu quo* [*sic*], not thinking about Christian perfection of community life, and in general it subordinated everything to the external interest of military defense. But it lost the intrinsic reason for its existence precisely as a consequence of these one-sided concerns and thus could not fulfill its external mission either, and it perished in a sad way.

7 Sunday Letters

I. A FAMILY OF NATIONS

“It is not good for a people to be alone.” The pagans understood this truth as well. There came a time when a stern *pater familias* appeared in the world with his *patria potestas*, gathering the multitude of nations into one family circle.¹ The regime to which the Roman subjected this great family of nations was not an easy one, just as the regime which lay at the foundation of the private Roman family was not easy. But in any event this was a family, and the ruler of the house required only a peaceful common life among its members and the recognition of his supreme power over them all, not in the least encroaching on their per-

Source: These twenty essays originally appeared under the series heading “Voskresnye pis'ma” during 1897–98 in the newspaper *Rus'* published by V. P. Gaideburov. They are reproduced in *Sobranie sochinenii* 10:3–80. Eleven of the twenty essays were also included by Soloviev as “addenda” to his last work, *Tri razgovora o voine, progresse, i kontse vsemirnoi istorii, so vklucheniem kratkoi povesti ob Antikhriste i s prilozheniiami* (St. Petersburg: Trud, 1900), 199–279. “A Family of Nations” appeared as “Sem'ia narodov,” *Rus'*, January 19, 1897.

sonal rights and particulars. Neither the Roman Republic nor the empire of the Caesars knew forced *latinization*—freedom of language, way of life, and religion were granted to each nation. Owing to the relative freedom of the parts, the unity of the whole was not only made more substantial with fullness and depth, but at the same time also *stronger*: a living body, with all its complexity and various separate parts is much stronger and stable than a simple and monotonous pile of sand, which the first wind will disperse. The complex organism of the Roman Empire seemed so strong and stable compared to the first mechanistic colossi—that the word *eternal* became the usual epithet for it on all lips.

The fateful shortcoming which destroyed this eternal empire lay not in the fact that it was a family of many nations (otherwise the empire itself would not have existed), but in the fact that it was a pagan family, and the power of rule in the home rested on foundations alien to absolute truth; therefore, it could only present itself as divine, but was not so in fact. Transferred to Byzantium, the Roman Empire was then subjected to absolute truth and because of this itself received the right to absoluteness. But this right is not realized in and by itself: the single, but as a result also indispensable, condition of the true realization of this right is the fulfillment of the obligation connected to it. The empire in Byzantium also became pagan.

In the northeastern corner of Europe, another family arose apart from the ancient Roman circle of nations, and by free moral resolve. Several Slavic and Finnish tribes reached a mutual agreement to call a supreme power from across the sea as a dispassionate third party to adjudicate a resolution of their disputes. The regent also soon became for them an elder relative closely linked with his new subjects. But in addition to these two meanings—arbitrating party and older relative of the entire family—the great Prince then obtained for the majority of his members a third significance, that of Godfather.

The new family of nations received spiritual sanctification, and even if not all of its then and future members took part in this second birth, the basic issue remains unchanged: *the duties of baptized brothers to the unbaptized are determined not by the fact that the latter are unbaptized, but by the fact that the former are*. The duties of Christians to non-Christians can be only Christian duties, and it would be an obvious and crude falsehood to indicate and emphasize your Christianity if you do not want to look at everything and everybody from a Christian point of view.

Of course, the acceptance of Christianity could not abolish but only elevate and strengthen the significance of happy circumstance in our historical life (the

calling of the Varangians for the formation of a State); and even in its first positive manifestation Russia acted as a harmonious family of nations. And the more our State grew, the more the family circle of nations subject to it grew. New members entered, both baptized and unbaptized, but the source of its true unity remained inviolable and was based on the fact that each could find for oneself a place and a space for one's peaceful growth under the shelter of a common power. Even Ivan IV did not disturb it. Whatever his great faults were, it did not even come into his head to reduce all the nationalities of the Muscovite kingdom to a common denominator. Just as from the beginning Russia was a multinational family gathered around Novgorod and Kiev, it also gathered such a family around Muscovy, and finally was designated in the same way as an all-Russian empire that embraced a seventh part of the earthly sphere.

And after the long and rough political work of the gathering of lands, when spiritual creativity and self-awareness awoke and began to grow among us, did it come into anyone's head to represent and think of Russia otherwise, than as a single *multinational* whole? When our great national poet spoke about his own future glory—although sometimes playing this tune too often—the fatherland appeared to him in this future not otherwise than in the form of a divers and sympathetic family of nations:

A rumor about me will pass over all Great Rus'
And *every language existing in it* will name me.²

So where has this infection come from—this infection which we see before our eyes and which has forced many people and entire community circles to maintain stubbornly and bitterly that there are no “existing languages” in Russia besides the Russian language alone? To maintain this stands in defiance of common sense and Christian sensibility and all our history and direct national interests. It stands against the thinking of all our best people and despite the resolute declarations of the supreme authority itself. Should all this richness of our fatherland and world be destroyed and reduced to monotony and poverty? Should all these innumerable nationalities, having entered into the makeup of the Russian Empire at various times, now be erased into one faceless mass, into one uniform ethnographic material? And should they maintain at the same time that these are only the remnants of an ancient disorder and earlier lack of discipline, either more or less submissive or unyielding, but all the same doomed victims of coercive Russification?

Glory to God! We can save ourselves from the unpleasant labor of rummaging through the dark sources of this community epidemic, for it has already been

endured. And although it still exists, it does so only in the form of traces of a disease that is gradually and increasingly weakening, unlikely to return, at least in its former shape. And now we can dwell on a more gratifying task. First, we should point out some signs of our community's return to health. After that, we can proceed from the truth of the *multinationalness* of our homeland, the truth to which the Russian national self-consciousness has finally returned, and examine the question: what should a *Christian family of nations* be and toward what should it strive? We will begin a discourse about this next Sunday; and meanwhile I ask you to turn your attention to the previously emphasized words. I emphasized them in order to denote a very importance difference: a Christian family of nations is not yet absolutely a family of Christian nations. Although their coincidence is always desirable, these two concepts can also not coincide in a certain historical epoch.

II. AN AWAKENING OF CONSCIENCE

When people who have not completely lost their conscience give themselves up to some ugly passion, for example, spite against their neighbor, they sometimes free themselves by traveling the path of long experience or difficult trials, but sometimes the matter transpires more simply and easily. A man begins to reveal his enmity more internally than externally: he pictures for himself an invisible enemy and inflames himself with hatred toward this enemy; then he imagines the enemy breathing spite and murder, and he himself first stings this enemy with murderous words and then proceeds to action. Now the enemy is toppled, the victor triumphs as he tramples him underfoot . . . and then suddenly stops. Well, what is all of this about? This is ugliness, this is insanity! A blush of shame covers the face as the entire gamut of malicious feelings that led to this ignominy falls away, having nearly metamorphosed into the gnashing teeth of a cannibal. The man shakes off the infernal nightmare and returns to human reason.

This psychological experience involuntarily came to mind when in recent weeks I read several articles in Russian journals of a conservative and narrowly nationalistic bent. The articles were about our relation to the nationalities and faiths that entered into one family with us by the will of Providence under the power of a single common Father. "Wipe them from the face of the earth; there can be only one nation in Russia—a Russian nation, and others are only mate-

Source: "Probuzhdenie sovesti," *Rus'*, January 26, 1898 (*sic*). This essay seems to be misdated, for it follows the first in terms of its logic and references.

rial for the speediest, compulsory Russification by any means possible.” This is what has been advocated until recently by the “patriotic” organs of our press. But now we read another kind of wisdom in the *Russian Review*, one of the most glaring representative organs of this current:¹

The more zealously the gymnasium blames their students for belonging to the Polish nation, the more strongly it restrains in them every outward manifestation of this membership, the more deeply they will recognize it, and the more widely opens the abyss distancing them from Russia. And overly zealous Russifiers count such forcible eradications as service to Russia! Leave alone the love of a Polish youth for everything native and national; let it blossom freely in him and apply all your efforts to combine in him this love with a devotion to Slavic affairs held in common, the representative of which was, is, and will be Russia. Evidently these gentlemen forget that hatred only breeds spite, and contempt calls forth offense. By displaying hatred and contempt to all that is Polish, they increase tenfold in Polish children and young people their hatred to all that is Russian—and what’s more, they produce hatred in those who never had it at all. . . . Not even a year passes after matriculation before a burning hatred is clearly displayed in these indifferent youth. Over the years this hatred continuously grows and increases, so that near the end of their course of study they are already so steeped in it that they have in this tendency far surpassed their parents, whom life has calmed and made practical, forcing unavoidable compromises. Russia is in need not of the reincarnation of Poles into Russians, but of their education into honest citizens, and the first and integral mark of an honest man is truthfulness. It is not Poles that are harmful for Russia, but the two-facedness and falsehood that have been produced in a majority of them in part under the influence of foreign dominion.

This kind of talk in such an extremist publication is cited with great approval by such a sensible organ of public opinion as *New Times*, which has itself published several excellent notes in the same vein.² Isn’t this a good sign of the achievement of moral change? In reading articles from the *Russian Review* and *New Times* on the Polish question, I recalled for some reason these lines by some poet that I read long ago in childhood:

Albanians guard me,
I am in chains, but in the window
Orange blossoms flower,
A good sign—spring is near.³

Even more pleasantly striking in the role of a flowering orange blossom is a former Albanian, the venerable Prince Meshchersky.⁴ In recent years he has surprised (in various senses) both his adherents and detractors more than once by

his passionate declarations in favor of toleration and religious freedom. And now, at last, what excellent words we have recently heard from the venerable enfant terrible of Russian conservatism: "In general, it would behoove us to turn our attention to the questions and subjects of faith with great caution out of respect for them." Referring to various legal limitations on religious services, especially for Catholics, Pr. Meshchersky continues:

But here is what I in no way can come to terms with—the possibility that as a result of such prohibitive and restrictive clauses for Catholic religious services, and in order to avoid the impact of these clauses, the Catholic has changed faith, has made himself Orthodox and, yesterday hopeless, today has been accepted on the spot as one who has become a *trustworthy* Orthodox. This is a most outrageous and scandalous phenomenon to religion; it is insulting, immoral, and particularly blasphemous. And meanwhile this phenomenon is not only practiced among us, but is accomplished with approval, so to speak, and doesn't trouble anyone. And in the meantime if disrespect as well as insult to the Orthodox Church does not appear here, then they appear nowhere . . . for the Orthodox faith clearly becomes the subject of shameful bargaining of conscience with any kind of place of religious worship. Renounce the faith of your fathers . . . create a public desecration over your church, and then join our church as a perjurer, apostate, and betrayer of your church, and you will receive a position to which as a Catholic you did not have a right; as a perjurer and Judas of your church, you receive the right to count yourself a *trustworthy* servant of the Russian State: henceforth, you can be trusted with both Russian honor and Russian security.

"True," concludes Pr. Meshchersky, "I cannot remember an instance when terrifying Divine punishment did not overtake such *trustworthy* Orthodox Poles, but in any event I think hopefully of the time that such an outrageous occurrence intended for the glory of our church and for the honor of Russia will become unthinkable."

Many of his previous strange and unnecessary comments will be forgiven Pr. Meshchersky for such righteous and passionate words. Through him the awakened conscience of our society has begun to speak even more boldly and more directly than through other representatives of that same conservative current.

And it is especially important that our society has begun to speak on its own, freely without external inducements. It used to be that similar about-faces of societal opinion occurred as a result of the impression left by a national disaster, for example, of such a historical event as the Sebastopol pogrom.⁵ In the present case, there was nothing of the kind. Going too far in its nationalistic Russification passion, society suddenly *came to its senses*, became shamed by the disgrace that logically followed from these evil steerings and changed its direction.

Certainly, the collective soul is complex, and moral changes cannot be accomplished in it as quickly and fully as in the soul of a single person. But whatever yet will emerge on the surface of current history, and however long recovery takes, the mortal danger has passed: Russia will not now be deflected from the historically Russian, Christian and imperial path. Now the entire task for us is to see more clearly the goal and to go more boldly toward it.

III. ON THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

A strange desire was recently ascribed to me in *New Times*: that the peoples of the Russian Empire read Pushkin “not in the Russian language, but in other languages: Chuvash, Mordvinian, Kalmyk, Armenian, Ukrainian, Belo-Russian, etc.”¹ It will be useful to dwell for a while on this small specimen of a great misunderstanding. Where does this negation come from: “*not* in the Russian language”? It would seem that every Russian could have *two wishes* on this topic: (1) that all nations, not only within the Russian Empire but also outside of it, read Pushkin and other of our great writers *in the Russian language*; and (2) that nobody forcibly disturb any nation whatsoever of our Empire to read both all-Russian and local writers *in their native* language. These two wishes not only do not exclude each other, but are connected to each other in the most intimate way—the second is only the inevitable condition for the serious fulfillment of the first.

It is possible to coerce forcibly our non-Russians to learn the Russian literary language in schools. But to read Pushkin as he is worthy and as he himself desired that he be read—this is possible *only voluntarily*. Forcible coercion to learn the Russian language can only create revulsion to it, their unwillingness and incapability to turn it to their utility beyond the limits of coercive requirements. This is clear in and of itself and supported by experience as well. During the reign of Emperor Nikolai I, when the strict statutory repression of Polish *political* aspirations did not transgress onto the soil of nationality and language, educated Poles not only read Pushkin in Russian but knew and loved him not less than we ourselves. Yet now, when they are forced to read in Russian, our literature has become alien to them. And it is not just with the Poles that this has happened; does this really satisfy Russian patriotism?

The Russian language is too great a gentleman to be foisted on anyone; whosoever does not want to know it himself loses out. Nobody denies the ne-

Source: “O Russkom iazyke,” *Rus'*, February 16, 1897.

cessity of the Russian language as the state language of the entire Empire; but the foisting of it on the population outside of state functions and official relations will inevitably lead to two results: to hostile alienation from everything Russian and to the strengthening and revival of local languages and dialects, even where in themselves they did not have vital strength.

We somehow have not heard up to this time that Mordvinians and Chuvashi have stood for their languages and opposed the natural process of Russification for uncultured nations. But as soon as artificial and forcible Russifiers appear, as soon as it is prohibited to speak and print books in Chuvash or Mordvinian, as soon as they begin to coerce these non-Russians to the knowledge of Russian and the Russian language alone—then it will be necessary to be prepared for the appearance of Chuvash-ophilia and Mordva-mania with new national literatures, the representatives of which, in the opinion of local enthusiasts, will probably eclipse Pushkin and Gogol. And it is certainly a good thing that new literatures appear as a result of forcible Russification. This is the good that is always extracted by Providence from human evil. But once local languages have been strengthened and local literatures have appeared under the oppression of forcible unification, the further persecution of them is a new evil, the deliverance from which would now be unconscionable and meaningless to blame on Providence alone—an evil of mutual enmity and offence.

And a just attitude, it would seem, is just as clear as the fact that two is greater than one, and that intellectual wealth is preferred to poverty.

Attachment to the local homeland obstructs patriotism, that is, loyalty to a common fatherland, as little as in a regular family love for a mother does not interfere and does not compete with love for a father. Certainly, attachment to the Yaroslavsky dialect more easily, completely, and involuntarily merges with all-Russian patriotism than attachment to the national character and language of Poland, Armenia, or even Little Russia. But is involuntary merger really the best form of unity, always and in everything preferable to intelligible, conscious concordance?

An educated and thoughtful Little Russian himself will not want to restrict his intellectual horizon with the Ukrainian language and literature alone and will connect them with the common Russian. And if he is fluent in both one and the other, then all the better for him, and who is injured by this? Is it really insulting to the father of the family if he is not the only one? Is the fact that he has many members in the household in reality a misfortune for the husband? But at this point the misunderstanding regarding the Russian language crosses over into a more general misunderstanding, by virtue of which rejection of one's

solitude and one's exclusiveness and of forcible maintenance and defense of this exclusivity is taken for *self-negation*—abstinence from the abuse of one's fist is confused with the sacrifice of one's individuality and originality. We will speak separately about this in essence clear but in practice unusually complicated and tangled misunderstanding.

IV. WHAT IS RUSSIA?

How strange it is that this first question of our self-consciousness remains in a haze to this day. However, the inevitable hour of a simple and clear response is drawing near.

Many will say, of course, that there isn't even anything to inquire about: Russia is a nation, just like every other. But, well, every other one of these is a particular nation, and thus, even if we acknowledge Russia as only one of the nations, then the question of its *particularity* still remains open. In fact Russia is more than a nation, it is a nation that has gathered around itself other nations—an empire which embraces a family of nations. Yet neither does this definition in all its importance resolve the question, but only indicates its extent. Empires have been and can be completely different; the significance of Russia is determined, of course, not by the simple fact of its multinationality, but by *how* its core, central nation—the *gatherer nation*—relates to all others, in what way it gathers them and in the name of what. The matter is not in the general quality of empire, but in its differentiating character, which can directly depend only on the particularity of the core nation that forms it, that is, *the Russian*: the supra-national significance of Russia can flow only from the Russian national essence.

The essence of a nation, like that of an individual person as well, is determined by what it has faith in, how it understands the subject of its faith, and what it does for its realization. Since faith, which is justified neither by knowledge of faith nor by works of faith, is only apparent, then these three definitions reduce to one: the essence of a nation, like that of a person as well, is in what it actually believes.¹

And so, what does the Russian nation believe in? If we take the matter simply as it is and do not enter into the disputatious theological area, then we should say that the Russian nation, in believing with all nations of a united faith in one and the same God and with all Christian nations in one and the same Christ, differs from others only in one essential subject: that church, in which it believes,

is not the same one in which the greater part of the remaining Christian nations believes; and it is precisely this difference which is meant, when they speak of the *Orthodox* Russian nation: Orthodox, meaning not Catholic and not Protestant.* But if we cross over to a positive signifier from this indisputably negative one and ask precisely *which* church the Russian nation believes in or by what is its Orthodoxy determined—then it is not possible at the present time to obtain a definitive answer to this question. The church in which 3/4 of the Russian nation believes is not the one in which the remaining quarter of that core Russian nation believes. A difference in rites does not obstruct a *community of faith*, but a great majority of ancient-orthodox did not want to accept “unity of faith” even under the condition of the inviolability of their ancient rites. By this they proved that their separation from the “dominant church” is maintained not on grounds of rites, but on grounds of faith: the followers of Archpriest Avvakum do not believe in the same church in which the followers of Patriarch Nikon, Metropolitan Stefan Iavorskii, and Bishop Theofan Prokopovich believe.² Which one of the irreconciled sides represents the Russian nation? To come down fully on the side of the Old Believers, with their absolutely negative attitude to Peter the Great’s reform, means to allow that Russian history does not have meaning, to renounce the principles of universal human enlightenment and the tasks of the future. And in the meantime, it is possible to see only one fruit of national ignorance in the schism by closing one’s eyes to the abiding anomalies of our life up to the present. This was an independent separation called forth by no external foreign influences, a separation of several million purely Russian people, the result of which was the formation of two particular faiths, opposing each other more than two centuries now. But no matter how you strain your eyes, no matter if you keep silent, this religious separation is a phenomenon with which the national conscience and reason should finally in one way or another come to terms. As experience has shown, drastic measures lead to nothing here. The breakup affected the very spiritual essence of the Russian nation much too deeply, and unity can be restored only on spiritual grounds.

Only two paths present themselves here: the path of supreme authority and the path of free discussion. The schism became crystallized thanks to the Moscow synod (1666–1667) and its excommunications in which, according to the opinion of the Old Believers, the old rites themselves were anathematized,

* This is why, for example, despite all the efforts of specialists, the Russian press stubbornly considers and calls the Abyssinian-monophysites “orthodox”: Christians, non-Catholic and non-Protestant—meaning Orthodox.

but according to the claims of their opponents it was not the rites, but only the people who were separated from the church because of the rites. In any event, the voice of an authority higher than the Moscow synod is necessary for the practical resolution of this problem. But since other hierarchs besides the Russians—the chief representatives of the Graeco-Eastern Churches—also acted at this council, then the supreme authority here can be only an *ecumenical* council. Yet the convocation of such a council, in spite of the honorable desires of many and the resolute declarations about its necessity from the side of such enthusiastic supporters of orthodoxy as T. I. Filipov and A. A. Kireev, turns out to be completely impracticable.³ There seems to be some kind of insuperable barrier for us on this simple and clear path. The other path, the path of free and multilateral discussion of disputed religious-ecclesial questions, remains the only possible one. This path, toward which the old Slavophiles strove in vain, is still guarded with barbed wire to this day; certainly, from some point of view there are sufficient grounds for them as well. But in any case, there *currently* exists only one indubitable response to the question “What is Russia?”: Russia is a family of nations gathered around an Orthodox Russian nation, which has become divided in its understanding of Orthodoxy and which abides hopelessly in this division.

V. ON SO-CALLED PROBLEMS

Today I must beg your pardon as I interrupt the important matter of discourse begun in the last letter to give you my impressions of social and political affairs that concern me personally.¹ In issue no. 7543 of *New Times* two essays are dedicated to me: an editorial about my last letter and a review of my moral philosophy. Although these articles apparently do not belong to one and the same pen and speak about different subjects, they both say one and the same thing: that any so-called questions are unnecessary and that every general, ideological question is useless and even harmful; it is “metaphysics, scholasticism, and Jesuitism.” By the way, only one of the authors talks about Jesuitism, but both cite Khemnitser’s fable “Metaphysics.”² According to the *New Times* editorial the questions “What is Russia?” and “What is Orthodoxy?” are unnecessary metaphysics, and the book reviewer in this paper pronounces any “theorizing” relative to the Good and morality to be this kind of unnecessary metaphysics. Here is what we read in this completely characteristic and in its own way excel-

Source: “O tak nazyvaemykh problemakh,” *Rus’*, March 2, 1897.

lently written review entitled “Unnecessary Justification” and signed “Apocrypha”:

Vladimir Soloviev’s book creates a weighty impression. Imagine a man who has seriously undertaken the task of justifying the Good. The apparent and clear, absolute and undoubtedly true Christian teaching of love is subjected to a refined, scholastically contrived, Jesuitic, metaphysically abstract justification, proof, and confirmation. For what purpose and to what end? Excuse me if I do not understand this. Yes, I completely sincerely and seriously renounce any comprehension of this theorizing over morality. Of course, it is possible to reflect upon everything, even upon a “simple rope” as our simple metaphysician does, and on the “metaphysical nature of the antediluvian mammoth,” as Schelling or Hegel (I don’t remember very well exactly which of these two wise German minds) pondered. . . . But ponder “ropes” and “mammoths” in your own home; don’t bring out your banded sophistry to honest people, don’t confuse them with it. What is certain for them is certain, and you with your sly and weak conclusions only weaken their faith in the necessity of the Good and only introduce into their heads confusion by your ignorance, by your Jesuitry, by your scholasticism. It will appear to them that in actual fact the Good is in need of justification; and losing the correct attitude toward the Good as a certain, self-evident truth as they incline toward vain thinking, they will follow you into the debris of metaphysics, where, of course, they will find neither trustworthiness nor cogency nor truth. With your metaphysic you take from them at once both morality and reason. . . . It is easier to comprehend and explain to oneself the justification of evil than the justification of the Good. The Good is truly not guilty of anything and has no need of justification. Evil is darkness both for the soul and for the mind; and although according to its nature it cannot be justified, it sometimes naturally becomes the subject of apologetic and justifications. Whereas from the psychological point of view the motives of the Pharisees, scribes, and Jesuits, who justify their evil actions, are both natural and comprehensible, and even inevitable; the motives of Mr. Vl. Soloviev, who justifies by every scientific and unscientific means the Good, are completely incomprehensible to me. It is natural to justify the guilty and guilt, but rather against nature to justify that which is not guilty of anything before anyone . . . the Good and love.

When I read this tirade, ancient Slavophile feelings that had subsided leaped in my heart. Perhaps we really are exceptional! Apart from Russia, is there a country on earth, from Sweden to Scotland to the land of the Bushmen, in which one could read such argumentation? All of this had the odor of some kind of exclusive otherworldly and untouched exceptionalism—this demand to study moral philosophy and metaphysics only *in your own home* in order not to upset by one’s banded sophistries the honest people; this disdain for

Schelling *or* Hegel; this protestation that the Good is not guilty of anything; and this apprehension that I will take away from the people at once both morality and reason by my metaphysics. Moreover, the writer points out in a blissful state of ignorance of Saint Augustine, who wrote twenty-two books in justification of Divine Providence, that the justification of the Good is “against nature.”³ And he is also ignorant of Leibniz, who dedicated the most extensive of his works to Theodicy, that is, to the justification of God.

But if, as an old Slavophile, I felt a sense of joy from this waft of the Russian soul, then as an “ethical writer” I must immediately pose a question regarding the benign nature of this “soul.” Reading further, I arrive at the following: “Tell us, for example, what you will conclude from the following example of the philosophical imitation of Ignatius Loyola? Mr. Vl. Soloviev examines the following absurd dilemma.”

There proceeds an excerpt from my book, which sets forth a certain question of the permissibility or nonpermissibility of lying for the salvation of the life of one’s neighbor. Introducing this excerpt, Apocrypha continues: “On several pages, Mr. Vl. Soloviev unravels this Loyolan dilemma, and, his just due be given him, he does this with a subtle understanding of formal-moral casuistry that we will not find in even one of our moralists. Unfortunately, the sensible Russian reader is not attracted enough by such Jesuitism even in philosophical clothing, and rather than unraveling the Gordian Knot of scholastic thinking, he has gotten used to cutting it by the power of indifference and alienation, and completely ignoring them.”

Excellent! Although it remains incomprehensible which Russian people, as stated above, I will confuse and even deprive of reason and morality in the face of such indifference, that’s not the issue. The sensible Russian, of course, will agree with Apocrypha, that the question introduced about lying is falsely raised, that in actual fact there is no moral question here at all. But won’t that “sensible Russian reader” be surprised when I tell him that this is precisely my opinion as well, and that even the expression “absurd dilemma” belongs not to Apocrypha but is directly taken by him from me? Here are my literal words: “No questions could even be raised, at least among people who understand that $A = A$ and $2 \times 2 = 4$. But the fact is that those philosophers who particularly stress the rule ‘do not lie’ as one that can have no exception themselves fall into falsehood, willfully restricting the meaning of truth (in every given case) by its real, or more exactly, its factual aspect alone *taken separately*. Dwelling on this point of view, they arrive at an absurd dilemma: I will cite a commonly used example as the most simple and clear one” (pp. 151, 152). Further on is an excerpt written by

Apocrypha, but on the next page (153) I say, “Let us analyze this carefully, and let the reader not complain about a certain pedantry in our analysis: the question itself arose only by virtue of the scholastic pedantry of abstract moralists.”

So the ongoing question, which I call an absurd dilemma, is ascribed to me as my philosophical imitation of Ignatius Loyola, and the argument on which I dwell as a vivid specimen of false morality of abstract philosophers is offered as an example of my own scholasticism. I don’t know how the “sensible Russian reader” to whom Apocrypha addresses himself will understand this. I at least understood why the reading of my book was so unpleasant and onerous to the enemy of all so-called questions, and why he speaks about ropes and knots as well: in certain cases moral philosophy is “a rope in the house of one that has been hanged.”

Apocrypha persuades the reader that I confuse honest people. Nothing yet has been heard in this regard: we have been convinced only in the confusion of persons who can be ascribed to the *honest* people, either in hopes of their correction or in the understanding of this adjective in that epic sense in which, for example, the ancient Homer calls the swineherd Eumaeus “divine.”⁴

I do not doubt that there is good in Apocrypha and those like him; but their consciousness, being insufficiently acquitted in them, turns out to be powerless to restrain them from conduct which no one will call good.

The people whose peace concerns Apocrypha are undoubtedly an apocryphal people; it is too well known that the actual Russian nation is oppressed by its ignorance, by its “unjustified” goodness, and it searches for teaching as light, particularly in the moral and religious sphere. And the part of Russian society which is at one with the nation and devoted to its true benefit will not find for itself superfluous the justification of the Good, even if it is connected with the awakening of various “so-called questions.”

VI. ON TEMPTATIONS

I have in mind not the crude temptations of passions—sensuality, vanity, lust for power, which inflict direct harm only on personal life—but more subtle intellectual temptations, about which it is said, woe *to the world* from temptations. Such temptations are *not* produced by a simple or direct denial of truth: a naked lie can be attractive, yet is tempting only in hell and not in the world of hu-

Source: “O soblaznakh,” *Rus’*, March 9, 1897. Soloviev appended this as the third addendum to his last work, *Tri razgovora*, 229–34.

manity. Here it is required to cover it over with something attractive, to connect it to something true in order to captivate an unsteady mind and to justify the evil of an infirm will. Temptations, from which woes to the world ensue, are produced only *by half-truths*, and these half-truths tempt only “these little ones,” which, however, almost the entire world consists of. Few great people are either good or evil. Great righteous people, having made their life choice resolvedly and irrevocably in favor of good and truth, of course, do not fear intellectual temptations and tear them apart like a cobweb. But there are so few of these righteous people that they have secured their places on calendars for entire millennia. And the same goes for great evildoers. Having given themselves over irrevocably to evil and lies through an inclination within themselves, they have no need whatever of any temptations. Temptations are so rare for them that they usually do not notice them and even deny their very existence. The huge majority of humankind—that is, “the least of these”—do not have a taste for evil and do not love it for its own sake but are not strong enough to withstand its material temptations; chiefly, they are not strong enough to confess resolutely their weakness and call things by their own names. Seeking to justify their bankruptcy before material temptations—that is, the temptations of sensuality, vanity, and lust for power—these people willingly and greedily grasp for the intellectual temptation of half-truths, which can give them the appearance of such justification. “Woe to the world from temptations; for it is necessary to come to temptations: but woe to the man through whom temptation comes”—he who invents, defends, and disseminates half-truths, deceptively disguising lies and craftily justifying evil.¹

There is an indeterminate multitude of these tempting half-truths; there are as many of them as there are sins of humankind that are seeking seemly cover. But there are among them typical core temptations, which have social and historical significance as well as moral significance in personal terms. There is the completely straightforward and ordinary sin of spiritual laziness, which prompts us to settle for the least, to be satisfied in the spiritual realm by that which is readily available and does not require from us inner labor and effort. While this is a weakness—it is a pardonable weakness. But self-love prevents us from confessing it, and the spiritual nature of man is ashamed of it. And here the temptation appears to justify this weakness of the spirit with some kind of easy, popular truth, not requiring any intellectual effort. If persistent intellectual labor that proceeds to its conclusion is difficult for us, why bother? This is just a sign of our superiority! All arguments of the mind are vanity. Sufficient are *faith of the heart and good feelings*, which are self-justifying.² Why argue about what is in

and of itself good? Such reasoning is unnecessary, and to occupy oneself with what is unnecessary means to be distracted and to distract others from what is necessary. And this is not only a superfluous matter, but now also positively harmful. The direct conclusion that proceeds from here is that one must not only save oneself from independent and serious intellectual work concerning the most important life questions, but also prevent others as much as possible in this harmful and dangerous matter.

This entirely false and hostile outlook is supported, of course, by one seductive half-truth, which gives it seemliness and deceives weak and superficial minds. The half-truth consists of the fact that faith of the heart and feeling are contrasted to intellectual reasoning in general. It is impossible to say that such a contrast is *false*. Why, not only are the heart and mind, feeling and reason, faith and thought in fact always different forces, but sometimes they are not in agreement with each other as well. But then this indubitable fact expresses only *half* a truth, and what good incentive, what moral, sincere, or religious motive compels us to dwell on this half-truth and disseminate it as the whole? Isn't the *concord* of the heart and mind, faith and reason *better* and more desirable than their contradiction and enmity? This sort of concord is a norm, an ideal of that which *should* be, and if this is so, then this means that this concord is also the real goal of our intellectual labor, and thus it is impermissible for us to rest while we have not realized for ourselves and for others this full truth, as it is developed through the clear light of conscience.

There are callous intellectual efforts about vital questions, and there are thoughts that are alien and harmful to faith. But using this logic one can first of all conclude that *any* action of the mind which is directed to vital subjects necessarily renounces sincere feelings, that any thinking must be in contrast to faith. And second, if there are callous intellectual efforts, then it is possible still more often to encounter meaningless feelings and blind, dark faith. Well, which of these two unilateral approaches is better?

Our peasants are alien to all intellectuality and wisdom about moral and any other so-called questions whatsoever; they are people totally untouched in their sincere feelings and beliefs. When they destroy imaginary sorcerers and real doctors and medical assistance alike with an undisturbed conscience, there are only two possible perspectives on this. Either we must acknowledge that the good hearts of these peasants and their innocence of any wisdom-seeking whatsoever *are unable* to restrain them from evil and savage deeds, or it is necessary to admit that these peasants never had a good heart, and then it turns out that intel-

lectual naiveté in no way is a guarantee of goodness. In the first case, the half-truth which covers over spiritual laziness and fear of thinking straightaway shows its false aspect; in the second case, the half-truth of obscurantism too loses its seemliness.

Let them reveal the secret to us: in what other way apart from the development of consciousness, apart from intellectually enlightening work can the heart of a believing people be affected? How else except through a dark faith, where the heart in its darkness is capable of committing evil acts, taking them for good ones? And until they reveal this secret, one has to think that the contrast of mind to heart is only a temptation of the false mind and depraved heart for the deceptive justification of spiritual infirmity and intellectual laziness. And aren't the inventors of this pernicious temptation threatened by the gospel verdict: "It would have been better for that man if they had tied a millstone around his neck and thrown him into the sea"?³

VII. FORGOTTEN LESSONS

An interesting historico-psychological essay by Prof. V. O. Kliuchevsky (*Problems of Philosophy and Psychology* January-February 1897) relates how our seventeenth-century ancestors attempted to, but could not, differentiate spheres of licit and illicit influences as they drew near to the west European world. Three convictions lay at the basis of Russian society's attitudes toward the rest of the world at that time: (1) a righteous conviction that we possess the true principles of life, (2) a dubious conviction that we alone possess these principles, that they are our exclusive privilege, and, finally, (3) the entirely false and unworthy conviction or, better to say, feeling of fear that these true principles, innate to us, could be shaken and even completely lost from our drawing near to foreigners in general and to western peoples in particular.

Meanwhile, along with such an outlook, there appeared in the Russia of the seventeenth century a real necessity to draw near to Europe for the sake of its material culture, for the sake of those technical successes without the adaption of which the Muscovite Kingdom, in spite of its innate exceptionalism, would not be able to defend its external independence. At first Moscow people related to the matter peacefully and warily: they wanted to utilize only the practical, necessary knowledge and capabilities of the West, the results of material culture,

Source: "Zabytye uroki," *Rus'*, March 16, 1897.

without any spiritual intercourse. But soon a difficult question arose about language: it is not possible to imitate someone else's art without knowing their language. Already during the time of Tsar Boris the priesthood set itself in opposition to the founding of schools for Russians learning various languages. They said that Great Russia was united in faith, language, and morality: "There will be many nations—there will arise confusion in the earth."¹ Nevertheless, practical necessity took precedence and it became necessary to agree, at the least, to dispatch young men abroad "for the purpose of learning various languages, and reading and writing," only with a condition: "Take very special care that they do not abandon their faith and their customs."

A major difficulty was contained in this very characteristic comparison of faith and customs as something equal in meaning. Soon the uncle of Tsar Aleksis Mikhailovich, the boyar Nikita Ivanovich Romanov, was not able to observe the established boundary and came to the point where he sewed for himself a robe of foreign cut for hunting trips. Concerned about the spiritual salvation of the good boyar, His Holiness the Patriarch requisitioned the dangerous costumes under a specious excuse and cut them to pieces. The Patriarch's scissors that cut the foreign kaftan portended the scissors of the Tsar turned upon Russian beards. One could argue about which was better, but it is clear that one called forth the other and that the action of the Patriarch was the beginning of the struggle that resulted.

The conditions of relations with the West changed with Peter I: the permanence of custom was cast away, and at the same time all the earthly sciences and the arts, quite apart from only directly useful information, became permitted subjects of conceptual pursuit out of necessity. Only the theological and ecclesiastical-historical spheres of thought, those that in the closest way adjoin faith, remained at a distance. That such a new line was drawn was entirely natural; but it is also clear that to dwell on it forever was impossible without serious detriment to us ourselves.

Forty years ago the late Katkov wrote the following in an official note printed after his death (I quote with some mollification):²

One cannot without sadness view how indifference toward the great interests of religion in Russian thought is gradually strengthened. This is the result of those barriers by which they desire to separate higher interests from the vital thought and vital word of cultured Russian society. This is the reason that a complete absence of religious direction is noted in our literature. Wherever it is possible to repeat only newspaper and stereotyped phrases, trust in religious sentiment is lost and anyone is ashamed willy-nilly of expressing it. A Russian writer would never dare to speak to the public in the

tone of the religious convictions that writers of other countries can speak. . . . This . . . inaccessibility, in which the interests of religion have been placed in our country, is the chief cause of the fruitlessness that has stricken Russian thought and education. . . . Are we always destined to deceive ourselves and to lull our conscience, and to silence the voice of necessity? In such a great matter we should not limit our horizon to the present generation, and we should recognize with sadness that the future of our fatherland does not promise any good if this system of alienation of thought continues. Upon investigating the causes of the profound decline of religious feeling and of the higher moral interests in the people, our progeny will not remember us well. . . . No idle word breaking through under conditions of freedom can be as harmful as the artificial alienation of thought from higher interests. . . . Under conditions of freedom of opinion every lie will not be slow in calling forth a counteraction to itself, and the more glaringly a lie is expressed, the stronger and the more beneficial the counteraction. But there is nothing more dangerous and disastrous than indifference and apathy of social thought.*

At about that same time, Konstantin Aksakov, a man far removed from Katkov, expressed the very same axiom even more clearly and directly: "Truth, which acts freely, is always rather strong for the purpose of defending itself and pounding into dust every lie. And if truth is not capable of defending itself, then nothing can defend it. But not to believe in the triumphant force of truth—would mean not to believe in truth. This is atheism of its own kind: for God is truth."³

Forty years have passed and only today I happened to read the following excellent words in a just-published article by one of the late Katkov's legatees in Moscow University's philosophy department:

We cannot think without profound grief of the conditions that make the science of the Old and New Testament absolutely inaccessible to the Russian reader, maintaining indifference, ignorance, and dilettantism in this most important branch of knowledge. We would like to know who and what wins out in such a state of affairs; there cannot be two opinions in its moral evaluation and the result is obvious. In place of science, in place of critical study inspired by the higher interest of truth and historical veracity—study which cannot *but* lead to the greatest *positive* gains—rule ignorance or blasphemy and superficial, flippant denial. Such denial can be overcome only with knowledge, with a basic familiarity with the subject. But isn't it strange that, recognizing science everywhere, we want to banish it from the sphere that we consider

* Published in the book by P. A. Liubimova, *M. N. Katkov and His Historical Contribution* (1889), pp. 80–81.

† See Ivan Aksakov's "Rus'" no. 27, p. 19.

the most important? . . . Let us say that in certain cases criticism leads even to negative results—there is nothing worse than denial: this is indifference to and complete absence of interest in scientific and religious truth.

And this indifference is explained naturally by that which is often proposed among us under the guise of religious-historical science: if one convinces a mature man that Scheherazade is history and that Aesop's fables are zoology, he will consider history a fairy tale and zoology a fable. (Pr. S. N. Trubetskoi. Toward a bibliography of the history of religion.)*

The political might of Russia could manifest itself and be strengthened only when it became armed with all the gains of technology; adoption of these forces was not only harmless to our national power, but was also the indispensable condition of its growth. But still more important than Russian political might is Russian faith, since in it is the higher justification of our strength as well. And for its real triumph, our faith should appear fully armed in order to take advantage of all the intellectual and scientific gains of civilized humanity.

In the seventeenth century, one of the worst patriarchs of Moscow and all Russia announced publicly that the chief danger to Orthodox dogma springs from "tobacco pipes." The error, of course, is sad. However, it is more innocent than the error of those of us who assume that independent and free scholarship is more harmful and dangerous to true faith than anything else.

VIII. THE SECOND CONGRESS OF RELIGIONS

I have received a curious book from Paris: *Congrès Universel des religions en 1900. Histoire d'une idée*, the author of which is the young liberal Abbot Victor Charbonnel.¹ About two years ago he began energetically agitating, together with several like-minded people from that same circle of French clergy, in favor of convening in Paris in 1900 the same kind of council that gathered in Chicago in 1893 made up of representatives of all religions. (An Orthodox bishop from the Hellenic kingdom was there, as was the Russian Pr. S. M. Volkonsky, who excellently related his impressions in the *Messenger of Europe*.)² Mr. Charbonnel's enterprise evoked an interesting exchange of opinions in the European press, and an entire book emerged from a comparison of these opinions; it therefore has the character of those "questionnaires" (*enquêtes*) that have come into use in the contemporary press. I found something that is highly interesting and in-

* Published in *Problems of Philosophy and Psychology*, no. 36 (1897).

Source: "Vtoroi kongress religii," *Rus'*, March 23, 1897.

structive here, independent of whether the planned congress even takes place or not. Of special importance is the fact that it is principally in the Catholic world that the question is posed of how religious truth should (in the person of its summoned representatives) relate to various religious errors. From this aspect the opinion of Langer diocese's general vicar, Abbot Moreau, is especially remarkable.³ "The universal congress of religions," writes this respected elder,

has a seductive outward appearance. I can understand this kind of congress for all Protestant, Jewish, and other sects. I do not see any embarrassment in inviting Moslems and pagans, pastors, rabbis, muphtas, and bonzes. Only the Catholic religion does not have a place here, even if a place of respect were offered. The defenders of this idea are convinced that from this congress of religions will emerge a broader, more elevated religion, one that will gain the upper hand over the current indifference to faith, that it will be a practical matter, a unique work of dogmatic toleration up to this time. At this point I part company with them, since they are proceeding from a false principle. *Toleration in the sphere of dogma is heresy.** In fact, the Catholic Church views itself as the single repository of religious truth. . . . Truth in and of itself is not tolerant, and does not suffer errors; this cannot be otherwise.

At the end of his declaration Abbot Moreau repeats, "This congress is excellent for everything that is not the Catholic religion: she alone is excluded from it by the very principle by which she lives." Yet prior to this we find in the letter an important proviso: "The institution of the Church by Jesus Christ and its most ancient traditions rest on her obligation for the very widest toleration relative to people, prohibiting her any compromise in doctrine (*toute compromission doctrinale*)."

In view of this proviso the question involuntarily arises: what exactly is the matter, and what is the argument about? Are Abbot Charbonnel and other supporters of the congress really not in agreement with Abbot Moreau about truth not allowing compromise with error, and are they really striving toward such a compromise? But if such is the case, instead of indicting them for heresy, they should simply be recognized as mentally ill, just as anyone would acknowledge

* In the face of all the antipathy toward foreign words, I need to preserve them in the current case because the Russian word *terpimost'* is not successful in conveying the meaning. Produced from a passive participle instead of an active participle, it therefore represents a grammatical meaning opposite to that which is required, leading to absurdity. If, for example, one translates such a phrase as *de soi la vérité est intolérante* ['truth is in and of itself intolerant'] into Russian, an absurd meaning is obtained: "*sama po sebe istina neterpima*," meaning that the truth must not or should not be tolerated.

a man who begins to claim that between the truth that maintains “twice two is four” and the error that denies this any compromise is possible and desirable. And let us say that even two or three French abbots have lost their reason. But what does one say about all eighty Catholic bishops in the United States of North America, who unanimously approved the congress of religion in Chicago? Since even the most extreme enemy of progress in Catholicism is hardly resolved to accuse them of the “heretical” or, more precisely, the insane, desire for compromise between truth and error, then a misunderstanding must be allowed in this respect.

And, really, in reading the declaration of Abbot Charbonnel and his like-minded Catholics, we see that there is no talk of any kind of doctrinal compromise in their words. While repudiating any “deal” between truth and error, the fact *must* be acknowledged that a great number of people conscientiously deny truth or doubt it out of insufficient knowledge, and many more also conscientiously argue among themselves regarding one or another definition of truth. In every such conscientious denial, doubt and difference of opinion are the fate of truth. Thus, anyone who counts himself possessing the full and precise truth can find common ground with the conscientiously mistaken one, and a peaceful exchange of thoughts on this common ground, of course, can lead only toward the triumph of truth. It is clear that here toleration of one who thinks differently will especially relate to their moral person, acknowledged conscientiously, and even the uncompromising Abbot Moreau himself acknowledges such personal toleration as obligatory for Christians.

Unfortunately, his principal assertion did not call forth from the side of the supporters of the congress a sufficiently clear response or clarification. Apparently, the word “heresy” excessively confused some and frightened others. Abbot Charbonnel restricted himself only by the fact that he ascribed the letter of Ab. Moreau to “theological declarations, the tradition of which is now lost.”

The popular Catholic press carried over the question about the congress to the ground of external impressions. The following announcement in the paper *La Croix* is especially characteristic:

“With the best intentions and in the capacity of exponent, Mr. Charbonnel wants to present Catholic teaching to the Paris exhibition of 1900. He is certain that the Gospel and the Primate of Apostle Peter will receive the gold medal. But what if they receive only the silver—after Luther and the Jewish rabbis? Mr. Charbonnel’s undertaking cannot be approved.”

As a result of the evasive attitude of the Vatican and the unanimous opposition of the French episcopate led by the Parisian Cardinal-archbishop, the par-

ticipation of the Catholic church in the future congress can now be considered a dead letter. Since there wasn't even any talk of the participation of eastern Orthodox churches, it seems then that this means all of ancient traditional Christianity will not be represented at this council. Only half of Protestantism will be represented: the Episcopal church in England and America already bowed out of the congress in Chicago for reasons that still have force in 1900 as well. Finally, Moslems and Orthodox Jews will, in all probability, be absent. Thus, this "council" will not have a universal character. It is still difficult to say what will come out of such a half-fashioned form. But the question about the practical relation of truth and error which was raised by it beforehand has great significance—among us even more than in the West. We will return to it more than once.

IX. LITERATURE OR TRUTH?

One of the most characteristic phenomena of contemporary intellectual life and one of the most dangerous of its *temptations* is fashionable thinking about a *superman*. This thinking attracts us first of all by its truthfulness. Isn't the unfortunate Nietzsche right, after all, when he maintains that all the virtue, all the value, of a man is in the fact that he is *more* than a man, that he is a *transition* to some kind of other, *higher being*? Granted, this truth about a supreme, superhuman source in us, about our affinity to and gravitation toward the absolute, was already old when the Apostle Paul *reminded* the Athenians of it (Acts of the Apostles 17).¹ Now Nietzsche has proclaimed it a great new discovery. We must be thankful even for small favors. But here is the problem: the Apostle Paul reminded the Athenians of the higher virtue and significance of man only in order to point immediately to the actual realization of this *higher being* in a truly righteous man who was resurrected from the dead; in speaking of the superman, Paul *names* Him, while for the most recent preacher of a superman there is nothing to point out in reality and no one to name.

Alien to Christian faith and still not mature in serious faith in the future living Antichrist, the Basel professor started to write about a superman *in general*, similar to how Tentetnikov, with the assurance of Chichikov, wrote "about generals in general."²

Source: "Slovesnost' ili istina?" *Rus'*, March 30, 1897. Although 'philology' perhaps better serves as a translation for the Russian word *slovesnost'*, I have opted for 'literature' as a less bookish title for this essay. Soloviev appended this as his fourth addendum to *Tri razgovora*, 235–40.

Every one of us is a superman as a possibility or potentiality, but, of course, in order to become one in reality, a more durable basis is required than one's own wish, feeling, or abstract thought. Nietzsche, while thinking himself to be a real superman, was only a *super-philologist*. In his giftedness, Nietzsche was not burdened by the limits of earthly human nature; his was by nature exclusively a formal scholarly ability. And not having any experience (as is evident from his biography) in the actual drama of life—with which he had, apart from books, only a very one-sided and elementary acquaintance—the limitations of philology, or that which he called *historie*, constricted him. His own history was but a reproduction of the first monologue of Faust—the struggle of a living, but sickly and feeble soul with the burden of an immense bookish erudition. Remaining for all this a philologist, and too much of a philologist at that, Nietzsche wanted to become more—a “philosopher of the future,” the prophet and founder of a new religion. Such a task inevitably led to catastrophe because for a philologist to be the founder of a religion is as unnatural as for a titular councilor to become the King of Spain.³ I speak not of the distance separating classes, but of the difference of natural capabilities. Without any doubt good philology is preferable to bad religion, but for the greatest genius of a philologist it is impossible to found even the most foul religious sect. Nietzsche's attempt to rise above *historie* and become a super-philologist ended with the manifest triumph of philology. Not finding any religious reality either in himself or above himself, the Basel professor created a literary figure, called it Zarathustra, and erected it for the people at the end of the century: here is a real superman! Philology triumphs even in his very name. The true superman carried a simple name, common in his country, belonging to other well-known people of his nation (Jesus Navin, Jesus son of Josedik, Jesus son of Sirach); but the “superman” created by the Basel professor cannot be Heinrich or Friedrich or Otto, he must be Zarathustra—not Zoroaster even, but only Zarathustra. It carried so much the odor of linguistics that the bold and much-learned German did not even think that an inevitable danger threatened his hero—to be taken for a woman by some Russian translator.⁴ In his sincere striving toward super-philology, Nietzsche in fact succeeded only in crossing the boundaries of classical philology in order to fall into oriental philology—from the frying pan into the fire! Zarathustra, of course, is not a bad name for the new superman. He had only one shortcoming: that instead of all the heavenly, earthly, and infernal powers trembling, only psychopathic decadents (both male and female) in Germany and Russia bend their knee before him.

Before the beginning of his social service the true superman spent forty days

in the wilderness. Of course, the exotic figure of the superman created by the German professor cannot be satisfied with such a brief period: Zarathustra spends ten years in a cave, giving himself over to solitude. One should be grateful to the classical school for such moderation, but true eastern supermen characteristically spend millions and billions of years in caves. Emerging from his cave into the city, Zarathustra turns his attention to the people who have gathered and announces to them his intention to teach supermen (*Ich lehre euch den Uebermenschen!*) If you thought that the superman is some kind of higher being, then renounce your error now. The superman is only a subject of university teaching, a newly instituted *department* of the philological faculty. Here there exist departments of Greek and Roman mythology, antiquity, the history of literature, stylistics—and now a new department is revealed—a Department of the Superman. But what exactly is taught in this department? Here is the heart of the problem; here is the tragic situation for Nietzsche: for him there is absolutely nothing to teach about the superman, and all his advocacy is reduced to a single literary exercise, which is beautiful in literary form but bereft of any real content. Nietzsche could not bear the ultimate victory of philology over the more profound but impotent aspirations of his spirit, and he went out of his mind. In this he demonstrated the sincerity and nobility of his nature and probably saved his soul. I do not believe in purely physical causes of mental illness, and someday no one will believe in them. In cases similar to this, psychic derangement is an extreme method of saving one's own intrinsic being through the sacrifice of one's visible cerebral "ego," which turns out not to be up to the task of resolving the moral purpose of our existence. The example of Nietzsche did not make any impression on his successors, who gave themselves over to temptation with enthusiasm and without any resistance: exchanging the truth for literature and placing a fabricated superman above the real one. The real one said, "If you do not believe my words, then believe in the deeds which I do," and He in fact rose from the dead.⁵ The fabricated superman has nothing besides words, and these words attract the semieducated mob with their sonority and harmony, making it forget the instructive and tragic example of their author. In the teacher, of course, there turned out to be more spiritual depth than in his disciples. He became ashamed and horrified of his forgery of the truth when he saw its emptiness and futility; but they continue to be captivated by a brilliant literary exterior, under which lies a decaying intellectual corpse. However, there may still be something more important and significant in this passion. In all his emptiness and artificiality, the superman whom the unfortunate Nietzsche concocted and morally regurgitated perhaps represents the prototype of the one who will dis-

play, apart from his brilliant words, both deeds and signs of the times, even if they are false.⁶ Perhaps the literary exercises of the Basel philologist were only impotent expressions of a real premonition? Then the catastrophe that befell him would have an even more tragic and more instructive hidden lining.

We shall see what we shall see!

X. HEAVEN OR EARTH?

I have just had occasion to read an article which reproduces opinions rather typical for a certain part of our press. Here is the essence of these opinions. The Russian nation is already enlightened; it has, in any event, the seeds of true enlightenment which have been planted in it from the outset, and thus the intellectual soil of the people does not need to be sown, but only tilled. However, “the intelligentsia,” which has been separated from the “soil,” is alien and even hostile to the foundations of the people’s worldview; and it strives to impose on them its vain and false education, which can have only a harmful and destructive effect on the life of the nation. The true enlightenment of the people relies on the fact that for them *everything is in heaven*, and “the intelligentsia’s” false enlightenment is expressed in the opposite formula: *everything is on earth*.

If this definition is correct, then from the point of view of Christian truth it must be said that “the people” and “the intelligentsia” find themselves identically in error. “Everything is in heaven” means that there is nothing on earth, but then why did our God “come to earth and become man”?¹ And what then do the words of the Lord’s Prayer mean: “And your will be done *on earth as in heaven*”? The will of God which is realized in heaven does not depend on us. Our life’s task is the realization of this will here on earth. Why shut off the question about truth with such indeterminate, ambiguous terms as “the people” and “the intelligentsia” that do not go to the heart of the matter? The point is not in them, but in truth itself. What expresses perfected truth? Is it pagan dualism, the hostile opposition of God to the world, heaven to earth, the soul to material existence, or the Christian idea of unity of these oppositions through the *incarnation* of the Divine in humanity, of the heavenly in the earthly, of the spiritual in the material? The directly linear and unilateral striving toward heaven is a Platonic, Neoplatonic, and gnostic ideal, but in no way Orthodox-Christian. All so-called heresies were and are reduced to the abolition of the God-man, the heavenly-earth, and spiritually-material all-unity and wholeness.

Source: “Nebo ili zemlia?” *Rus’*, April 6, 1897.

The future belongs neither to “the people” nor to “the intelligentsia,” not to anything of the kind, but only to truth. And if, in fact, Russia is separating into two classes of people, out of which for one class “everything is in heaven” and for the other “everything is on earth,”—then it is clear that the future of Russia does not belong either to the one or to the other.

But are there really in Russia no people faithful to Christian truth and capable of comprehending that the task of a man, and of the people, and of humanity lies not in fruitless dreams of absolute perfection, just as it does not lie in limited and unworthy service to mortal goals. Rather, it lies in the correspondence “of that which is below with that which is above,” in active efforts toward the multilateral perfection of personal and collective life, in order that the will of God be on earth just as it is on heaven. I think that such people exist both among “the people” and within “the intelligentsia.” I also think that in any event the future of Russia depends only on whether she in fact acquits her Christian name, whether she remains faithful to the truth in the essential questions of our life. The contrast of the intelligentsia to the people is one of those half-truths which by its facile nature seduces the mind. In fact, no mental efforts at all are required to have the simple people coincide with true faith and to accuse “the intelligentsia” indiscriminately of materialism. But what kind of practical conclusion results from this? Protect the people from the influence of the intelligentsia, which can destroy their faith? But, in reality, and in spite of such influences, schisms and heresies arise among the people themselves, and the people’s ignorance turns out to be no less hostile to true enlightenment than “the intelligentsia’s” philosophising.

SEVEN PASCHAL LETTERS

XI. CHRIST IS RISEN!

The first decisive victory of life over death! The continuous war between them—between living spirit and dead matter—essentially forms the entire history of the universe. Although there were many victories of the spirit of life before Christ’s Resurrection, all these victories were incomplete and indecisive. They were only partial, and after each of them the enemy succeeded in securing and consolidating his real dominion under new forms of apparently triumphal life. How apparently great was the victory of life when the first rudiments of the plant

Source: “Khrystos voskres!” *Rus’*, April 13, 1897. This also appears as one of the addenda to *Tri razgovora*, 241–46.

and animal kingdom, myriads of living creatures, crept in and swarmed amidst inert, inorganic matter. The life force masters dead elements, makes them material for its formation and converts mechanical processes into docile means for organic purposes. And besides, what a huge and ever-increasing wealth of forms, what an intricacy and boldness of expedient constructions, from the smallest zoophytes to the giants of tropical flora and fauna. But death only laughs at all this magnificence: she is a realist, beautiful forms and symbols do not captivate her and premonitions and prophecies do not restrain her. She knows that the beauty of nature is only the many-colored, vivid shroud on a continuously decaying corpse. But isn't nature immortal? A habitual deception! At a casual passing glance, she *seems* immortal to an observer who takes a new, instantaneous life for the continuation of a previous one. They talk about a dying and eternally reviving nature. What an abuse of the word! If what is born today is not the same thing that died yesterday, but something else, then what revival is there? In no case will an immortal life arise out of a numberless multitude of fleeting mortal lives.

The life of nature is a bargain struck between death and immortality. Death takes for itself all the living, all individuality, and concedes only the general forms of life to immortality: this single plant or animal is doomed inevitably to perish after a few moments; but the form of vegetation or animation, the species or genus of organism remains. Death turns to its advantage God's commandment to all living creatures: be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Be fruitful and multiply, not in order to broaden, consolidate, and perpetuate their life, but in order to disappear quickly, so that there be someone to replace and substitute for you. Fill the earth with your mortal remains, be but a *bridge* for the next generation, which in its turn, will become but the bridge for its successors, and so forth. In place of life and immortality is this never-ending series of bridges. True, they are not built in vain, and the creative spirit goes along this dead path toward its predetermined goal. But why must it permanently go over forgotten graves? And if its aim is good, then what purpose is served by the nasty means of this constantly renewing deception of mortal life?

No! This seeming life is but a symbol and the beginning of true life; the organization of visible nature is not the decisive victory of living spirit over death, but only its *preparation* for real events. The origin of these events is conditioned on the appearance of a rational being over the animal kingdom. Thanks to the capacity of intelligible, generalizable thought in man, life stops being only an expedient *process* of procreative forces and, moreover, becomes the expedient *activity* of individual forces:

Everything that wavers in a fluid phenomenon
 You secure with a powerful design.¹

The war between life and death enters a new phase from the time that it is carried on not only by creatures that are living and dying, but moreover by those who think of life and death. There is as yet no victory in these thoughts, but the necessary weapon of victory is in them. The heroes of human thought, the great sages of East and West, have prepared for the victory. But they were not victors over death: they died and did not rise from the dead. It is sufficient to name only two of the greatest ones. The teaching of Buddha was properly a *renunciation of struggle*; he preached indifference to life and death, and his demise was in no way remarkable. Socrates did not renounce the struggle but led it valiantly, and his death was an *honorable retreat* into a realm inaccessible to the enemy, but the trophies of victory remained all the same with this enemy.

If physical vigor is inevitably conquered by death, then intellectual vigor is insufficient to conquer death. Only the boundlessness of moral vigor gives life absolute fullness, rules out every bifurcation and, consequently, does not allow the final decomposition of a living man into two separate parts: the fleshless soul and decomposing matter. The Crucified Son of Man and Son of God, having felt himself abandoned both by people and by God, and having prayed for His enemies at that, evidently had no limits for his spiritual power, and no part of His being could remain as spoils of death.

We die because our spiritual power, which is internally bound by sins and passions, turns out to be insufficient to seize, to absorb, and to convert into itself all our external, physical being; it falls away and our natural immortality (until that final resurrection, which we can obtain only through Christ) is only partial. Only the internal aspect is immortal, only the fleshless spirit. Christ rose *completely*.

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, *thinking they saw a ghost*. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your minds? Look at My hands and My feet. It is I, Myself. Touch Me and see; *for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have*."

When He had said this, He showed them His hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, He asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of broiled fish and comb-honey, and *He took and ate it in their presence*. (Luke 24:36–43)

Spiritual power, internally free from any restrictions in Christ, is morally limitless and is naturally liberated in His resurrection from all external limitations as well. First of all, it is liberated and free from the one-sidedness of an exclusively spiritual existence contrasted to physical existence. The Risen Christ is *more than spirit*—a spirit does not have flesh and bones, a spirit does not eat food. As spirit, the *eternally incarnated* Christ, with all the fullness of His inward mental essence, all the positive possibilities of physical existence without its external limitations, *all that lives* in Him is preserved, all that is mortal is overcome absolutely and finally.

Being the decisive victory of life over death, of positive over negative, Christ's Resurrection is at the same time the triumph of reason in the world. It is a miracle only in the sense that the first new phenomenon of anything surprises or seems unusual or unprecedented. If we only follow the new stages of a universal process, forgetting about the results in their entirety, then each of them will appear as a miracle. Just as the appearance of the first living organism amidst inorganic nature, just as the appearance after that of the first rational being over the kingdom of the speechless was a miracle, so too the appearance of the first man who was completely spiritual, and therefore not subject to death—the first-born from the dead—was a miracle. If the preliminary victories of life over death were miracles, then the final victory too must be acknowledged as a miracle. But that which *seems to be* a miracle is understood by us as a completely natural, necessary, and rational occurrence. The truth of Christ's Resurrection is a complete, absolute truth—not only a truth of faith, but also a truth of reason. If Christ had not risen, if Caiaphas had turned out to be right, and Herod and Pilate to be wise, the world would have turned out to be nonsense, a kingdom of evil, deception, and death. It was not just a matter of the termination of somebody's life, but of whether a *true* life, the life of a completely righteous man, would be terminated. If *this kind* of a life could not defeat the enemy, then what hope remained in the future? If Christ had not risen, then who would be able to rise from the dead?

Christ is Risen!

XII. On Conscientious Unbelief

It would be very sad if truths of faith were immediately apparent to everyone. Then, strictly speaking, they would not be truths *of faith*. God, the salvation of

Source: "O dobrosovestnom neveriii," *Rus'*, April 20, 1897. This also appears as one of the addenda to *Tri razgovora*, 247–52.

the soul, and the universal resurrection are all absolutely *reliable*, but their trustworthiness is not for every mind positive evidence which appertains to mathematical tenets on the one hand and directly observable facts on the other. Only something of little importance to life is apparent. Mathematical truths have a universal significance, but they are morally indifferent. Two-times-five always and everywhere equals ten, but this doesn't make anybody feel warm or cool. On the other hand, directly observable facts can be more interesting, but then they are absolutely lacking in common emotion, they are limited and fleeting. I see that right now in Moscow it is a clear and sunny day.¹ This fact is apparent and is not lacking a certain interest, but in no way can it be supported and converted into a truth which is immutable everywhere and always—a fact is reliable only here and now. Similarly, all other manifest evidence is in and of itself either formal, like mathematics, or casual, like today's bright day in Moscow. And all subjects in which universality and internal necessity are united with vital importance are lacking in direct evidence and palpability for the mind and for the external senses. Rejecting them on this basis, that is, acknowledging as true or reliable only that which has the evidence of a mathematical axiom or an observable sensory fact—would be a sign of hardly probable, or in any event extremely rare, obtuseness. Usually truths of faith are spurned in advance not out of a crudeness of mind, but owing to a craftiness of will. There is no heartfelt inclination to such subjects as God, the salvation of the soul, or the resurrection of the flesh. There is no desire that these truths really exist; life is easier and simpler without them, better not to think of them. And here now it is not difficult for the mind to find a pretext in order not to think of them or at least not to consider them seriously: all these are things which are impossible *to prove* either by reason or experience, so all this is untrustworthy, imaginary.

Such unbelief is essentially uncertainty in one's own self and thus more or less *embitterment* against those objects, the existence of which it denies. It gives itself away by this animosity because, in fact, it is impossible to be angry at that which absolutely does not exist. Such unbelief is *unconscientious*; in the best case it is based on a fainthearted rejection of all the work of the intellect and act of will that are necessary in order to achieve and acquire the truths which lie beyond the boundaries of mathematical and factual evidence. But there is another type of completely *conscientious* unbelief that is founded not on any moral shortcoming but on a certain peculiarity of psychological temperament. A typical representative of such unbelief is immortalized by the Gospel in the person of St. Thomas:

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

And in eight days his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came and stood among them though the doors were locked and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and reach out your hand and put it into my side, and stop doubting and believe." And Thomas said to him, "My Lord and My God!" Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen me, Thomas, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:24–29)

If the unbelief of Thomas had resulted from a crude materialism which reduced all truth to sensory evidence, then having been convinced palpably in the fact of the resurrection, he would have invented for himself some kind of materialistic explanation and would not have exclaimed, "My Lord and My God!"² From the point of view of sensory evidence the nail marks and the perforated side in no way proved the Divinity of Christ. What is still clearer is that Thomas's unbelief did not result from moral unsoundness or from enmity toward the truth. *Love* for the truth drew him to Christ and generated in him a boundless devotion to the Teacher. When prior to the last journey to Jerusalem Christ spurned the suggestion of threatening mortal danger, Thomas exclaimed, "Let us also go that we may die together with him" (John 11:16).

It is not without reason that this is noted in the Gospel. There is an indication of the psychological cause of the Apostle Thomas's unbelief in this ardent expression of heartfelt devotion. Having accepted a truth, an impetuous personality anticipating an event demands its immediate realization. He is not satisfied principally with conviction and does not trust another's evidence, he needs *here and now* to assure himself of it in fact, to experience its real power, to verify truth with fact. Until then he refuses to believe: if I don't see, I will not believe. But once having seen, he now wholeheartedly believes also in that which he has not seen and which is impossible to see: the sensory fact was not the basis but only a point of rest for his faith.

Temporary, conscientious unbelief, for the sake of a final and complete attestation in the truth, does not merit moral condemnation. Neither did Christ condemn Thomas but convinced him by the method he required. People who do not have need of this method and believe without verification cannot be better than Thomas—they are only more fortunate than he: blessed are those who don't see and believe. But the bliss of calm and unshakeable faith *obliges* its pos-

sessors to relate tolerantly to their less fortunate confreres. In times of dominant unbelief it is important to differentiate between the *kinds* of unbelief you are dealing with. Is this crudely materialistic and cattlelike unbelief that is not capable of raising itself to the very concept of truth? It is useless to argue about this kind: *non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa*.³ either this is a cunning unbelief, consciously indulged to excess with various half-truths out of a hostile fear before the full truth or it is a purely human, conscientious unbelief, thirsting only for a complete and final attestation in perfected truth. It is necessary to watch out for the first snake and uncover all its cunning wiles without anger and fear. The unbelief of the type of Apostle Thomas's has every right to our moral acknowledgment, and if we cannot, like Christ, give to these people the attestation of truth required by them, then in no case must we condemn and reject them: without any doubt these apparent unbelievers will precede in the kingdom of God a great multitude of apparent believers.⁴

XIII. THE QUESTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

It occupies not the least important place among the multitude of "questions" accompanying us as we prepare to cross over into the twentieth century. Just as love, according to the opinion of one student of theology, is divided into the sincere and insincere kinds, so too are all questions in general divided into serious and useless ones. We should acknowledge as serious those behind which stands some real fact, some kind of transpiring change in the life or the consciousness of people—a change of more or less common and, consequently, of social significance. We should acknowledge the question of women's rights as a serious one because behind it lies hidden such a change.

A great number of women and girls have ceased to be satisfied with family life and have lost the capacity to sit quietly at home occupying themselves with domestic matters. The spiritual unrest which has taken possession of them expresses itself not infrequently in a pathetic and funny manner, but it exists and grows and you won't get rid of it with any arguments and ridicule. And how do you respond to a human being who says to us: such a life does not satisfy me; this is not enough for me, I don't want to be only the means of the birth and upbringing of other beings, I also want to live for myself, having my very own purpose. Just *what* this purpose can consist in, and *what* these women themselves

Source: "Zhenskii vopros," *Rus'*, April 27, 1897. This also appears as one of the addenda to *Tri razgovora*, 252–55.

want is completely obscure to them: it is clear only that they do *not* want the former and have parted company with it forever.

Woman's role in history corresponds completely to her physiological role. She cannot conceive new life on her own, but she brings forth into God's world a life conceived by another or from another; and without her participation nothing would occur in the world. This is as true in relation to spiritual life and the ideas which govern it as it is relative to physical life. For the successful fulfillment of her role in the overall history of humanity, woman possesses two contrasting and characteristic attributes; she combines conservatism with variability. The observation of folk wisdom that "a woman is a sack—whatever you put in it, she'll carry" must necessarily be supplemented by universal experience, which tells us that "women crave novelty, an unchanging world is frightening to them."

In some epochs, women who are satisfied with their historical role display first of all a social conservatism, and they gratify their "thirst for novelty" only in a private way, devoting themselves to new styles and a personal enthusiasm for love's passion. This is true in epochs in which vital ideas, once brought to term, given birth to, and nurtured by women, still have command of humanity, give meaning to its existence, and are yet needed by it. But in those epochs in which the old forms of life's basic principles are drained and exhausted, and a transition to a new conception of ideas is required, women—if not earlier, then certainly more powerfully and more resolutely than men—experience discontent with the traditional framework of life and have the aspiration to leave it for an encounter with the modern, with the future. Before they hit upon what's true, they try out with ardor everything that presents itself before them.

In this way, before finding Christ, Mary Magdalene passed through the power of seven demons.¹ Won't this number fit also for those false ideas, which, sometimes simultaneously and sometimes successively, have taken possession of the contemporary woman? And in reality there are seven: the demon of "free love," the demon of political drive, the demon of deified natural science, the demon of the outer "adoption of the simple life," the demon of compulsory celibacy, the demon of "economic materialism," and the demon of aesthetic decadence.

All these demons can deceive and torment, but they cannot give real satisfaction—to the female soul still less than to the male soul. Only a single truth will give true satisfaction; it is not just today's or tomorrow's—it is eternal. But the point is that the intrinsic perception of eternal truth by a person outstrips those or other temporary forms of its manifestation and action. It is, of course, a childish illusion to await a completely new and unheard-of word. The single Word of Truth has been spoken, and we won't hear another because there is not

and cannot be another. It is not the word that has become antiquated or obsolete, but our understanding of it. A new way of understanding, assimilating, and implementing the Word of Truth is always possible, and today it is becoming essential. Confusion of the female spirit is a manifest sign of this need and its impending fulfillment. The answer to the question of women's rights, as with all other serious questions, is in an understandable, sensible, and revived Christianity. Women were first to arise to meet the Risen Christ. The point of today's women's movement, upon deliverance from the seven demons, is to prepare new women to carry the fragrant anointing chrism for the imminent resurrection of all of Christianity.²

XIV. THE EASTERN QUESTION

The practical solution to this fateful problem is delayed in the public consciousness for an indeterminate amount of time, which is, in any case, sufficient for calm reflection.

In recent history, this question, inherited from the most ancient of times, was defined by the transformation of Greek Constantinople into Turkish Istanbul—444 years ago.* Was this downfall of the Eastern Roman Empire and Islam's enslavement of the entire Graeco-Slavic world in the Balkan peninsula out of senseless chance? Christians living at the time of the catastrophe who were staggered and dispirited by it found, however, justification for it—they saw God's punishment for the sins of Christians in the triumph of the hostile Hagarite kingdom. This view, which is expressed with childish naiveté, is in essence profoundly correct. The point, of course, is not in individual sins, of which there have always and everywhere been plenty, but in collective, historical sin. On this sin alone depended and depends the fate of the Imperial City and at the same time the solution of the Eastern question, which at its essence is a *religio-political* problem.¹

Having overcome the latest serious digression from Christian truth in the dogmatic sphere—iconoclasm—Byzantium firmly held to the letter of orthodoxy, and we will not begin to deny her contributions in this regard. But in piously keeping to the deadening letter, the Byzantines without a doubt gradually forgot about the spirit, which revives. This spirit disappeared from public life and, despite all private efforts, its loss led the collective organism of the Empire

Source: "Vostochnyi vopros," *Rus'*, May 4, 1897. This also appears as one of the addenda to *Tri razgovora*, 256–60.

* Written in 1897 toward the end of the last Graeco-Turkish war.

to complete enfeeblement. From nations and kingdoms, just as from separate individuals, the Christian spirit first of all requires *a dissatisfaction with oneself and an aspiration for perfection*. Neither a real preservation nor an improvement of life is possible without this. Meanwhile, Byzantine society, in spite of all the disasters it experienced, abided in devoted complacency and disdain for everything alien, without any self-criticism and without any aspiration to conform the actual social order to the higher ideal of the Good, taken up in the words of abstract debates.

But was the western world more Christian than the eastern? Certainly *no*, if one has in view an achieved ideal, and certainly *yes*, if one looks at the vital *aspiration* and real *movement* toward the better. With all the historical shortcomings of medieval Christianity in the West, it maintained an energetic religion. And in the fifteenth century, when the stern guardianship of the church over mature nations began to come to an end, these nations came out with a plenitude of spiritual strength and aspiration. The treasures of ancient Hellenic culture, preserved as if in a miser's trunk without any application by the Byzantine Greeks, fell into the hands of western Europeans who powerfully advanced a great "renaissance" of art and science, of which the Byzantine Greeks did not even dream. Sincerely devout people, Italian and German "first generation humanists," defined their task as making use of the best fruits of pagan culture for the embellishment and reinforcement of Christianity. Along with this began a tireless striving to expand the external borders of the Christian world, until the earthly globe was enveloped by the European enterprise. Finally, there is a third great movement in the western world—pure in its origins, although having deviated in every possible error—the movement toward the conversion and re-birth of the church itself.

No matter how we look at the western world at the beginning of modern history, in any case it presents a direct contrast to the collapse of power and the enfeeblement of spirit which the Christian East of those times suffered. The well-springs of life were then inarguably in the West, and to these springs our society also should have come, having taken first from Byzantium everything that it could bequeath to us.

Meanwhile the historical one-sidedness of the West began to be revealed in Europe in the eighteenth century, and later even more so in America. The energetic and enterprising character began to take on gradually more and more of an outward and superficial direction; heroic aspiration toward epic feats began to be transformed into restless mobility, affirmation of the human individual with its eternal aspirations and rights began to turn into the denial of that which

is higher than the human individual. Humanism, having spread to the detriment of piety, in its turn was absorbed by naturalism; and the human principle, now separated from the divine, lost the higher meaning of life, and with all its formal gains in essence seemed impotent, lapsing into a “slavery of vanities—to the feeble and meager elements of the world.”²

This direct contrast is what Byzantium perished from. In the West they gradually forget about God, just as in Byzantium they forgot about the human being; in fact they forgot about the essence of Christianity, which they so zealously defended in words—that in Christ perfect God is united indivisibly and materially with perfect man, to whom consequently all things human in our life—both personal and collective—can and should be connected as well. In absolutely separating God from man, Islam did in principle candidly and honestly that which Byzantism did secretly and hypocritically despite its own creed. Owing to their general error, the Moslems were more just and thus stronger than the Byzantines and had to conquer them, because history has internal logic and moral significance.

For just this reason, however, a people of undiluted error, having conquered by rights a people who had split themselves between truthful words and a sham life, cannot be victorious definitively. Just as the unilateral movement of the West displays its inconsistency, so too should the one-sidedness of the immovable East. And really, just as the first signs of an internal spiritual impoverishment in the West became discernible in the seventeenth century, the internal strength of Islamic power began to waver. But who will stand ground in the face of the decline of both these historical forces? Is there a world force that would be able to effect a true joining, to unify in historical life the divine principle with the human, piety with education, religion with humanism, the truth of the East with the truth of the West, and in the name of this absolute truth say to the enfeebled Graeco-Slavic world: *Get up and walk!*³

XV. TWO STREAMS

Early morning. Having stopped at a large station called *Little-Vishera*, after having flown by a small substation called *Big-Vishera*, the express train from

Source: “Dva potoka,” *Rus’*, May 11, 1897, which also appeared as one of the addenda to *Tri razgovora*, 261–68. Schopenhauer’s influence on Soloviev can be seen in this essay. After being lulled into complacency by the bucolic surroundings of a patch of woods that the author enters in the first part of the essay, the reader is taken in the second part into questions concerning moral choices.

Moscow to Petersburg suddenly halted in a narrow glade between two woods.¹ A fuss and clamor arose. The passengers became uneasy; some left the railcar. I looked through the open window. In a conversation with a deferentially stretching head conductor, a gentleman of an expressive and energetic appearance somewhere between youth and middle age poured out his indignation, pointing to a railroad official who stood at a distance (perhaps, the senior machinist—I am not very sure about this hierarchy). Although his rank was probably significantly lower than Class V, the words the angry passenger used with reference to him consisted chiefly of the repetition of two, recalling by their initials a Councilor of State.² I became a little frightened when the speaker, having left the chief conductor, headed for the culprit himself, who was supposedly responsible for what had occurred. But nothing frightening took place; it happened that the passenger who reminded one of the all-purpose Councilor of State had more anger than force. I heard the loud but good-hearted, grumbling voice of the railroad official: “Well, what of it? It could happen anywhere! It would have been worse if we had not stopped, and it would have torn off your head.”—I would like to see how you would have dared to tear my head off.—“Well, not the head, but it would have been more than a few ribs. And now we’re waiting about an hour and a half or two, until they get another locomotive—and that’s the extent of the problem.” Despite the continuing complaints of the passengers and their caustic pointing out of the obvious contradiction between the label “express” and a two-hour layover—I got into the best frame of mind and went into the woods to enjoy the spring’s blessing. Several common folk, occupied with a search for some necessary “parts” that had fallen off the locomotive, impressed me with the total tranquility with which they did their work. The switchman and his woman broke off their shoptalk in order to explain to me sympathetically and precisely where it was possible to cross a deep ditch safely and, avoiding a marsh, to find a path through the woods. Seized by the smells of plants and soil wafting to the calls of the cuckoos, I became deeply absorbed in the woods and in reflection.

When a man like me “enters the fullness of years,” according to Ostrovsky’s expression, then the most elementary prudence requires him to look at his life now not as a life, but only as the “remaining time of life.”³ The difference is that in one’s so-called life, that is, in youth, the highest exertion of strength is lost vainly on empty or imaginary goals, while in the “remaining time of life” a man who does not wish to reject the meaning and merit of his existence has to apply a small remnant of strength to the single, but then most tremendous and impor-

tant goal—the guarantee of complete immortality. There are perhaps still the kind of angelic people who pass up every passionate illusion of life and directly set about preparing for a Christian end to life. But in general the sons of man know only by experience the difference between imaginary goods and the real Good, between illusions and Truth. And here's a paradoxical problem: how is eternal moral reward to be realized by means of meager energy?

In general, our existence is composed of *passions* and *goals*. I speak about the necessary *material* of our spiritual being. When there is no such material, boredom, sadness, and repulsion from life appear, and a man begins to search for a rope in order to hang himself—vivid evidence that without passions and work he cannot exist. Thus the preaching of impassivity and inaction can be explained only by a misunderstanding; it is strikingly apparent already that such preaching itself is a certain *action* (assuming many other things, such as the work of scribes, typographers, booksellers) and that this action inevitably presupposes a certain *passion*—namely, a passion for preaching or disseminating one's ideas. The specious cause of the preaching of impassivity and inaction turns out to be the fact that human passions for the most part are unworthy and meaningless, and that human works in the majority of cases are vain. But what follows from this? Are we to extinguish our candles and lamps and douse our fireplace only because bad-intentioned people use fire for igniting private homes and public buildings? Are we to stop washing and drinking tea only because reckless people use water with “utopian” goals (see the matter “on the drowning [*utopii*] of Deacon Dobrozrakov of Serpukhov in the river Oka in a drunken state” in the senate archive).⁴

The fire of passions and the stream of necessary human work are completely innocent of the usage which we make of them, as horses and a carriage are not at fault in driving a murderer to the place of his crime: they would also carry him for works of faith and love with the same ease. The evil is not in passions and in deeds, but in the meaninglessness of passions, in the senselessness and vanity of deeds. In other words, in place of impassivity and inaction, only an implementation of passions and deeds for Truth and the Good is required.

But how is this done? Well, how do they put fire and water to work to make this train move? Through a transformation and a concentration of forces. With the help of fire, water is transformed into steam—and the compressed steam that is concentrated in the boiler obtains a huge capacity for mechanical movement. Every passion is a force, and every deed is a form of work of this force. In physics, work and force are not wasted, but in practice for a man they can be wasted when they are scattered and squandered aimlessly in the external envi-

ronment. If that water, which in the form of steam trapped in the boiler moves this locomotive, were instead poured into the ocean or into Markizov Pond, it would not be physically wasted, of course, but the forces and their entire unseen molecular work latent within would remain without direct use for us.

A man's inner and spiritual life in its present earthly stream is subordinated to this very same general law, according to which every force is manifest or every work perfected thanks only to already existing forces or work. It has been thus constructed by God himself, and *dualists* speak in vain against this. One law! I know with complete and absolute reliability that if I begin to get angry, to be dissatisfied, and to curse regarding the train stopping, then my spiritual energy would be wasted aimlessly in the external environment, and I would in no way be able to enjoy myself now with the spring morning in the woods and to reflect calmly on physical and moral truths. But I also know that if the capacity for anger and a passionate temper were not in me, if I was bereft of this dark fire, then I would also have nothing to pay for the clarity of soul and for the quaff of immortality that pours into me this bright, Divine day. If there were no evil passion in me at all as a latent force, as potential energy, then I would be as dispassionate as a corpse, which rots as easily as a log; it does not take anything to destroy it like a pile of sand that the first breeze will disperse.

All our existence is an uninterrupted interaction of the spirit with the external environment. External forces, which are embodied in various life events, rush from every direction in order to attract our spiritual forces to themselves as much as possible, to swallow them and to disperse them in the external movements and processes of nature. Consider a man who has surrendered to the passion of anger (the most dangerous and pernicious passion in mature age, as voluptuousness is in younger years and greed in old age): what a tremendous waste of energy! And wasted on what? On disorderly and disruptive stirrings of the circulatory and respiratory systems, on wild, half-beastly cries, on the meaningless exertion of muscles and sinews! It could be said that a transformation takes place before our eyes, of a rational human soul into a blind elemental force, which without any resistance is carried away by the dark current of the material processes of nature—to certain destruction. But there is another phenomenon. As external chance calls forth the action of a passionate soul, this soul in its first stirring turns inward—if only instead of having to direct itself outward—and perforce calls forth the action of our higher spiritual nature. This higher spiritual nature, being in essence intrinsically infinite and, consequently, changeless, can, however, grow and strengthen in that same soul in its present reality; the passionate nature either serves the soul with the temporary food of external forces or gives indestructible

food to our spiritual essence for life eternal. This internal act or energy, by which awakened passion is restrained from outward expression, and the force of soul that is concentrated and gathered inwardly instead of being scattered outwardly can indeed perish. But since the act or the energy has not turned into anything external, then into what can it go, if not into the strengthening of the spiritual essence itself, into the food of its immortality?

Of course, passions are to a powerful degree awakened in us not directly by external chance, but only when this chance has already become embodied in someone's evil passion and through it acts upon our soul. The passion of anger is certainly all the more awakened when someone encroaches on the sense of our dignity, insults our pride or vanity. A threefold attitude is possible in response to such an insult. A man can surrender without restraint to the natural feeling of anger and scatter his soul, both for the external meaningless stirrings of the above-described type, and still more for a whole series of complex actions inspired by rage and vengeance. Such a man throws himself headfirst directly into the current of material processes which carries our life, processes behind which are hidden unknown hostile forces that devour our soul. Or, like Buddhist and Stoic sages, we desire to counterpose only our dispassion and insensitivity to external animosity, striving to stop motionless in the stream of material chance; but even if this were successful, what use is it and to whom is it useful? There is a third and perfected method: not Stoic indifference, but a new feeling must be counterposed to the outer stream that attempts to carry away our soul; a feeling that answers evil with good and that gives birth within the soul to another independent stream of stirrings and action, gradually broadening and strengthening our being more and more. The water of the first stream, the satisfaction of passions by outward deeds, slakes the thirst of the soul only for a minute; the water of the second stream—the transformation of evil passion into good inward feeling is the permanent and infinite satisfaction of the spirit, the continuous increase and affirmation of life without any loss or injury. Whoever drinks from this water will never thirst; but this water becomes in him the source of the water that flows into life eternal.⁵

XVI. BLINDNESS AND BECOMING BLIND

You remember, of course, the famous image of that talented man who was not only “a gambler, a duelist” but “also profoundly light-fingered.”

Source: “Slepota i osleplenie,” *Rus'*, May 18, 1897. This also appears as one of the addenda to *Tri razgovora*, 269–73.

When he speaks of lofty honesty
 We are infused with some sort of demon;
 Fire in the eyes, the face gets hot—
 He cries, and we all sob.

This ingenious image is not made up but captured alive and immortalized by Griboedov.¹ He represents a real type, both Russian and universal. And here is the vivid refutation of an erroneous theory that has been disseminated both in philosophy and in public opinion from time immemorial and that even deceived the wisest of the Hellenes, Socrates, with whose name it remains connected. It is maintained that a man errs and rejects the truth in fact only because he does not see it. Therefore, it is only a matter of enlightening all the people; and once having perceived the truth, they will begin to effect it, and virtue will prevail in the world.

Such an opinion is explicitly refuted by actual experience, which shows that a manifest understanding of truth has not a single, but rather a *threefold* consequence: for some people, understanding the truth means in fact accepting it, while others remain indifferent to it. Still others are hardened by it, as Socrates had to recognize, in fact, when his rational service to truth prepared on the one hand devoted friends and students for him, and on the other hand—a death sentence by his enemies, a sentence confirmed by the “mindless mob.”

The profoundly light-fingered moralist immortalized by Griboedov at least saw with complete clarity the elementary truth that lofty honesty is superior to cardsharpping. This plain acknowledgment filled his soul with rapture, giving him complete satisfaction inwardly, not leaving room for worry about the concordance of deeds with words and feelings. This is the most prevalent type of person, one who sees the truth and does not effect it. I have in mind, of course, only the point of the matter and not the artistic vividness of the image and the sharpness of contrast. Of course, not many have the enthusiasm to bring listeners to the point of sobbing by their lofty words, and precisely in the same way few have the inclination to end up profoundly “light-fingered” by starting out with confessing the words of ideal norms. But it is typical that psychological deception substitutes moral satisfaction with aesthetic pleasure. Pious people constitute quite a numerous variety of this type. For them, religious requirements become completely covered over by the pleasures of ceremony and the aesthetic aspect of the church, without any hint of interest in the vital mission of Christianity. The so-called people of the forties, Turgenev’s heroes, and so forth, constitute another variety.² All these people, so different in other respects, agree among themselves that truth is for them a subject of theoretical understanding

and aesthetic pleasure, but not of practical performance; it is something that they simply forget about. All of them, not excluding Griboedov's preacher of lofty honesty, deserve pardon because in their enthusiasm as well as in their forgetfulness they are, generally speaking, sincere. While slightly violating the practical requirements of truth, they do not take up arms against truth itself and even glorify it by means of their Platonic love.

But in our time, the motley mob of these Platonic admirers of truth, who by their existence alone have refuted the Socratic view that precise knowledge of truth is sufficient for virtue, begins more and more to thin out. And another kind of people come out more daringly and mindlessly, a kind that not only see the truth, but *hate* it as well. They hate the truth namely because they see it all too well, not only theoretically and aesthetically, but with all its practical requirements and consequences. They hate the truth because it obliges them to actions, which they don't want. Apart from the spiritually blind, who have lost the capability of clear sight owing to a disease of the soul inherited from ancestors and acquired by one's own habitual sins, but who still can become whole and recover their sight; and apart from those whose spiritual sight is restricted by only one aspect of truth and who still allow, albeit with great difficulty, healing; there are also souls who have consciously, by their own decision blinded themselves out of hatred for the truth, which they see fully and from all aspects. Such self-blinding people cannot be healed because they do not want healing.

If we do not dwell on the outer husks, it is easy to sense this spiritual kernel of evil: a hatred for truth because of the good that it expresses and requires and to which it leads. It is hardly possible to hate only theoretical truth because of the sole fact that it is truth; scarcely has anyone denied with hatred that two-times-two is four—but if formal judgment is as reliable as this, tied in its content to some kind of moral requirement—how many people will arm themselves with rage against judgment!³

Having come to hate truth for its perceived connection with the Good, these people naturally turn away from it and stop seeing it, only sensing its hostile presence over their shoulders. Those blinded by hatred in their heart also soon lose intellectual acuity and become in the end feeble and harmless. The entire point is that the vital, intrinsic connection between good and truth cannot be completely severed. Therefore, if people who are intellectually blind owing to inherited and acquired sins but who preserve in their hearts a seed of good inevitably end by receiving their sight and seeing the truth, then just as inevitably, sighted people who see the truth well but hate it in their hearts because of the good which is in it will in the end inevitably be blinded intellectually as well.

This gradual enlightenment of the “good-blind” ones and the blinding of the evil-sighted ones constitute the moral point of the historical process or universal judgment. As it is said: “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see, and those who see will become blind.”⁴

XVII. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DOGMA

Who among us in today’s world, opening the church calendar and noting an approaching Sunday designated by the words “the Week of the 318 Holy Nicaean Fathers,” will have any memories, feelings, and thoughts evoked, if only the kind that are usually called forth by the names Kulikovo Field or Poltava?¹ For the huge majority of educated people, the terms *Nicaea* and *the 318 Fathers* are no more than last year’s snow. And in the meantime, Christianity is still our spiritual homeland, from which we cannot disengage in the depths of our destiny; and the indifferent forgetfulness of its history, its great names, and the times of its existence can harm only ourselves—the clarity and fullness of our consciousness—making us a kind of “forgetful relatives.”

There was a time when religious dogmas constituted the chief and almost sole spiritual interest. This was an anomaly for which the Byzantine world, especially subject to it in the second half of its existence, paid dearly. But then, the trouble here was not at all with a vital interest in true faith but, on the contrary, with an overly superficial and abstract, *insufficiently vital* interest in these truths. The organic connection between faith and life was lost, and arguments about dogmas became for the nobles and for the people a kind of favorite sport on a par with horse racing.² It is clear that the subject of such interest was not the content of theological truth, not its vital meaning, but only the letter of dogma, the technical details of its expression, taken separately from those intrinsic religious facts and requirements which were designated by them. But is it really possible to blame dogma itself for such an abuse, such a transformation of it into a favorite game on the part of novice minds? Can those absurd debates of the latter scholastics, which are immortalized by satire in the “Letters of Obscure Men,” really serve as an objection to philosophy itself?³

When Christian dogmas were taking shape at the general church councils, for the true representatives of the church they were neither that mind-game by which the last Byzantines were carried away nor that alien and forgotten word,

Source: “Znachenie dogmata,” *Rus’*, May 25, 1897. This also appears as the last addendum to *Tri razgovora*, 274–79.

which they pronounce for present-day hearing. True dogma is the word of the church responding to the word of God when such a response is required by the course of history and the development of religious consciousness. And if it is possible to abuse even the word of God itself in taking it by the letter, which becomes dead and does not enjoy it even slightly, then the word of the Church is all the more subject to such abuse. The root of evil is solely in the *separation* between the letter and the spirit, between form and essence. Two branches of error go from here in two contrasting directions: the idolatrous deification of the letter, or the outward form apart from its meaning and spirit; and the blind denial of the very spirit of truth because of the moribund form which shuts off the spirit (this is the fault of people), and which has stopped being understandable and interesting.

The situation was different toward the third decade of the fourth century. Once ignorance and violent hostility were defeated by Apostolic preaching and the great deeds of the Martyrs, respectively, Christianity was delivered from external struggle by its acknowledgment as the faith of the “universal,” that is, Roman, empire, and it had to concentrate on the clarification of its truth in correct and precise definitions. Why? Certainly, such definitions were not needed for the Apostles and Martyrs: the truth for which they gave their entire life was not separate from their very existence, which was wholly inspired and imbued by this truth. Their lips spoke from a fullness of heart and carried away those who listened and saw. On the other hand, formal definitions of truth were useless to people consciously hostile to it, rejecting it in advance. The task of correct and precise definitions is to eliminate misunderstandings and vagueness; but what good is this for those who with full clarity and without any misunderstandings are embittered against truth solely because of its intrinsic value, for the fact that it is the expression of the Good? But if a precise intellectual definition and explanation of truth are not necessary for the righteous and useless for the evil, then it is necessary and useful for all those middling people whom the evil ones tempt and for the sake of which the righteous labor. Intellectual attention to truth is not required by the *elect* of Good and Evil, but it is required of the multitude of those called to Good and distracted by Evil. And thus a great historical point consists in the fact that the period of the supremacy of dogmatic arguments and definitions in the life of the church began exactly at the time of Constantine the Great. It was then that, owing to the official recognition of Christianity in the Roman Empire, mobs of middling people rushed into it; they were a passive herd of a multitude, easily confused and led astray by any wolves in sheep’s clothing. Here in particular a pastoral (that is, shepherd’s) office had

to appear in the church. And it truly obtained special significance. The time from the fourth to the ninth century is a time of the final formation of the hierarchy. All the fundamental truths of Christianity were clarified by the individual work of archshepherds and were determined by decisive method at their general meetings—the so-called universal councils. The first of them is distinguished from among all the others by the fact that, in the person of many of its members, the archpastoral identity of the church leaders was not yet separate from the apostolic and the martyr. Several of the bishops who met at this council had become famous for converting pagan people to Christianity, others were mutilated, with empty sockets in place of eyes vividly recalling recent persecutions for the faith.

The important task of this gathering was worthy of its composition. From the beginning, the representatives of Christianity appreciated the Gospel as the absolute and final revelation of truth, as news of a complete union with the perfect Deity. If Christ had been only a prophet or even a superhuman being, but inferior to God, then this sense of complete satisfaction, the sense and acknowledgment of Christians that not a relative, but an absolute truth had been revealed—the fulfilled meaning and value of life—could have been mistaken: another prophet could have arisen and given another testament, another god-like being of a still higher order could have become incarnate to reveal other completely new tasks of life. That which was spoken about Christ in the word of God was sufficient for the truly faithful, for those “having the mind of Christ.”⁴ But it allowed all sorts of seductive reinterpretations on the part of people who were devoid of the mind of Christ. It was necessary to speak a word that did not logically allow an understanding of Christ as but one of the prophets or one of the Aeons.⁵ After lengthy discussion and debate, the Nicaean fathers spoke just such a word. Holy Scripture says, Christ, the Son of God, the First-born of the dead, only begotten son of the Father—all this the Arians reinterpreted according to their own whim and removed from Christ and Christianity its absolute meaning. *Of one being with the Father*—the Church proclaimed through the lips of the 318 Fathers, and at this point any reinterpretations of this first fundamental question of Christian faith should have ended. It remains only either to accept or to reject—either *yes* or *no*. Of one being, that is, of one being or nature with the Father Almighty, meaning God by nature, and not by election and adoption; meaning not one of the prophets and Aeons, but the same one that was in Him from the beginning, all renewed by Him, and what gave each of them—what can give to each of us—absolute significance.

This term—*of one being with the Father*—can appear small in comparison

with the fullness of religious life, but the fathers of the Nicaean Council turned out to be faithful in the little things, and for that they were placed in authority over much.⁶ The Deity Which was revealed to us, Which is accessible to us, and in Which we can participate is a real, perfect Divinity, and consequently if we want edification, then we can achieve it not approximately and partially, but in an authentic and complete manner. This is what the term *of one being with the Father* means.

XVIII–XX. RETRIBUTION

(On the Spanish-American War)

I

Old historical accounts are settled and new ones are presented. The last vestiges of the political might of the once greatest of all European powers are crumbling in faraway oceans under the attacks of an external enemy.

All that is great on earth
comes to naught as smoke.
Today Troy has met its destiny
Tomorrow another will.¹

In the downfall of Spanish greatness which has been continuing for nearly three centuries and is now being brought to a conclusion before our eyes, there is also more definite instruction for those who can and want to see.

Here is a nation that had obtained a preeminent position in exchange for its services in western Europe as the Middle Ages were coming to a close. For more than seven centuries it continued its uninterrupted heroic struggle with the formidable force of Islam. Spain had to defend the existence of the European Christian world before it had even scarcely begun to take shape and could begin to think of the progress and growth of its vitally important principles. I won't even try to begin making an exhaustive evaluation of Islam at this time.² But the ex-

Source: "Nemezida," *Rus'*, July 5–19, 1898. The title is not the common Russian word for 'retribution,' but derives from the part of the literary language that has its origins in classical Greek myth. It refers to Nemesis, Greek goddess of vengeance, whose principal victims exhibited hubris. Soloviev writes here about the "lessons" that the Russian imperial order must learn posthaste from what he understands to be Divine judgment upon the Spanish Empire. Soloviev added this as the very first addendum to *Tri razgovora*, 199–220.

ample of the Christian countries of the eastern and southern Mediterranean coasts clearly demonstrates that for a Christian population to submit to Islam meant one of two things. It would undergo either (in the case of unfaithfulness to their religion) immediate and complete dissolution into an alien, more elementary culture or (in the case of retaining a Christian confession of faith) the arrest of its historical development and passive entry into the structure of this alien world, becoming a subservient part of it without any independent future ahead of it.

It is said that the Moors were more cultured than the Castilians and the Catalonians of the Middle Ages. With several qualifications, it is possible to acknowledge this as fact. However, what then do we conclude from this? When the point concerns life, it is impossible to segment it into portions or separate epochs. Let us assume that in the tenth or twelfth century Moslems were superior to Christians in Spain at the time as they were in other places; but if the Spanish had been converted to Islamic paradise, would they have discovered America? Would they have produced Cervantes's novel and the drama of Calderón, not to mention Spanish painting? It is not possible to dissect the life of nations and people into segments like earthworms. The most mediocre thirty-year-old Stratford philistine was certainly wiser and more educated than a three-year-old Shakespeare; and the most ordinary full-grown horse, especially an Arab horse, is more intelligent than any nursing child. Does it follow then that mediocrity is superior to genius and that an animal is superior to man? This is only an instructive comparison, and I don't mean to insult Moslems at all. I willingly acknowledge all the good that is in Islam and recognize its positive significance in the past as well as the important role still awaiting it in several realms of humanity. But submission to Islam by an energetic part of the Christian world in the Middle Ages would have been a great—and happily an impossible—disaster, a direct denial of universal, historical meaning.³ By impossible, I do not mean here an abstractly logical impossibility—abstractly speaking, why could that which happened with western Asia, northern Africa, and the southeastern fringe of Europe not happen with the rest of Europe? Rather, I mean the actual historical impossibility, which depended on the vitality and strength of western and northern Christian nations who defended themselves and their future from absorption or subjugation by foreign powers.

Moreover, it is clear that in defending itself against the military forces of Islam, Europe first of all had to be *armed*. Certainly anyone who is not devoid of common sense will acknowledge the historical necessity of *military* self-defense. But now simple common sense compels us, I think, to acknowledge something

greater as well. Taking upon themselves the historical necessity of armed struggle against militant Islam, Christian nations did not retreat from the spirit of Christ in this, and their military exploits were Christian exploits.

How is that? And what about the words of Christ: "He who takes up the sword," and so forth. And what about the words concerning love of enemies and nonresistance to evil? These words are known to everyone; but apparently not everyone remembers the rule for understanding these and all other words of the Gospel, a rule which was given, however, by the very same Christ: "My words are the spirit and the life."⁴ And it is clear from this rule that the repetition of the letter of one or another biblical text does not yet signify the expression of its true meaning. If imbued with this sense, then the following truth, which it would seem is as clear as God's day, will also become comprehensible. In speaking this truth, I have made many angry, do so now, and will continue to vex them; but I have still not heard and probably never will hear any refutation of it. Here it is: it is possible to allow a man the use of a weapon for war and everything that is connected with this, while not at all betraying the spirit of Christ, but on the contrary, being inspired by it. And in precisely the same way, it is also possible to deny in word and deed any armed or generally coercive action absolutely, and in this denial itself unconsciously and even consciously betray the spirit of Christ and be estranged from it. People who are faithful to this spirit are not guided in their actions by any external instruction, even if it is according to the letter of the Gospel; rather, they are guided by an inner evaluation according to conscience in a given vitally important situation.

This is why Metropolitan Saint Alexis rode to the Golden Horde to mollify the Tatars and suggested to the Russian princes that they submit to the Khan as to a legal sovereign; and why after several decades, Saint Sergius of Radonezh blessed Dmitri of Moscow in open armed rebellion against the very same Horde and even sent with him into battle two of his monks who were strong, athletic men. And for all this outward contrast, both St. Alexis and Saint Sergius acted alike in the spirit of Christ for the good of the people. The action of Sergius was in apparent contradiction to the letter of several Gospel texts and in obvious agreement with the spirit of Christ. But he who in 1380 would have counseled Dmitri Donskoi to lay down arms and give Russia over to destruction by the hordes of Mamai because of these texts would have shown himself to be not a Christian, but a heartless scribe and literalist.⁵

Sanctified armed struggle of European nations with the Moslem world was the first Christian concern and a great service to humanity in the Middle Ages. After the Crusades—an impulsive and unsteady general assault—the Christian

world steadfastly defended itself with four shields against the pressure of hostile forces. The main burden of the common cause lay on four young nations. On the left, on the northeastern flank of the defensive perimeter, Russia itself met and repelled the wild onrush of Mongol and Tatar hordes. The center, which had been rent by the Ottoman Turks who had encircled and then occupied Byzantium and had shattered the south Slavic states in the Balkans, was shored up in the Carpathians by two warrior nations—Poland (with the southern Rus) and Hungary (with Croatia). And on the right, the southwestern flank of Christian defense, the Spanish pushed back the invasion of the Moors step by step over the course of more than seven centuries until they repelled them back to Africa. The fact that the enemy possessed, apart from military might, the seductions of a refined culture as well magnified the difficulty of the struggle and consequently the contribution also. The energy which this seven-century struggle imparted to Spanish national forces did not die at the borders of their native land but gave them power and influence in Italy and in the lower reaches of the Rhein in Germany as well as advancing them into another hemisphere to discover and conquer a new world.

The Spanish did not betray Christ in faithfully and valiantly fulfilling sentry duty on the frontiers of Christian lands and in not letting their weapons out of their hands. “He who has been faithful in little things, I will set over much,” says the Lord.⁶ He did not disdain those who served His needs as a man in His earthly life; and He does not reject those who are now concerned about the external conditions of the existence of His collective Body, visibly Christian humankind. This is precisely that small service for the faithful fulfillment of which He promises a large reward. Spain received it in its time. Remaining faithful in the little things for seven hundred years, it was set over much at the close of the Middle Ages. But the end of the Christian struggle turned out for Spain to be the end of its faithfulness to Christ. The Spanish did not betray the spirit of Christ when they fought for Christian land; but the possibility of real and specious betrayal appeared with final victory and newly acquired power. It is important not just for the Spanish to comprehend the simple, but for many elusive, essence of this betrayal.

II

How can I mark and define more clearly the narrow but only reliable bridge by which humanity must pass between two abysses? This is the bridge to the truthful and powerful Good between the abyss of mortal and mortified “nonresistance” to evil, on the one hand, and the abyss of evil and violence, just as mortifying, on the other. Where does the line pass that divides coercion as a moral

duty and as a heroic deed of self-sacrifice for others, from violence as injury, as falsehood, as crime? This line *does exist*, and before giving it a logical definition, let us inquire of the human conscience. Can anybody—independent of any *religious* convictions—in *conscience* condemn a Christian ascetic when he blesses and encourages leaders and warriors embarking on the liberation of their homeland from enslavement by foreigners and adherents of a different religious faith? Summon as vividly as possible into your imagination this historical picture and look to see whether there appears in it a feeling of moral indignation against St. Sergius or against Dmitri Donskoi. Whether you are a direct descendent of anyone among the Tatars, lying on the Kulikovo steppes, or even a Quaker, obliged to reject every war—you are *probably* not experiencing a real, sincere feeling of indignation here.

But in the meantime, if all violence were indeed a *crime*, then every man who has not lost his moral sensibility must certainly experience the greatest moral indignation against those guilty of such a horrible amount of violence as Mamai's carnage. Think of how many people were killed and maimed! However, no matter how you try, you experience no indignation here whatsoever against anyone, and consequently neither will you find any *crime* from the Russian or from the Tatar side in all this agglomeration of the most extreme violence. And meanwhile, everyone senses that murder is something horrifying; not only the murder of an innocent man, which, generally speaking, all the Tatars and Russians who perished were, but the murder of the most evil criminal as well. Something horrifying exists here; namely, it inspires horror toward the one who does such a thing even in the event that he is authorized by the power of society to do this. What is the result? A man who kills many innocent people, even willingly and with pride, does not evoke moral indignation in anyone whatsoever. But the man who takes upon himself, perhaps reluctantly, the duty to kill some dangerous criminal out of necessity evokes in all morally sensible people not moral indignation but real moral *revulsion*, disgust mixed with horror.

This strange contrast in our attitude to the two “killers” is, however, an indisputable fact. Try to imagine the following scene: you see an old man leaning on a crutch, and out of respect you want to grant him the right of way, but suddenly you notice the yellowish little ribbon in his buttonhole: this is a war medal, “the Knight of the Order of St. George's Cross.” Therefore, he is a “killer”—and you run away from him with horror and revulsion. You will agree that one can see something like this only in a dream. And now imagine another scene.

“Who is the gentleman with such a complacent and self-assured look? You seemed to shake his hand especially warmly?”

“Oh, he is a very nice, well-respected man—this is our local executioner, a true guardian and benefactor of the city.” You will agree that such an encounter could also occur only in a dream.

Thus it is not psychologically and morally possible to relate to the one of the two “killers” with horror and revulsion, and to the other *otherwise* than with horror and revulsion. Therefore, that “line” which we seek can now be timed to coincide with a definite, concrete attitude. A question: how does a brave warrior differ from an executioner? Both the one and the other kill; both the one and the other kill not according to personal arbitrariness but according to societal authorization; both the one and the other have in view the defense of society against its enemies. Then where does this contrast of attitude toward them come from? Where does this inviolable voice of conscience come from, which authorizes war and condemns the executioner—authorizing and condemning immediately and absolutely, in a keen, heartfelt sense, independent of all theoretical opinions and considerations? Where does the contrast of evaluation come from in the presence of identical facts? Not having a basis in fact, this contrasting evaluation apparently can depend only on a different and, up to a certain point, contrasting attitude toward fact on the part of both of these two agents. The warrior and the executioner cause identical facts but achieve different *effects* to the point of antithesis.

The taking of a human life in general (not talking now of the killing of any particular people) certainly does not enter into the intention of a warrior; it is not his real concern, and we certainly respect military valor not for the killings that take place in war but *in spite of* these killings. But killing may also not occur, and yet valor and respect for valor will remain the same. So, for example, a sailor who, at the risk of his life, fished out a torpedo or a soldier who once riveted together the enemy’s tools—even though not one man was killed in the process—receives the same and even greater military glory as a commander of an infantry detachment bravely leading a bayonet charge or a captain boarding an enemy vessel. The goal of war is security. If this goal can be achieved without crude violence, without the spilling of blood, all the better. They don’t kill an enemy who has laid down his weapon.⁷ The very purpose of an executioner, on the contrary, consists precisely in taking the life of particular people: it is absolutely necessary for him to execute the criminal, otherwise his job has not been performed. The executioner kills an unarmed person, that is, one who has ceased to be dangerous. Here the direct goal is not security but killing.

At this point, a most profound moral essence of this contrast also becomes

clear. A warrior does not deny any human rights whatsoever of the enemy, and if he in fact threatens his life, then it is only while subjecting his own life to the very same threat as well. War presupposes *active* force on both sides; they enjoy here equal rights, and human dignity is not offended in anyone. In an execution, on the contrary, they treat *this* particular man as a passive instrument, as a thing without rights. And the right to dispose of another individual as an inanimate object—a right which does not belong to anyone—is reserved for the executioner. Thus the whole point lies in the fact that the attitude of a warrior toward the enemy, with all its real anomalies and all the disasters and horrors of war, still remains on the ground of natural moral and human relations, while the attitude of the executioner toward the victim is *in essence* immoral, inhumane, and unnatural.

Here is the clear and inviolable boundary between permissible and impermissible coercion, between the honorable violence of a warrior and the dishonorable violence of an executioner. There is a moral principle, the root of all human rights and relations—the law of truth: respect the human dignity in your own self and in all other individuals and never make out of any human being a passive instrument of a goal external to him.

This law is not violated by a warrior, whereas its notorious violation constitutes the entire purpose of the executioner. Here is the line between them and the true reason for the different attitudes toward them. No sophistry will erase this line.

It is possible to require and to give all sorts of clarifications regarding this question from a variety of aspects; but *the main point* is in what I have just indicated. And now it is time to return to our Spaniards and to their long-past, fateful transformation from warriors into executioners.

III

The historical destiny of Spain was embodied in two striking figures: in the crusader-knight fighting for faith and native land, and in the executioner-monk who destroyed both faith and homeland by his profound, diabolic betrayal of the spirit of Christ. An unconscious moral sense compels everyone to despise the ordinary executioner, who deprives the criminal of his right to physical life. How much more horrible is religious execution, which takes innocent people's supreme right to spiritual existence? You see, the point of a person's spiritual life is not to repeat memorized, correct religious formulas spoken by someone else's

voice; it is not necessary to be a man to do this, it is enough to be a starling or a parrot. The point of spiritual existence is that a man himself, with his internally free actions and feelings, his mind and will, defines his attitude to the true Good, that is, he *himself lives by his faith*. And although not everyone has achieved this, everyone can and ought to be educated in this. There is not only a human interest in this, but the Deity's own purpose as well. In accordance with Christian truth, man is important not only to himself but also to God, only as a free-acting individual, as a potential "friend of God." God has enough impassive, inanimate, and dumb instruments apart from humankind.

And it is precisely because the vast majority of humankind still does not live a real spiritual life, but is only being educated in this direction, that it is also more important than anything to protect the embryos, the germs, the sprouts of life which spring up. A life that is prepared and spiritually mature does not fear external violence. Violence is pernicious for *the least of these*, in whose defense it has been said: better for the man who tempts one of the least of these not to be born.⁸

The ordinary executioner is worse than the simple murderer, but the spiritual executioner is incommensurably worse than the ordinary executioner. The gradation here is clear. A murderer, violating the right of a man to physical life, does not elevate his lawlessness and crime to principle, he does not legalize it; an executioner commits his physical murder as a lawful and principled deed; and the religious executioner in the very same way legalizes his spiritual murder, his encroachment on the very principle of inner life. And since the person *himself*, of course, is for us spirit, and not flesh, then the religious executioner, this spiritual murderer who kills the person *himself*, is chiefly a murderer of men—the direct embodiment of that which is called so in the word of God.⁹

How did it happen that a nation of saints and knights became the bearer of this fiendish principle of religious violence, which, although also defiling other Christian countries, nowhere permeated so deeply and became implanted so firmly in the national soul as here in Spain?

The *peculiarity of race* was certainly not a reason for this phenomenon, but it was one of its favorable conditions—or at least the predominant influence on one of the elements entering into it. An important distinction helps us here: the distinction between the external environment, the realm of Christianity, which could be and must be protected by weapons against enemy violence—and Christianity itself, that is, the internal Kingdom of God in man, which does not require and does not permit such a defense. This distinction turned out to be too subtle for people whose ancestors expressed a devotion to their deity by

burning their children as sacrifice to him.* Their more recent offspring preserve this tradition as national entertainment in the perverted cruelty of bullfights. Christianity did not overcome all the elements of the Moloch religion in the national soul, and harbingers of the future Torquemada appeared very early, long before the Arab conquest.¹⁰ At the end of the fourth century, Spanish bishops tried to obtain the death sentence against heretics, which evoked a principled condemnation in Gaul (St. Martin of Tours) and in Italy (St. Ambrose of Milan). The Spaniard Theodosius legislated criminal measures against the Manichaeans in the East, while the juridical term *inquisitio* first became adapted to the matter of religious persecution. One can only imagine what this special inclination to religious violence would have led Spain itself to, if it had not been restrained seven centuries by the Arab invasion and the necessity of open, honorable struggle with them. The Spaniard was now ready to become an executioner in the worst sense of this word when historical Providence compelled him to make of himself a valiant warrior for an extended time. And the opinion of the opponents of war who consider it *absolute* evil and pure folly is actually refuted here. Beyond its practical necessity, the seven-century war with the Moors had the significance of a great blessing for Spain. It saved the fledgling nation from early spiritual ruin and left it the time and the conditions to gather itself up and mature for the free resolution of its moral and historical destiny. And, whatever the verdict turned out to be, it also allowed the best forces of the national spirit to develop themselves in order to give to the world all the positive things they were capable of.

But is war really at heart absolute enmity? The wicked beast in a man is at enmity with everything even in peacetime; but once it is called forth by necessity, war also opens for a man the way for the profession of a truly moral attitude not only toward one's own but toward the enemy as well. It induces one not only to lay down one's life for one's friends but also *to love one's enemies*. And this commandment is directed not only to individual persons but also to entire nations; and for the nation, an enemy is another nation with which it is at war. It is necessary to love precisely *this* enemy. Thus, besides everything else, war is for nations *a real school for the love of enemies*. And this is not only clear logically but is also doubtless in fact. If the adversaries are not beasts, they learn in open battle

* I mean here the fiendish Phoenician or Ninevite cult of Moloch, which colonized ancient Spain more thoroughly than other European countries. As the geographic names demonstrate, the entire coast of the Iberian peninsula on both sides of the Pillars of Hercules was seized by a Phoenician culture.

to acknowledge each other's dignity, enjoying mutually equal rights and feeling respect for each other. And this feeling is not very far from love. Straightforward people of all times, races, and faiths have known this. The Moslem Saladin knew this, the Christian knights knew this. And nobody will say that our own Peter the Great was distinguished by any special refinement or delicacy of religious and moral sensibilities. But *this* he sensed and understood. It was noted in him and immortalized by the great national poet:

In his tent he entertains
His leaders, foreign leaders
And to his "teachers"
He raises a goblet in a toast to their health.¹¹

It was not only in the military arts that these external enemies turned out to be our teachers but also in the ability to relate to foreigners humanely.*¹²

Precisely such teachers were given to Spain in the person of the Arabs not only for "lessons in glory" but also for lessons in humanity. This historical school was an excellent one for the sentry nation of the Christian world. But although education means very much for nations as well as for individuals, their life's destiny is not decided by it. Of course, all the positive aspects of national spirit developed, grew stronger, and later yielded their abundant fruit thanks to this lengthy "school of love" in the Middle Ages. But for all this and in spite of it, the ancient Moloch triumphed. During their incessant martial conflicts, the Spanish probably had to display their Christian attitude toward the enemy not infrequently. But then the war ended and the last stronghold of the Moslem kingdom fell. At this point, what else could a Christian nation have done if not put its sword back into its sheath, having extended finally the hand of peace and friendship to the former adversary, now disarmed, safe? Nothing prevented the Spanish from relating to the *subdued* Moors, for example, as our much less cultured ancestors related to the humbled Tatars of Kazan and Astrakhan: namely, leaving them to live peacefully in their place as fellow citizens enjoying equal rights. And even pagan Rome acted this way; in the words of its poet, Rome considered its duty "to spare the subdued" — *parcere subjectis*.¹³ But a nation which confessed Christianity for twelve centuries did not know mercy; having broken

* Not in the sense that the Swedes gave us here any examples or models of special philanthropy—as far as I know, this was not the case—but only in the sense that, up to the decisive conflict with us in the Northern War, we knew them more from the negative aspect, as "dumb," that is, not as people. But in the struggle with them for existence, in a closer familiarity with them, we recognized in them people the same as we are.

the enemy in honorable battle, it did not want to give him an honorable peace. Several hundred thousand Moors, and at the same time Jews as well, were inhumanely expelled in several moves from the country which had become their homeland over many centuries.

Meanwhile, in the very year that Spain brilliantly ended its military schooling of the Middle Ages with the fall of Grenada, the discovery of America was leading the triumphant nation to new vistas in its historical experience; but the Spaniards carried the sad narrow-mindedness of their inner life principle—religious violence—into this new frontier. The epoch of the fall of Grenada and the discovery of America was also the epoch of the founding of the Spanish Inquisition.* Here now straightaway began the infernal work of ecclesiastical butchery, the restoration of the Moloch cult under Christian symbols and names. The transition from the figure of the valiant knight in thought and deed to the figure of the religious persecutor and executioner was completed on the basis of the natural element of cruelty and blood-lust. It was internalized in three ways: (1) a sense of hatred toward the “infidels” was developed and struck root; (2) an immense sense of national pride arose; and (3) an ideal of national unity and might, as resting on creedal unity, was taken up and elevated above all else.

A threefold betrayal of Christianity!¹⁴ A nation that confesses the Christian faith and yet lives with hatred toward the “infidel” by the same token demonstrates that the premier *infidel* is that nation itself. But one can only be an infidel by betraying *one’s own* and not *someone else’s* faith. It was obviously impossible to require from unbaptized Moslems and Jews that they be faithful to Christ, Whom they did not confess. And the demand for genuine faithfulness from those who were baptized by force or deceptively by fear and seduction was godless and inhuman. “Christians” who made such a demand evidently were apostates of the religion which they confessed and which is incompatible with such a notorious matter of falsehood and spite.[†]

* One should not confuse this royal Spanish inquisition, begun during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, with the clerical Roman inquisition, which was instituted much earlier (in the thirteenth century) also by the initiative of a Spaniard (St. Dominic), but in general not having the bloody character for which the Spanish inquisition became famous. The Roman inquisition, as a purely spiritual tribunal, exists even today.

† One can see how great this anti-Christian spite of the Spanish toward the Moors was from what is expressed about them by the best and most ingenious of the Spaniards, Cervantes, who called them “a treasonous and deceitful tribe by nature” and “our eternal enemies.” (*Don Quixote* I, 9). And this, a hundred years after the Moors were defeated and expelled from Spain!

But this implacable hatred of one's neighbors, being now itself a betrayal of Christianity, was naturally connected with another one. Falsely ascribing to themselves a monopoly of faithfulness to the religion which they in fact were betraying, the Spanish affirmed in themselves national *pride*, having indeed erected their distinctive characteristic. They were proud of their service to Christianity in the Middle Ages at a time when this service, although necessary, was only in outward form and in this sense a small service. And with the end of this service at the time the Moors were repelled from Europe, a new and greater service to humanity should have begun for the Spanish in the spirit of Christ and truth—but in place of this, the spirit of hatred and pride gave birth to the notorious *auto-da-fé*.¹⁵ Of course, this was not Christian faith, but faith in Moloch.

In their pride and enmity to others, the Spanish had to place willy-nilly not Christianity and the kingdom of God as the highest object of their service, but themselves, *their political might and State unity*, the main pillar of which was acknowledged as creedal unity. The fateful transformation was accomplished: the means became an end and the end became the means. But the real tool of these ideal means was the Royal Inquisition, which strove to exterminate from the soul through the body any and all difference of opinion. There followed after the hundreds of thousands (in the aggregate not fewer than two million) of slaughtered and expelled Moslems and Jews, many other thousands (not fewer than four million in the aggregate) of Moriscos—falsely baptized Jews and Protestants—tormented by the Royal Inquisition. This was the highest goal—to remove religio-political “sedition” from the great power of Spain, to reduce all to one common denominator. Everything was brought as a sacrifice to the outward unity of the orthodox power.¹⁶ But here also awaited *Nemesis*, Retribution. It turned out that outward unity, when separated from the inner principle of spiritual freedom, leads to its own opposite—to disintegration and collapse. The Spaniards of the Middle Ages, who did not think of themselves in their service to the common cause, both created national unity and amassed such an abundance of national power that they could seize the greater part of the known world. But they took pride in these results and made a purpose for themselves to validate this great unity of their country by fire and iron. And when they disavowed their inner strength of love and truth, which can bind many and different nations into a living whole, they had *nothing* left with which to hold these nations together. The great power, devastated both spiritually and physically, inevitably

began to crumble, and the last vertebrae that were attached to this dying head are now falling off before our eyes.

Nations do not perish. The soul of Spain can be reborn. But, as a political force, Spain must perish in order to atone for its crimes, when for three centuries it persistently poisoned the very springs of living water in Christianity. Political power can be held firmly only as a tool of that Spiritual Power which Spain renounced at the very dawn of its historical existence.

XXI. RUSSIA IN A HUNDRED YEARS

A second-class car on the Nikolaevskii Railway is one of those places where so-called neighbors stop being that in the *figurative* sense of the word and become *intolerable* reality.¹ And a large supply of natural or acquired altruism is needed in order not to wish those neighbors to be as far away from me as possible. In these cases, I try to preserve a philanthropic disposition by means of an economy of spiritual force, substituting an unprofitable irritation with useful attention. I pay attention to conversations. “It’s proven by scientists,” proclaims a sonorous baritone, “that in a hundred years Russia will have four hundred million inhabitants, at the same time that Germany will have only ninety-five million, Austria—eighty, England—seventy, France—fifty. And so . . .”

The one speaking is a tall man of a technical demeanor and “gray countenance.” And he and his audience obviously belong to the most fortunate part of the population. I mean that social mass which in prose is called “the most esteemed public” and in poetry “the mob” and even the “unenlightened rabble.” But anyway, despite the abuse of poets, this is the most fortunate part of the population. Some maintain that the so-called people or the peasants are happier than anyone. And it is true that the peasant enjoys some important conditions of true happiness; but two peculiarities of the peasant’s situation spoil the entire matter, making it difficult for the very best possibilities to turn into even mediocre reality. First, the peasant is susceptible to disasters from which other classes of the population are shielded (with the exception only of officials of the harbor bureaucracy).² And second, being stupid* according to his own admission, he is distressed excessively by his misfortune and becomes depressed, in-

Source: “Rossiia cherez sto let,” *Rus’*, July 26, 1898. Soloviev appended this as the second addendum to his last work, *Tri razgovora*, 221–28.

* “The peasant’s stupid” “The old woman—a fool.” *Collection of Russian Sayings*, Dal’.

stead of—according to the altruistic instruction of (Aleksei) Tolstoy's famous clerk—finding one's satisfaction in the prosperity of others.*³

If, therefore, the "peasant" cannot be happy as a defenseless sacrifice to the elements and his own foolishness, then the happiness of people who are devoted to thought is undermined at root by an impossibility of tranquility with the persistence of two questions: *Is it really so?* and *What next?* Happiness is imper-turbable by anything apart from personal and family wrecks (railroad derailments do not count), and it therefore remains the destiny of that "most esteemed public" for which elemental disasters go no farther than "bad weather," and inquiries of the mind rest on imaginary truths, imaginarily proven by an imaginary science. "The public" does not itself think, just as it does not itself sew its own boots and bake its own breads. And in relation to both the intellectual and the material, it lives on everything prepared, and its prepared thoughts only further its feeling of contentment, precisely because they do not awaken in it the two troubling questions: *Is it really so?* and *What next?*

Even if only as an example: what torments the feeling of patriotism yields for the man who does not buy his spiritual bread already prepared in some bakery but who works it out by his own effort! If you don't believe that patriotism could cause real torments, I'll consent to express myself more gently—I'll say: excruciating anxieties. In what condition does our native land find itself? Aren't signs of spiritual and physical illness appearing? Have old historical sins been wiped out? How is the duty of a Christian nation being fulfilled? Doesn't a day of repentance still lie ahead?—All these are only variants of the two fateful questions which at root undermine the naive and self-confident optimism of the "most esteemed public." The public does not know these questions, and *its* patriotism procures it only satisfaction and exultation. It is all settled by the well-known pietistic formula, "Thunder of victory, ring out!" Of course, the thinking patriot no less than "the public" also wants the "thunder of victory." But being over the age when a cupped hand and deftly thrown Christmas cookies can cause ineffable bliss, the thinking patriot knows that the "thunder of victory" is of two kinds: a real kind, on the basis of adequate, interior foundations, and a false kind, correctly designated as "thunder, but no lightning."

The announcement that in a hundred years there will be four hundred mil-

* At the Chancery gates / Gathered people / Aplenty.
They said simply / That their stomachs were / Empty.
"Fools!" Said the clerk: / "Everyone of you should be
Fat / Why just yesterday in / Council / We could barely finish the / Sturgeon."

lion inhabitants in Russia is an example of the second kind. It is menacing to our enemies and even to our friends. Obviously, behind this thunder there is no cloud but the cloud of ignorance. People who faithfully repeat such nonsense as if it were a scientific conclusion do not even suspect that a certain rate of growth in the population, just as with any other phenomenon, is conditional upon a series of other phenomena, and that with a change of these phenomena or causes, their consequences also change. But people who are part of the public and who say self-confidently, "Science has proven" cannot even imagine at all the growth of the national population as a conditional *fact*, which is dependent on various *factors*, but see in it some kind of immutable *fate* that is favorable to our native land and harsh to other countries.

Meanwhile, it is clear upon the merest reflection that in Russia, just as in every other country, yesterday's growth of population in and of itself does not say anything of tomorrow's. This is just as clear as the fact that anyone who was well yesterday is not at all prevented from falling dangerously ill tomorrow. And why even talk of tomorrow when the situation has already changed today? According to recently promulgated, unquestionable statistical data, the considerable rate by which our population grew until the 1880s began to fall sharply after that time and in some parts of the Empire has already reached zero. And as we know, since 1885 growth of the population particularly in provinces of the black-earth belt has completely ceased, and the significant (although less than expected) increase of twelve million over ten years, which was disclosed by the census of 1897, is falling principally in various non-Russian or mixed-Russian outlying districts. In order to distance themselves somehow from this sad fact, they attempted in vain to explain it by resettlement from the center to the periphery of the country. It is necessary to reject this explanation. First, the figure for resettlement from the central provinces over ten years, which in itself is rather large, is completely insignificant in comparison with that figure which should have expressed the natural increase of population over those years and in those provinces, if this increase had occurred at the previous rate. Second, apart from the central provinces, the resettlement movement was very strong, for example, in the Kingdom of Poland; however, this did not change the high figure of local population increase. Finally, if the cessation in growth of the rural population in central Russia occurred from resettlement, then what explains similar cessation relative to the city of Moscow, from which nobody is moving, and to which, on the contrary, pour in industrial workers in large numbers? And meanwhile the population of Moscow, which doubled over the sixties and seventies and continued to grow in the eighties as well, although not with such rapidity, has remained in

the past decade on the threshold of a million and cannot seem to get over it. This means that there is, then, some sort of organic cause which has interrupted our growth, apart from the mechanistic relocation of masses of people.

We should turn our attention willy-nilly to *thoughtful* and *anxious* patriotism. Apart from its intellectual and moral poverty, the unaccountable and care-free, happy optimism of triumphant patriots loses any factual basis to support it before our eyes. It is impossible for us to answer the question of what will become of Russia in a hundred years even with the certainty that is expressed in the figure of four hundred million inhabitants. But is there indeed nothing known to us about the future of Russia? We know, of course, that God will do with her what He wants. But isn't this hypocritical—to rest on the general direction of what is to us the inscrutable will of God—a direction from which nothing follows and which does not obligate us to anything? Do we still not know what God wants *from us*, from Russia? If we still don't know, then this is our fault, and it falls to us to correct it—to *find out what most likely* God wants from us. There is neither Caprice nor an Arbitrary Rule over us, and we possess a reason and a conscience in order to become acquainted with the supreme will—and here is the real, single task for thoughtful patriotism.

XXII. THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE

Is it true that our nation has become indifferent to religion and is in a condition of spiritual decay “over the past twenty years”? Please note that the same census of 1897 that revealed a cessation in the physical growth of the core of Russia—also gave occasion to a rare but brilliant phenomenon of a spiritual anomaly in the life of the Russian people. Superstition, darkness of the mind, savagery—anything you want, apart from religious indifference—can be seen in this anomaly. I am speaking about notorious, but so far insufficiently appraised, events in the hamlets of Ternovsky. News about the general census taking place simultaneously across the country appears in a small corner of Novorossia, which is populated by recent Great Russian emigrants. There is no “most esteemed public” here interested in knowing how near the population of Russia drew to the cherished figure of four hundred million: here they are interested in another “drawing near.” Taking a census of the entire nation at once is already not only an omen of Antichrist but the very beginning of his “activity”—the beginning of the most

Source: “Dukhovnoe sostoianie Russkago naroda,” *Rus'*, n.d. [1898].

extreme sorrows and trials. Indisputable rumors about new measures against “ancient piety” go together with the news about the census. Zealous “Graeco-Russian” missionaries are appearing everywhere, and of course our schismatics, because of their lack of education, do not differentiate them at all from “persecutors and tormentors.” It is quite clear that “by threat and flattery” they will seduce the faithful to renounce true piety in order to enlist them immediately in the ranks of the antichrists. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak! They will seduce you—that’s why you need to watch out—if not with this, then with the other, if not by fear, then by deception—and your soul perishes forever. Better not let it get as far as temptation. In olden times, entire mobs self-immolated.¹

But isn’t there a sin and an impediment to the quick resurrection of the flesh here? Instead of destroying your corporeal makeup by fire, isn’t it better to conceal it secretly in the ground? And so, during several months (the end of 1896—the beginning of 1897) a whole community in groups of several people—both old and young, women and children—with pious rites and in imperturbable tranquility buries itself alive in the ground. The decision taken by all of them is fulfilled with brilliant success: twenty-five people are buried. Only one alone, the chief executor, who took upon himself a “work of penance” to bury everyone, intending later to kill himself by starvation, falls “into the hands of justice.” It seems the authorities still do not know what to do with him. Incidentally, he buried his wife and children as well.

Even if the separate details of this frightful matter have a completely peculiar, exclusive character that does not allow for any generalization, the chief conditions and foundations of what happened, the whole religio-moral atmosphere in which it took place, certainly appertain to the whole of Russia; if this phenomenon is unhealthy, then the disease is national, historical. And in no way now is there to be seen here simply a decline of spiritual forces. These forces are extremely unbalanced and completely unintelligible—but of what striking power and energy of spirit, not stopping for anything in the fulfillment of that which is taken up as a moral duty!

A profound spiritual anomaly is unveiled in the Ternovsky tragedy. But one cannot take it as decline, and therefore, as *inactivity* of the spirit—this is powerful and only badly directed spiritual activity.

Apart from such an extreme manifestation of religious stimulation, the lack of indifference of the Russian people to spiritual questions is sufficiently demonstrated by the appearance of new sects among us every year. Much that is of interest about this is found in the just-published Loyal Account of the Chief

Procurator of the Holy Synod (L.A.C.P.H.S.) for 1894 and 1895 (Skt. Pb. synod. typogr. 1898):²

“A new sect appears in the Iakovlevsky parish of Orenburg diocese in 1895. The people call the followers of this sect *reciters*.³ The sect members call themselves awakened spirits, God’s people, a people full of the Holy Ghost, etc. Their liturgy consists of prayers, preaching, and singing. The preaching and prayers are put together by themselves. *They deliver both the preaching and the prayers with special animation, which has an effect upon the listeners.*” However “they strive to denigrate Orthodoxy,” indicting it for the fact that it “*does not give liberty to live according to the Gospel.*” (L.A.C.P.H.S., pp. 236, 237).

A new false doctrine has been detected in Pskov province. The peasant maiden Elena Petrova of Pskov region, of the village of Leshikhin, has appeared as its disseminator.⁴

“The aforementioned false doctrine is of itself nothing other than a continuation, with some modifications and additions, of the so-called Seraphimovsky sect (according to the name of its founder, Father Seraphim of the Nikandrovsky monastery), which appeared in Pskov province in 1870–71. Followers of this sect are known by the name ‘Seraphimovichi and Seraphimovny’ or elect brothers and sisters.”

“With the confinement of Seraphim in the Solovetsky monastery, the possibility of his disseminating this false doctrine was cut short, but a zealous preacher of such appeared residing in the village of Leshikhin, Kolbizhetsky parish, Palkinsky *volost*, Pskov region, the peasant girl Elena Petrova,” who as we read further, found “*more than a few followers.*”⁵ Thus the expression used in the account about *the possibility cut short* should be acknowledged as not completely precise: it should be said that Seraphim was confined in the monastery *with the goal of cutting short* his possibility of disseminating the false doctrine, but that *this goal was not achieved*.

Before his confinement, Seraphim made the girl Elena Petrova into a Mother Superior “and, having directed her to continue his teaching, promised to return soon from confinement. In 1876–77 she entered the Staro-Voznesensky Pskov women’s monastery, where she soon began to gather around herself young novices and to lead some kind of discussions with them in secluded places. . . .

She gave names of various saints to her selected novices—so she called them Nikolai the Miracle Worker, Apostle Paul, Nicodemus, John the Theologian, etc.—and helped them with money, being herself rather well-to-do.

For the dissemination of such false doctrine, Elena Petrova was separated from the monastery from 1880 on, and eight novices, for whom she provided the means to live, followed after her. . . .

Having settled at the house of her father in the village of Leshikhin, Elena Petrova continued to tell about revelations that had come to her from above; she led a strict life and dispersed money to the poor, as a result of which and with assistance, her followers

began to gather around her for spiritual instructions and with requests for her prayers. During such meetings various prayers were sung, and, apart from that, Elena Petrova on her own interpreted various passages from the Gospel and the Apocalypse, related about where she saw whom in the other world, took on herself the task of praying to transfer from hell into heaven. Incidentally, she taught that it was revealed to her from above that the end of the world will soon ensue; that all signs of the second coming had been realized; that the Antichrist had already been born, that therefore it was necessary to prepare for the impending Dreadful Judgment, to leave worldly matters, to become occupied exclusively with piety, giving oneself over to prayer in secluded places. . . .

The lodging occupied by Elena Petrova consists of two rooms which comprise as it were an improvised chapel: on the wall are about twenty icons of a variety of images and crosses, on the floors and on the table are liturgical books: psalter, Book of Hours, acathistus, psalter concordance with commentary, many books of instructive content; more of these kinds of books are found as well in other rooms, where Elena Petrova's brothers and sisters live, occupying three houses; besides that about fifteen pounds of wax candles, several communion breads, a large musical box, two small ones, some kind of grass in a little sack, several monotone woolen women's caps and several rosaries.⁶ In one of the rooms in which Petrova's family lives, the spiritual investigator observed an icon under the name "Pure Spirit," with symbolic images of a variety of sorts, placed along with other icons.

Upon inspection of this icon it turned out that on an inch-thick board, seven by ten *vershoks* (width and height), imaged in her entirety was a maiden with a royal crown on her head, and over the head the inscription: "spirit pure," under her legs a full moon; below the moon a lion with a chain on its neck, the end of the chain crosses over to a green palm branch, which the maiden holds in the right hand; in the left hand the maiden holds a pitcher, from which is poured a liquid signifying the tears of the maiden upon a burning campfire constructed from twelve logs of wood; on the top of the image is drawn J. Christ; from the right side of the image—the sun; lower, four spruce trees on a cliff, according to the local name "elenas," which also serves as grounds for suspecting the inscription on the image "pure spirit"—to be Elena; below the spruces in the cliff is a cave in which a naked youth sits at a fire; he directs his gaze toward the maiden as if begging her prayers; between the cave and the burning campfire is drawn an evil spirit, which is falling from the mountain head first; a lizard with two legs is drawn beneath. Under the icon is written something like a troparion, namely: "spirit pure, like the maiden adorned, stands higher than the sun, and the moon under her feet; has on her head the royal crown; stands before God and prays, the prayer from her mouth rises to heaven: extinguish the fiery fires with tears and sinful thorns consume; after binding the lion, the dragon subdue by meekness; the hater-devil falls to earth, as a cat that cannot suffer her goodness."⁷

The exact same icon turned up with one of the followers of Elena Petrova, from whom it was also seized. . . .

The false doctrine of Petrova found more than a few followers. The latter began to preach the following: Elenushka of a good life, always prays and thus knows everything, God reveals everything to her; so He revealed to her that the end of the world has ensued and the Antichrist has appeared, who at first was a good man, but later an evil spirit settled in him, later he will sprout wings, he will fly in the air and will move mountains. . . . They will put Elenushka and all her followers into prison, they will beat them about the neck. . . . At the end of the world Elenushka will enter into marriage with the Saviour, who already now calls her his heiress; this marriage in heaven in Zion will continue three hundred years, and only Elenushka's elect themselves will meet at the wedding; therefore it is necessary to believe her and pray now, singing in honor of her greatness songs of praise: "We sing your praise, most blessed Elena, bride of Christ, we honor your pains and labors, by them you work to the glory of the Almighty, because you pray for us to Christ, to our God." (L.A.C.P.H.S., 239–45)

This detailed (shortened a bit by me) description of Elenushka's sect and the icons revered by her is certainly located in the "loyal account" only as a specimen of the strange religious fantasies which sprout up among our people. But by their very childishness these fantasies demonstrate how far the people are from being indifferent toward religion. Unfortunately, the practical results of the search at Elena Petrova's were not stated. Certainly, neither the "monotone woolen caps" nor all these "false doctrines" about the devil falling from heaven "like a cat" and the "lizard with two legs" discovered by the spiritual investigator at this peasant girl's house represent in themselves insult or danger to anyone whatsoever. A danger would appear only in the event that a prophecy of the sectists, that they would be "put in prison and beaten about the neck," would come to pass even if only approximately. This would immediately give them the authority of righteous prophets, and we know how similar measures taken in the seventeenth century against similarly innocent "false doctrines" *about every special hallelujah*, and so forth, plunged the Russian nation into great historical confusion.⁸ This also gives notice at present in such phenomena as the live burials of entire communities in the ground from a fear of approaching missionaries.

Seven new sects are described in two places of the account for 1894 and 1895. In the same account we find interesting information about a quite important phenomenon from the recent religious life of the Russian people. About this—until the next letter.⁹

8 Law and Morality: Essays in Applied Ethics

I. PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON LAW IN GENERAL

1.

Law arises in history, to all intents and purposes, side by side with other phenomena of the common life of humanity, such as language, religion, art, and so forth.¹ All these modes of the human spirit's life and action, without which man, as such, is inconceivable, cannot be sim-

Source: Pravo i нравственность: очерки из прикладной этики (St. Petersburg: Izd. Ya. Kantorovicha, 1897). These essays appeared under one cover as number 14 in a legal series under the rubric *Iuridicheskaiia biblioteka*. Parts of this work represent adaptations or revised versions of earlier efforts, including two sections of Soloviev's doctoral dissertation, "Kritika otvlechennykh nachal" (1880); the article "Nравственность i pravo," *Vestnik Evropy* 11 (November 1895): 323–37; and two sections of *Opravdanie dobra: Nравственнаia filosofia* (1896). A lengthy appendix consisting for the most part of translated selections from Kant and Schopenhauer on free will and absolute guilt (excerpted principally from *Critique of Pure Reason* and *The World as Will and Idea*) is not reproduced here. See also *Sobranie sochinenii* 8:523–658.

ply the products of reflection. Obviously, they cannot have their historical origin in the conscious and willful action of individual persons. They all appear at first as direct expressions of an instinctive *clan* mind-set which acts in masses of people. For the *individual* mind, these intrinsic formations appear originally not as things achieved or invented by it but as its qualities. To all intents and purposes this is indisputable, whatever future explanations we might give to humankind's intrinsic instinct itself. However, we have here only a particular instance of a more general fact. For the clan mind-set is not limited to humanity alone, and no matter how we explain the instinct of animals, in any event it is indisputable that rational forms of community, for example, in beehives and anthill "republics," appear for individual animals of a given species not as something invented by them or achieved by them but as something ready-made and given, as something intuitive, which they serve only as conduits and instruments.²

Communal animals undoubtedly obey certain *norms* of their community life, and individuals to blame for violating them (in extremely rare cases) call forth against themselves a corresponding reaction and run the risk of destruction. It goes without saying that human community in its very earliest origins also already possessed objectively definite, though subjectively instinctive, legal norms.

Early law, as the direct work of the clan (national, tribal) spirit, is *customary* law in which the principle of justice acts not as a theoretically conscious motive but as a direct practical inducement and assumes the shape of symbols besides. If early law in the form of juridical custom is the direct manifestation of clan life in general, then the organic development of the latter, which constitutes the history of a people, determines in itself also modifications in legal relations. So then, law in its determinate existence (that is, the law of a certain people at a certain time) is undoubtedly the product of history as a collective organic process.

Thus law is given to us as an organic product of a patrimonial historical process. This aspect of actual law is not subject to doubt; but it is just as certain that law is not yet defined, per se, by it—this is only the first mode of its existence and in no way its essence. When exclusive attention is turned to this organic basis of law, when it is abstracted from all other aspects and elements of law and is recognized as its full definition, there results the one-sided historical principle of law which is so widespread today; the unsoundness of its exclusivity can easily be demonstrated.

First and foremost, it is indisputable that the history of humankind can be acknowledged as purely organic only in its origins, that is, an impersonal patri-

monial process; later trends in historical development are in particular marked more and more by the allocation of individual authority. A community of bees always remains an instinctive, involuntary, and impersonal bond, but human community consistently aspires to become a *free association of individuals*. At first, the life and work of individual persons were entirely determined by the historical way of life of the people as a whole and represented at root only the product of conditions which worked themselves out organically in a people's history. But in its further development it was the other way around; history itself gradually was determined more and more by the free activity of individual persons, and the entire community way of life gradually became more and more only the realization of this individual activity. If human society as a union of moral beings cannot be only a natural organism but is essentially a spiritual organism, then the development of society as well, that is, history, cannot be only a simple organic process but is also essentially a morally free process psychologically as well, that is, a series of individual, conscious, and responsible actions. A question of another sort is: where does this spiritual–historical process, which separates out the individual from the clan, ultimately lead? Is it only a negative transition to the restoration of primitive clan solidarity (but a broader and more perfect one, which joins freedom with unity), or must the primitive, sacramental unity of clan life completely disappear and give way to purely rational relationships? But in any event, the aspiration of the individual to self-affirmation and to sheer liberation from the primitive unity of clan life remains a universal and indisputable fact. And that is why even law, as an essential form of human community resulting primarily from the heart of clan spirit, in the course of time inevitably had to experience the influence of the solitary individual, and legal relations had to become to a certain degree the expression of individual will and design. Therefore, if it is maintained according to abstract–historical principle that the permanent root of every law is customary law as the direct organic expression of the public spirit—all the rest, that is, written law or statutes and the law of scholars or legal experts, has meaning only as the formal expression of the former, so that all the activity of individual persons (legislators and jurists) should consist only in a more precise formulation and systematization of historical, organically worked out legal norms. Such an opinion must be rejected as one-sided and incongruous with reality. Apart from the fact that this opinion contradicts the general significance of individual authority in history, in the majority of cases a purely organic origin of law and legislation is already impossible owing to external conditions alone. So, for example, one may concede that the public and private law of Anglo-Saxons was a purely organic product of their

national spirit, but it is absolutely impossible any longer to say the same thing about the state law of the English kingdom in the thirteenth century; that is, about the origins of the well-known English constitution: for the simple reason that in this case there is *not* a single national spirit, a national unity, to the creation of which we could ascribe the aforementioned constitution, which took shape with the cooperation of at least *two* hostile national elements—Anglo-Saxon and Norman. Obviously, it is impossible to deny the hand of conscious calculation, of a deliberate arrangement between representatives of these two nationalities in this.

Another striking example: *whose* national spirit created the law of the North American republic?

2.

If the relationship among individuals remaining in the unity of the clan* is plain and ingenuous solidarity, then persons who have become isolated and have lost one way or another the essential bond of the clan organism outwardly enter into relations with one another out of necessity. Their bond takes shape as a formal transaction or *contract*. Thus an agreement appears here as the source of law, and against the abstract position: every law derives from the organic development of the national spirit, relies upon the natural, direct creative work of the nation in its essential intrinsic unity. There appears another, directly antithetical abstract principle: every law and all legal relations are the result of an intentional, deliberate agreement or transaction outwardly among the aggregate of all individual persons. If, according to the first principle, all legal forms grow on their own as organic products without any preordained individual purpose, then according to the second principle, it is the other way around—that law is determined absolutely by conscious purpose, which the aggregate of the contracting parties sets for itself. Here it is assumed that individual persons exist primarily in themselves outside any community tie, and then (it would be interesting to know when precisely?) they come together for the sake of common benefit, subject themselves by agreement to a single authority, and thus form a civic (political) society or State, the decrees of which obtain the significance of laws by virtue of general agreement or are acknowledged as an expression of right. Thus the defining principle of law here is common *benefit*. The task of a lawful State in all its

* In this entire chapter the terms “clan” and “patrimonial” are used by me in a broad sense without a direct relation, properly speaking, to the so-called ancestral way of life.

institutions and statutes is the realization of the greatest benefit, that is, the benefit of all. This public utilitarianism, so simple and clear at first glance, under philosophical analysis appears as the vaguest and most undefined theory. The State has as objective the common benefit. If the benefit were truly common, that is, if all were really in solidarity regarding their interests, then there would be no need of a special organization of interests. But if the benefit of all is not in conformity, if the common benefit contradicts itself, then the State can really have only the benefit of the majority as the objective. In fact, this principle is usually understood in this way. But in questions of interest exclusively, nothing vouches for even the solidarity of a majority, let alone the solidarity of all. Proceeding from interest, as many parties must be allowed in society as there are different private interests. If a lawful State is to be the instrument of only one of these parties, then where will it get validity for the subjection of all others? It must defend given private interests only insofar as they do not find themselves in direct contradiction to the interests of others. Thus, the State's own purpose is not interest, as such, which constitutes the personal objective of individual persons and parties, but the *delimitation* of these interests, which makes possible their coexistence. The State has a concern for the interest of each not in itself (which is impossible) but only insofar as it is *limited* by the interest of all others. Since this condition is alike for all, then all are equal before the common authority, which, therefore, is determined not by common benefit, but by *equality* or uniformity, or what's more, justice. By general acknowledgment, the first requirement of a model authority, that is, of a model State, is that it be impartial, but impartiality is only another name for *justice*.

The common authority must be impartial, and in this sense one can say that it must concern itself with the common benefit, that is, with the benefit of all *alike*; but the *equal* benefit of all is justice. However, as stated above, the State cannot concern itself with the benefit of all in a positive sense, that is, with bringing about the entire interest of each, which is impossible to do both because of the uncertainty of this task and out of its intrinsic contradiction, inasmuch as private interests are in opposition among themselves; therefore, the State can be determined only *negatively* by the common benefit, that is, be concerned with the common boundary of all interests. By virtue of this common boundary and in the realm defined by it, that is, inasmuch as each interest is compatible with all others or is just, it is a *right*—a purely negative definition, for it does not require that the interest of each be realized within given boundaries but only prohibits the transgression of these boundaries. Not being in a condition to bring

about the common benefit in fact, that is, according to the subjective requirements of each (which are boundless and contradict one another in the natural order), the State must accomplish it juridically, that is, within the bounds of the common law, which results from the relative or negative equality of all, that is, from justice. The concern of the State, as it is acknowledged by all, is not that each achieve his private objectives and realize his advantage—this is a personal matter—but only that, in aspiring to this advantage, each not violate the balance with the advantages of others, not eliminate another's interest within those boundaries in which interest is right. Thus, a requirement of authority from those subjected to it is a general requirement of justice: *neminem laede*.³ Therefore, law is not determined by the concept of utility, but contains in itself a formal moral principle also.

3.

If it is impossible, as we saw, to acknowledge the principle of organic development as the exclusive source of law, then in precisely the same way it is also not possible to assume the opposite mechanistic principle of agreement in the sense of the renowned *contrat social*, that is, in the capacity of *first cause* and sole source of every law and State. It is to all intents and purposes indubitable that both these principles—both the principle of organic development and the principle of mechanistic transaction—have a share jointly in the formation of law and the State. While the first principle is prevalent in the primitive condition of humanity at the beginning of history, the second obtains predominant significance in the later formation of social life with the greater detachment and isolation of the individual element. Thus law (and the lawful State) in historical reality does not have a single empirical source but occurs as a fickle result of the complex interrelationship of two opposing and counteractive principles. It is easy to see that these are only modifications or early applications in the politico-juridical sphere of the two elementary principles lying at the foundation of all human existence, community and individualism. In fact, the historical principle of the development of law, as the directly expressed common foundation of the national spirit in its indivisible unity, directly corresponds to the principle of community, while the opposite mechanistic principle, which deduces law from an outward agreement among all the individual atoms of society, is obviously the direct expression of the individualistic principle.

It would not be difficult to demonstrate how these two principles, becoming modified and more complex in different ways, manifest themselves in the po-

litical struggle between absolutism and liberalism, traditional aristocracy and revolutionary democracy, and so on. And both conflicting principles are alike unjust and unsound; their unsoundness is eliminated only in a palliative way by outward artificial bargains struck between them. But questions of a purely political character would deflect us much too far from the real subject of this essay.

The two fundamental sources of law, that is, the elemental creative work of the national spirit and the free will of individual persons, modify one another in different ways, and therefore their mutual relation in historical reality appears inconstant, indeterminate, and vacillating according to different conditions of place and time. Thus from an empirical or purely historical point of view, it is impossible to subject this relation of the stated principles to any general definition.

But in any event, no matter what historical forms legal relations have adopted, this does not at all settle the question of the essence of law itself, the question of its true definition. Meanwhile, the tendency to replace the theory of law with its history is very common. This is a particular case of a very widely propagated, even if completely obvious, error of thinking by virtue of which the origin or the genesis of a certain subject in empirical reality is accepted as the very essence of this subject, historical sequence is confused with logical sequence, and the substance of the subject is lost in the process of the phenomenon. And such a confusion of concepts is produced in the name of exact science. However, anyone would acknowledge as insane a chemist who, in answering the question, What is kitchen salt?, instead of saying NaCl, that is, of giving the chemical formula of salt, began to enumerate every salt-works and describe methods of obtaining salt. But doesn't a scholar do the very same thing when he thinks of answering the question What is law? with ethnographic and historical studies instead of with logical definitions regarding the customs of the Hottentots and the laws of the Salic Franks? Although these studies are extremely interesting and important in their place, they do not answer the general question in the least. Yet logical errors, which are striking in ordinary and individual cases, escape our attention in more complex and wider-ranging questions. It goes without saying that the positivist-historical tendency in the science of law, although in principle based on this error, nevertheless can be extremely fruitful and render great service in a treatment of scientific material. And what's more, this tendency is pardonable in principle as a legitimate reaction against a one-sided metaphysics of law, which in its complacent abstractness has sinned against practical principle, as a contrary tendency sins against an idea.

4.

Having broached the historical question—Where does law arise, or out of what is law formed? that is, the question of its material cause—we now cross over to the question of what is (*ti eoti*) law, that is, to the question of its formative (formal) cause or of its true essence.

The relationship of *persons* is determined first of all by right. That which is not a person cannot be the subject of right. Things do not have rights. To say, I have a right (in general, without further definition as to what kind) is the same as saying, I am a person. A creature is called a person, in distinction from a thing, when it is not used up by its being for another. That is to say, a person is not able in its nature to serve only as a means for another, and it exists as a purpose in itself and for itself; it is a being, in which every action external to it runs across the possibility of absolute opposition, a something that cannot yield absolutely to this external action and, hence, is absolutely intrinsic and original—inscrutable and unremovable for another. And this is *freedom* in the true sense of this word, that is, not in the sense of *liberum arbitrium indifferantiae* but the other way around—in the sense of the absolute special nature and immutable particularity of each being, manifested equally in all its actions.⁴ Thus, at the basis of right lies freedom as the characteristic feature of the individual; for out of a capacity for freedom results the requirement of independence (that is, its acknowledgment by others), which finds its expression in right. But freedom in itself, that is, as an attribute of a person taken individually, still does not form right; for here freedom manifests itself only in an outward manner as an actual property of personality that coincides with its *power*. Left to myself, I freely act within the boundaries of my power: there cannot even be any talk of right here. And there is no right in a situation in which my action collides with a similarly free action of another, and the matter is resolved by a preponderance of force. But if I limit the manifestation of my freedom or make it conditional upon acknowledging in someone else the same kind of freedom in principle, or acknowledge him as the same kind of person that I myself am, then by such recognition I make my freedom obligatory for him or transform it into my right. Such a relationship has a universal character by virtue of the universal significance of the individual: each man is a person, and hence his freedom, which is reciprocally conditional upon its actual manifestation, in principle should be recognized by all alike. Thus my freedom, not only as a force but as a right, directly depends on the acknowledgment of the *equal* right of all others. Hence, we obtain a basic definition of right:

Right is freedom which is conditional upon equality.

In this basic definition of right the individualistic principle of freedom is indissolubly linked with the societal principle of equality, so that it is possible to say that right is nothing other than the *synthesis of freedom and equality*.

The concepts of the individual, freedom, and equality constitute the essence of so-called natural right. The rational essence of right differs from its historical phenomenon, or positive right. In this sense, natural right is that general algebraic formula under which history substitutes various real values of positive right. Moreover, it goes without saying that this formula (just like every other one) taken separately is only an abstraction of the mind; in reality, it exists only as a general ideal condition of all positive legal relations, in them and through them. Thus under natural or rational right we understand only the common reason or sense (*ratio, logos*) of every right, as such. The theory of natural law, which existed at one time in juridical science as something that *historically* preceded positive law, has nothing in common with this concept of natural right as only the *logical prius* of positive right. A so-called natural state or State of Nature was proposed in which people existed seemingly before the appearance of the State and positive laws. In fact, both these elements, the rational and the positive, go into the composition of every actual law with identical necessity, and that is why a theory which separates them or abstracts them from one another in assuming the historical existence of purely natural law accepts an abstraction of the mind for reality. The unsoundness of this theory does not at all eliminate the unquestionable truth that every positive right, insofar as it is still right and not something else, is necessarily subject to the general logical conditions which determine the very concept of right and that, therefore, the acknowledgment of natural right in this latter sense is an essential requirement of reason.

The essential conditions of every right are, as we saw, the freedom and equality of its subjects. Therefore, natural right is reduced exclusively to these two factors. Freedom is the essential substance or subject of right, and equality is its necessary form. Remove freedom, and right becomes its opposite, that is, force. Similarly, the absence of general equality (that is, when a given person, maintaining his right in relation to another, does not recognize as compulsory the rights of these others) is precisely that which is called injustice, that is, also a direct denial of right. Therefore, every positive law, too, as a particular expression or application of right, whatever the specific matter it applies to, always presupposes equality as its general and absolute form: all are equal before the law; lacking this, it is not law. And precisely in the same way the law, as such, pre-

supposes the *freedom* of those whom it instructs, because for slaves there is no general formally binding law. For them, the sole and simple fact of a master's will is already *compulsory*.

Freedom, as the foundation of all *human* existence, and equality, as the essential form of all *societal* existence, in combination form *human society* as a *lawful order*. Something universal and identical is affirmed by them, insofar as the rights of all are equally obligatory for each and the rights of each for all. But it is obvious that this simple equality can apply only to that in which all are identical among themselves, to that which all have in common. The commonality of all subjects of right alike is that they all are persons, that is, independent or free beings. Thus, proceeding from equality as the essential form of right, we end at freedom as its essential substance.

In the empirical reality perceptible by the external senses, all human beings constitute an infinite diversity, and if, nevertheless, they firmly establish themselves as equals, then this expresses not an empirical fact, but a condition of *reason*, which concerns that which is identical in all or in which all are equal. In general, reason, as the identical boundary of all free forces or the sphere of their equality, is the determining principle of law, and man can be the subject of law only in the capacity of a *free* and *rational* being.

II. THE DEFINITION OF LAW IN ITS CONNECTION TO MORALITY

1.

Although the general formal definition of right (just like the formal definition of freedom, which is conditional upon equality—that is, upon equal restriction) designates a proper realm of juridical relations, it says nothing about their actual substance, and that is why it cannot in itself serve as an answer to the question about the connection between law and morality. The defining term of this formula itself—equality—has an excessively general and abstract character and requires a proximate definition: this is equal *restriction*, which makes right out of freedom. What does it really consist in, and in what sense is it equal for all?

Obviously, there can be no talk here of simple or absolute equality. It is clear that a restriction of freedom for young and old, for the psychically stricken and the healthy, cannot be equal. Equality is always conditional in other respects too: all are equally free to engage in medical practice, *if* they have evidence of their medical knowledge; all are equally free to own property, *if* they have first acquired it, and so forth. Consequently, in law, the freedom of each is conditioned

upon not only the equality of all but also upon the actual conditions of equality itself. Further, when we speak of equal restriction, then, in order to become a factor of law, this restriction itself must still have a certain special quality besides an equality which is realistically stipulated: not just any restriction, even if it is an equal one, can constitute law. So, when the Egyptian pharaoh decreed that all newborn Hebrew children of the male sex be put to death, this statute was not an expression of law, although it is possible to imagine it in the general form of law; *to wit*, so that the *freedom* of the Hebrews to live in Egypt was for all of them conditional upon an *equal restriction*—putting to death the newly born. This seeming statute did not have a lawful meaning, of course, not because equality here was one-sided, applying to the male sex of the Hebrews alone. If pharaoh had issued another statute by which not only Hebrews but also all Egyptian newborns of both sexes, not excluding even pharaoh's children, were subject to execution, then this statute in all its conformity with the idea of abstract equality in no way would become a better expression of law, and pharaoh, having issued it, could not be acknowledged as more just. The entire matter is not ultimately in equality but in the *character* of the restriction itself: real justice is required. For an actual *lawful* law is required to correspond not only to the form of justice but also to its practical essence, which is not at all tied to the abstract concept of equality in general. An injustice which is equally applied to all does not become justice. Truth or justice is not equality in general but only *equality in what is due*. The debtor who repudiates equally what is owed to all his creditors is not just and righteous, but he who uniformly repays his debt to all of them is; the man who is ready to murder or rob every one of his neighbors equally is not just and righteous, but he who wants to kill or rob absolutely no one is; the father who casts all his children into the street equally is not just and righteous, but he who devotes equal concern to all of them is. Justice is unquestionably a concept of moral order. So then, doesn't law, as the expression of justice, enter exclusively into the moral realm?

Such a conclusion cannot, however, stand against the universal phenomenon of *lawful immorality*, which has solid grounds based on principle beneath it.

2.

The requirements of morality and the requirements of law partly coincide with each other and partly do not. Killing, stealing, violence—are equally contrary to both moral and juridical statute—these are at one and the same time both sins and crimes. A civil suit with a neighbor over property or over a personal insult is contrary to morality but fully in accordance with law and is legitimized

by it. Anger, envy, private slander, and intemperance in sensual gratifications are tacitly permitted by law but are condemned by morality as sins. Where is the principle of differentiation in this?

It is not possible to see it in the distinction between negative morality by prohibitive precept (harm no one—*neminem laede*), applying here the entire realm of law, and positive morality by imperative precept (help everyone as much as you can—*omnes quantum potes juva*), applying here all strictly moral, and not juridical, relations. Such a principle of division turns out to be insufficient in every respect. First, a legal statute does not prohibit all harmful actions but only some of them, and it is indifferent to the rest. Gossip, lies, backbiting and slander in private conversations, unjust and poisonous attacks in the press, all can doubtlessly be very harmful to those who suffer from them, but a legal statute is indifferent to this harm. Second, this statute, not being restricted on the other hand by the prohibition of harm, sometimes positively directs certain types of persons (for example, doctors, police) to render direct assistance to those who are in need of it. Third, a purely moral law hardly consists, in the majority of cases, in the prohibition of actions which are harmful or offensive to others.

There are quite enough of these disparities so that an attempt to reduce the difference between the juridical and ethical realms to the difference between positive and negative precepts or norms can be rejected. A juridical statute permits a certain immorality in both senses, that is, a violation of both positive and negative moral precepts; it not only permits neighbors at times to be left without help but sometimes even allows harm to come to them in certain measure. So then, apparently, in order to establish a sufficient principle of division between the two realms, it is necessary to try to find in law an element which is not in the least connected with morality and is completely lacking in ethical significance. This, it would seem, is achieved through a definition of law as protected or defended *interest*.

The word *interest* sounds in fact somehow positive and practical; there is even something materialistic in it that excludes any idealism and sentimentality. Let us see what kind of utility can be extracted from these qualities for our question.

“Law is protected interest.” Isn’t there, however, a hidden tautology here? Not just any interest or just any protection is being discussed here. If anyone protects his property interest by fraudulent bankruptcy or some other swindling or defends his interest in the sphere of “free love” by means of poisoning his lawful wife, then in like manner, protected interest will hardly be recognized as the true essence of legal principle. Undoubtedly, only *lawful* interest is meant in

the stated definition, one which is protected on a legal basis, by virtue of statute and with the assistance (if necessary) of lawful authority. But if so, then, well, something defined is already present in this definition, which is logically not permitted. Law is interest, protected . . . by law! Law is law, *idem per idem*.⁵

Of course, it is possible to avoid the logical mistake, while not abandoning the concept of interest, by modifying the definition thus: *law is a norm of interests which are subject to public protection*. But this formal improvement essentially leaves the question open.

3.

What kind of norm transforms interest into law, or what general requirement must interest satisfy in order to become subject to obligatory protection on the part of the lawful authority? Let us suppose that, being occupied with complex intellectual work which is useful for me and for others, I am extremely concerned that idle guests not take up my time and not interrupt the train of my thoughts. It would seem that here is an interest that is entirely worthy of becoming law. However, no prohibition against taking up the time of anyone whomsoever exists in any legislation. The law has no business whatever with this, my interest in itself; it is left to my own discretion to protect it or not. But here I've locked my door and nevertheless some very determined visitor got through to me, let us suppose, having counterfeited a key or broken down the door. At this point, my interest is transformed into positive right, and I successfully turn to the good offices of the public authority, which is by law obliged to protect my dwelling from forcible intrusions. Thus my interest is protected. However, *which one*? Certainly *not* the interest of my intellectual work, which the legal authority neither had nor continues to have anything to do with. You see, I could lock myself in either in order to sleep peacefully or to indulge myself in pleasant dreams or to get drunk on vodka without anyone witnessing the fact or to work out a plan of some diabolically evil act in seclusion—this is all the same from the point of view of the law which protects me from forcible intrusion. It is, however, not possible to assume that my interest in getting drunk on vodka or working out a marvelous murder in itself corresponds to a legal norm and is subject to legal protection. Clearly, the law protects not just any of my interests but only the single interest of my freedom: to allow or not allow visitors in the case in question. Let us suppose that, instead of locking my door, I leave it open out of tactfulness or infirmity; but my friends, according to whose opinion my work should make me famous and grace humankind, lock my doors to visitors forcibly and

against my will in view of such an important interest, or, not inquiring of me, they chase them away: here, protection of the law is guaranteed to me against the very protectors of my interest, that is, the law secures my freedom by *not* defending my interest! So much, undoubtedly, that its true interest and the standard of its activity are only the protection of my freedom irrespective of any definite interest whatsoever.

The law grants a certain leeway of individual immorality for the sake of this protection of freedom. A man who, having shut himself in in order to get drunk on vodka, can in the meantime not allow people in who have urgent need of him; such a double immorality is legitimized: it is his subjective right, protected from any infringement by objective right or legal authority.

Within what boundaries is freedom of immoral conduct legitimized, or within what boundaries is immorality a right and sin *not* a crime? Why is a man who gets drunk behind closed doors and refuses to comply with neighbors who are in need of him—innocent, and a man who breaks into this scoundrel's place—guilty? Evidently, the distinction is simple: the former, in all his worthlessness, sits quietly and does not bother anyone, whereas the latter is committing aggressive violence. Thus the law allows passive immorality and prohibits active immorality: the law is against the aggressor, but even this principle cannot be consistently carried out.* *Criminal inaction* exists: not only the physician or the policeman but every other man as well is obliged by law, in certain cases, to render assistance to a neighbor, and he who in these cases remains in a passive posture is subject to legal amenability. Obviously, the relation between law and morality is too complex for the principle of division to be settled here by a simple characterization alone. In proceeding exclusively from an opposition of the legal and moral realms and neglecting their commonality, attempts to institute this principle turn out to be unsuccessful. It remains to try out the reverse path—going from the common to the diverse.

4.

Human speech in all languages indisputably attests to the core intrinsic connection between law and morality. The concept of “right” and its corresponding concept “duty” enter into the realm of moral ideas so much so that they can directly serve for their expression. Everyone understands and no one will dis-

* Of course, this distinction is totally relative: a firm boundary between passive state and active deed does not exist, not to mention even the debatable intermediate realm of actions which are expressed verbally and in writing.

pute such ethical assertions as: I see my *duty* to refrain from everything odious; or, out of human dignity I recognize (in my person) a *right* to be respected; I am obliged, according to the extent that I am able, to assist my fellowman and to serve the common good; that is, my neighbors and the whole of society have a *right* to my assistance and service; finally, I am *obliged* to adjust my will to that which I regard as absolutely supreme, or—in other words—this absolutely supreme thing has the *right* to a pious attitude on my part (hence, the idea of sacrifice—the main basis of every divine worship).

In all languages, moral and juridical concepts are expressed either by identical words or derived from one root. The Russian *dolg*, like the Latin *debitum*—from which come the French *devoir* and the English *duty*—and in like manner the German *Schuld*, *Schuldigkeit* have both a moral and a legal meaning; *dikhe* and *dikhaiosune*, *jus* and *justitia*, just as in Russian *pravo* and *pravda*, in German *Recht* and *Gerechtigkeit*, in English *right* and *righteousness*, differentiate these two meanings only by prefixes (compare also the Hebrew, *tsedek* and *tsedeka*).⁶

There is no moral relationship which could not be correctly expressed in a commonly understandable way in legal terms. Obviously, what could be further from everything juridical than a love of enemies? And yet, if a higher moral law *obliges* me to love enemies, then it is clear that my enemies have a *right* to my love. If I reject them in love, then I act incorrectly or unjustly, I violate a *truth* or a moral *law*. Here are two terms (truth and law) in which the essential unity of legal and ethical principle is embodied. For what is right if not an expression of truth and if not the substance of law? And, on the other hand, all virtues also reduce to a concept of truth or justice; that is, to that which should be or is correct in the ethical sense and which is directed by moral law. Here, the matter is not in a chance identity of terms but in the essential homogeneity of the concepts themselves.

5.

On the one hand, when we speak *about moral right* and moral duty, any thought about a core opposition or incompatibility of moral and legal principle is thereby removed. But, on the other hand, a substantial distinction between them is also indicated, since in designating some given right as *moral*, for instance, the right of my enemy to my love, we imply that there is a right in a narrower sense to which a moral disposition does not appertain as its direct and nearest attribute. And in fact, if on the one hand we take my duty to love enemies—with their corresponding right to my love—and on the other hand we take my duty to pay a promissory note on time, or my duty not to murder and

not to rob my neighbors, with their corresponding right not to be murdered, robbed, or cheated by me—then between these two kinds of attitudes, the second of which appertains to law in a narrow or proper sense and the first to pure morality, an important difference is apparent.

It is reduced here to three main points:

(1) A purely moral requirement, as, for example, love of one's enemies, is essentially unrestricted or all-embracing; it presupposes an absolute aspiration to moral perfection. Any restriction which is allowed *in principle* is contrary to the nature of the moral precept and also undermines its value and meaning; he who rejects in principle the absolute ideal rejects morality itself, abandons moral ground. Over against that, a strictly legal statute is essentially limited as is apparent in all cases of its application; in place of perfection it is satisfied by a lower, minimal degree of a moral condition and requires only the actual restriction of certain extreme manifestations of malevolent will. But this clear and general distinction is not a contradiction that is capable of leading to real conflict. From the moral aspect, it is not possible to deny that punctual repayment of promissory notes required by statute, abstinence from murders, robberies, and so on, although representing only an elementary good, nevertheless is a good and not an evil, and that if we are obliged to love enemies, then so much the more are we obliged to respect the life and property of all our neighbors. Not only is there no contradiction between moral and juridical law, but the second is assumed by the first: without the fulfillment of the lesser, it is not possible to fulfill the greater; he who is incapable of ascending to the lower rung is all the less in a position to rise to the higher; *to wit*, in the dissolution of this natural association, a patent and gross contradiction would appear—if a man who violated criminal laws would regard himself as having achieved moral perfection. But on the other hand, though the juridical law does not require higher moral perfection, it also does not prevent it, and in prohibiting anyone whomsoever from killing and swindling, it cannot, and indeed does not, require preventing anyone who wants to to love their enemies; so there is no contradiction at all here either. Thus, on this first point (which in certain moral teachings is mistakenly accepted as the only important one) the relation between the two basic principles of practical life is expressed in the following way: *law* (that which is required by the juridical statute) *is the lowest boundary or a certain minimum of morality equally binding for all.*

(2) From the unrestricted nature of purely moral claims there also results a second distinction between them and legal norms. To wit: higher moral precepts

do not prescribe in advance any definite outward actions, but they afford an ideal disposition itself the opportunity to be expressed in corresponding actions as applied to a given situation, while these actions, which are in themselves of moral value, do not have and in no way exhaust the moral requirement, which remains infinite. Opposite that, juridical law has as its subject objectively defined external actions; a statute is fully satisfied by the refraining from or by the committing of such actions. But in this opposition too there is no contradiction at all: a moral disposition not only does not exclude outward behaviors but is naturally expressed in them, yet not exhausted by them. And a legal injunction or prohibition of certain actions presupposes the approval or condemnation of corresponding intrinsic conditions. Both the moral and the juridical law strictly concern the intrinsic essence of man and his will; but the first takes this will in its generality and entirety and the second only in its partial realization with respect to certain external facts which comprise the true interest of law, such as the inviolability of life and property of every man, and so forth. From the legal point of view, a practical attitude toward these subjects, expressed in refraining from committing or committing certain actions, is important. This is the second essential feature of law. And if law originally was defined as a certain minimum of morality, then, supplementing this definition, we can now say that law is the requirement of the indispensable realization of this least moral content. That is, the essential objective of law is *the guaranteed implementation in practice of a certain minimum of good* or an actual elimination of a certain amount of evil, whereas the strictly moral interest applies in a direct way not to the external realization of the good but to its intrinsic existence in the human heart. Since, generally speaking, a small but truly existing good is preferable to the very greatest and perfect “something-that-does-not-exist” (the old adage about the crane and the titmouse), then there is nothing reprehensible or degrading for the realm of law in a minimal, but in fact ensured, substance of good.⁷

(3) A third distinction also results via this second one. The requirement of moral perfection as an intrinsic condition presupposes free or voluntary performance—here, not only any physical but any psychological compulsion in the essence of the matter is also both undesirable and insufferable. Oppositely, the outward implementation of a certain order in accordance with law or of certain conditions of some relative good according to the nature of the matter fully allows direct or oblique *coercion*. And to the extent that the realization of a certain good in objective reality is here supposed to be a real or immediate goal—for example, community safety—to that extent the coercive character of the law be-

comes a necessity since by verbal persuasion alone it is obviously not possible to stop all murders, fraud, and so forth, immediately.

6.

Combining these three features, we obtain the following definition of law in its objective relation to morality: *law is the coercive requirement of the realization of a certain minimal good or of an order which does not allow certain extreme manifestations of evil.*

Now the question is, What is such a requirement ultimately based upon, and is this coercive order compatible with a purely moral order which by its very existence apparently excludes any coercion? If a perfect good is maintained in the consciousness as an absolute ideal, then shouldn't everyone be left to realize it freely to the extent of their capabilities? Why raise a coercive minimum of morality to the level of law, when conscience requires the unhampered fulfillment of the maximum of the good? Why announce threateningly, Do not kill—when one should gently suggest, Do not get angry?

Here, the subjective moral consciousness of some is taken for the realization of a moral attitude among all, and the formal condition of perfected morality (absolute freedom) is confused with the substance of any morality in general. Isn't it clear, however, that the law which prohibits murder does not at all concern those who in conscience recognize not only killing as impermissible, but also being angry? And, on the other hand, it would be totally inappropriate to presuppose a high degree of unhampered virtue or a proximate aptitude for it in a man who had resolved to kill his venerable parents in order to take control of their property. The juridical statute relates only to one who is capable of violating it. Good, as such, must be absolutely free—this is outside the question. The question is only in the freedom of evil; we maintain freedom even for it, but only with certain restrictions which are required by reason.

In the absence of individual freedom, human dignity and higher moral development are impossible. But a man cannot exist and, hence, also develop his freedom and morality other than in society. So then, the same purely moral interest which requires individual freedom thereby requires that individual freedom not contradict the terms of the existence of society. An absolute ideal of moral perfection, set up abstractly as a goal of unhampered individual efforts, cannot be used for the concordance of personal freedom with societal self-preservation.⁸ This is because an absolute ideal of moral perfection, saving and perfecting those who acknowledge it, is devoid of any real meaning for those

who do not acknowledge it, because in its name they require from them the very most—to love one's enemies—but cannot in fact give them the very least—if only to compel them to refrain from killing and robbery. And if a literal moralist says, “We do not need to refrain from evildoing, when refraining is not of free will,” then he displays only extreme egoism. He forgets that his pompous requirement of unhampered virtue from a murderer does not restore to life the murdered person and does not even help the murderer himself become even just a decent man.

A high degree of good in a man is measured not so much by the loftiness of claims presented by him as by his own moral condition. The Good is not settled by a formal principle of moral freedom alone or a law unto oneself but has a certain psychological content, which is incidentally incompatible with egoistic impassiveness or an indifference to the suffering of one's fellow creatures. A sign of altruism with a requirement of a corresponding deed—that is, compassion for the misfortunes of others—enters indispensably into the total concept of the moral Good. This compassion actively prompts their salvation from evil, and that is why moral duty can in no way restrict itself to consciousness alone and the elevation of a perfected ideal while the actual conditions of its achievement are being negated. In the natural course of things, which cannot be altered by good words alone, some would voluntarily begin to strive to the higher ideal and perfect themselves in impassiveness, while others would unimpededly practice the perfection of all possible evil and, of course, would destroy the former before they would actually be able to achieve moral perfection. And independently of this, even if people of good will were by some miracle preserved from destruction by the worst people, these good people themselves would obviously be *insufficiently* good if they could offer only good words to their worst colleagues who were preying upon one another.

The purpose of the moral law is that man live by it, but man exists only in society. The existence of society depends not on the perfection of some but on the security of all. This security is not provided for by the moral law in itself; people with predominantly antisocial instincts are deaf to it; security is provided by the coercive law, which is perceptible even to them. It is no more than blasphemy to spurn it while citing the beneficent force of Providence, which is obliged to restrain and instruct criminals and madmen: it is impious to lay upon the Deity that which can be done by a good police force.

Thus moral principle requires that people freely perfect themselves; the perfection of society is necessary for this; but society cannot exist if the right to kill

and maim neighbors is granted to anyone who wants it; hence, the coercive law, which in practice does not permit extreme manifestations of evil will that destroy society, is a *necessary* condition of moral perfection and in this capacity is required by moral principle itself, although it is not its direct expression.

Let us suppose that higher morality (from its ascetic aspect) instills in us indifference to the fact that we will be robbed, maimed, killed; but that very morality (from the altruistic aspect) does not permit us to be indifferent to our neighbors' freely becoming murderers and murdered, robbers and robbed, and that society, without which even a single man cannot live and perfect himself, risk the danger of destruction. Such indifference would be a patent symptom of moral death.

The requirement of individual freedom presupposes—for the purpose of its own implementation—a constraint of freedom to the extent that it is incompatible with the existence of a society, or the common good, in the present condition of humanity. These two interests—individual freedom and societal welfare—are contrasted for the purpose of abstract thinking but are equally binding morally and in reality coincide with one another. Law comes into being from their encounter.

7.

Legal principle can be examined abstractly in a subjective model of freedom, and then it is only a direct expression of justice: I maintain my freedom as a right to the extent that I respect the freedom of others as their right. But the concept of right in its very nature includes in itself, as we have seen, an objective element, or the requirement of implementation: it is necessary that right always have the power to be realized, that is, that the freedom of others, independently of my subjective acknowledgment of it or of my personal fairness, always could in fact restrict my freedom within likewise limits. This requirement of coercive justice, which constitutes the final essential characteristic of law, is rooted entirely in the idea of the common good or the community interest, which itself results from a purely moral interest—the realization of the Good or the requirement that justice indispensably become an actual fact and not only a subjective concept because only its factual existence corresponds to the principle of altruism or satisfies the fundamental moral sense of compassion. The degree and means of this legal realization of the Good depends, of course, on the status of moral consciousness in a given society and on other historical conditions. Thus natural law is essentially at the same time also positive law, and from this aspect it can be expressed in the following formula:

Law is the historically dynamic determination of a coercive equilibrium between two moral interests—the formal-moral interest of individual freedom and the material-moral interest of the common good.

Individuality is directly interested in its freedom, and society is directly interested in its security and welfare; yet law and the lawful State are not directly interested in this but are only interested in the rational *equilibrium* of these empirically contradictory interests. To be precise, equilibrium is the distinctive, specific character of law. It would be quite a mistake to assume the *material* equalization of private interests to be the task of legal statute. Even if such an equalization would be in general needed for anything, in any event law cannot have anything to do with this. It is interested only in the proper relation between the two chief boundaries of human life in principle: the freedom of the person and the good of society—and by restricting itself to this, and neither introducing its coercive element into the more narrow and complex realm of private relations nor affecting either the one or the other boundary, law better than anything conforms with morality itself. For a man must aspire to moral heights freely, but for this, elbowroom below, a certain *freedom to be immoral*, is necessary. To a certain extent, law secures for him this freedom, however, not at all inclining to use it. If a creditor did not have the coercive right to recover his money from a debtor, then neither would he have the possibility by a free moral act to renounce this right and to forgive a poor man his debt. On the other hand, only the guarantee of the coercive fulfillment of a freely accepted obligation preserves freedom for the debtor and the enjoyment of an equal right with respect to the creditor: he depends, as does the other, too, on his decision and on the common law. The interest of individual freedom coincides here with the interest of the common good since a sound community life cannot exist without the security of free agreements.

Still clearer is the coincidence of both moral interests in the realm of criminal law. The freedom of every man, or his natural right to live, act, and perfect himself, would obviously be empty words if the implementation of this right depended on the arbitrary will of every other man who wants to kill or maim his neighbor or take from him the means of existence. And if I have the natural right to defend by coercive measures my freedom and security from infringements by the evil will of another, then to defend others against it by those same measures is my direct moral duty. This duty common to all is carried out by public criminal law, which is provided with all the means necessary for this.

But in protecting the freedom of peaceful people, the criminal law leaves sufficient scope also for the activities of evil will and does not compel anyone to be

virtuous. A malicious and impassioned man can, if he wants, manifest his spite in private backbiting, intrigues, slander, arguments, and his evil passions—in drunkenness, games of chance, heated desire, debauchery, and so forth. Only when evil will infringes upon the objective, publicly acknowledged norms of human relationships and threatens the security of community life itself, only then must the interest of the common good, which coincides with the interest of peaceful people, coercively restrict the freedom of the criminal. In the interest of freedom, law allows people to be bad and does not interfere in their free choice between good and evil; only in the interest of the common good does it impede the bad man from being a triumphant *criminal*, dangerous to the very existence of society. The task of law is not at all that a world situated in evil revert to the kingdom of God, but only that it not turn into hell *for the time being*.

8.

In the realm of criminal law (as of civil law as well), freedom of the person is restricted not by the private or subjective interests of any other persons in question but by the objective norms of the common good. Many sensitive and selfish people would agree that it is better to be robbed or even maimed than to be subjected to merciless backbiting and slander. And therefore, if law had in view the protection of private interest, as such, then it would have to restrict in these cases the freedom of slanderers and habitual users of bad language even more than the freedom of robbers and rapists. But it does not do this because for the security of society verbal insults are not as important and do not demonstrate as threatening a degree of development of evil will as infringements of corporeal and property inviolability do. It would not be possible for the law to take notice of all the forms and shades of individual sensitivity to offense even if it so intended. And this would even be unjust, for there is no way to prove that the offender had in mind to occasion precisely the high degree of suffering which, in fact, occurred. As a common norm, law can be guided only by definite intentions and objective acts which allow for popular verification. In personal insults which do not pertain to criminal amenability, the offended can, if he wants, revenge himself upon the offender by the same malicious means—his *freedom of evil* is respected, just as the freedom of evil of his adversary: and if he is morally superior to him and does not consider vengeance permissible for himself, then he still would not turn to the external law, despite all his sensitivity to offense; and if he rejects personal vengeance, then all the better for him and for society as well, to which is freely granted the expression of its moral judgment. For the purpose of legal appraisal, evil will in itself is not important, nor is the result of

an act in itself, which can also be accidental. Only the connection of intent to the result or degree of firmness and consistency of evil will in a real act is important, since this extent of realization and the corresponding extent of danger for society are subject to objective definition. So, in the case of a premeditated murder having been committed, or even if prevented under circumstances independent of the criminal, it is clear that in this man there is a malevolent will capable of such realization. It is incompatible with public security and with individual freedom, and it calls forth against itself the coercive action of criminal justice. The object of law in this realm is not an evil will but a *criminal* will. The first is directed against the subjective good of private individuals, and its action was free; the second is directed against the objective norms of community life and cannot be free otherwise than with the destruction of society. And while society exists, the violated norms of its existence must be restored through the counteraction of a fully empowered law of criminal infringement. This legal counteraction to crimes constitutes the true subject of criminal law. Here also the basic problem of the connection of morality and law appears with particular brilliance, its diverse solutions revealing all their strong and weak aspects. Meanwhile, there appear some new problems which have significant interest both in theory and in practice.

III. CRIMINAL LAW. ITS GENESIS. A CRITIQUE OF THE THEORY OF RETRIBUTION AND DETERRENCE

1.

Every actual society is formed according to certain norms—political, civil, police, economic, and so forth—which are established in essence (even if not in sequence) prior to the criminal law. By one sufficiently precise formulation (which can be found in the lectures of Prof. N. S. Tagantsev) crime is an infringement of any of these norms in their practical objective reality.⁹ These norms themselves have their positive ground outside of the criminal law: it wasn't the criminal law which created them or produced a certain form of governance and was the cause of a given administrative structure or generated the law of property and the order of inheritance or, last, determined necessary measures of decency. But when an infringement is committed against the norms already inherent in public life, society, represented by its lawful authority, reacts against the offense as a healthy organism against morbidic elements, and it is this legal reaction that forms the criminal law. Not every reaction against the viola-

tion of public norms has such meaning. Lawless manifestations of blind public instincts, such as when a mob tears a criminal to pieces or sentences him in a kangaroo court to the gallows, can in no way constitute the formative principle of criminal law, but only one of its particulars. A lawful reaction to crime can be accomplished only according to the common law and beforehand, in a predetermined manner. A twofold definition is proposed. First, the actions that are to be acknowledged as impermissible infringements of the vital norms of society must be exactly defined. In other words, precisely which norms are to be subject to coercive legal safeguarding? Many also essentially very important practical norms are not subject to coercive juridical protection, such as, for example, social, purely moral, and in a majority of countries also religious, norms. They are acknowledged as a matter of inner spiritual interest and free personal choice. Second, it is imperative that the extent and means of legal reaction, which are called forth by each infringement of the protective norm, must be defined. In short, criminal law has as its subject: (1) the definition of crimes and, (2) the definition of punishments. The grounds of such definitions are analyzed and evaluated by the *science* of criminal law. The philosophical part of this science is occupied with the ultimate principled bases of such determinations or the investigation of the concepts of crime and punishment themselves in their inner essence. On the one hand, this philosophy of criminal law is a part of or, if you like, the superstructure of criminal-juridical science. On the other hand, it comes into the sphere of philosophical studies as the most important department of “the philosophy of right,” adjoining here in the closest way moral philosophy or ethics.¹⁰

2.

In the primary and simplest form of community—the clan—vital norms result from the blood bond among members of a given group and are safeguarded by the law of blood vengeance. Here the roots of law are deeply hidden in the ground of natural instinctual attitudes, still very proximate to phenomena of the animal kingdom. A beast which attacks another of its kind in order to devour it defends itself with its teeth, horns, and claws as strength permits and according to a sense of self-preservation. No one will look for moral motives here, just as in the case of the physical self-defense of a man in whom the meager means for attack and defense bestowed by nature are supplemented or substituted by artificial weapons. However, the savage man (and this still does not constitute his distinction from many creatures of a lower nature) does not usually live in a soli-

tary state but belongs to some social group—family, clan, band. Therefore, in his encounter with an enemy the matter does not end with the result of single combat. Murder or another offense incurred by one of the members of the group is felt by the entire aggregate and calls forth a common feeling of vindictiveness. Insofar as there enters here compassion for the one who suffered the offense, the presence of a moral element must be acknowledged; of course, an instinct of collective self-preservation prevails in this reaction to the offense, as among bees or other social animals: in defending *its own*, the family or clan defends itself; in avenging its own, it avenges itself. But the family or clan of the offender defends him according to the same motives also. In this way, individual conflicts turn into war between entire societies.

Thanks to Homeric poetry, which immortalized a ten-year war that arose out of the private offense of one clan leader by another, an eternal monument has been left concerning this stage of social relations. The history of the Arabs up to the time of Mohammed is replete with such wars, as is the antiquity of western nations. “Your great grandfather was killed and avenged, blood was spilled for blood, murder was exchanged for murder, and murder committed anew.” In certain isolated corners of Europe (Chernogoriia, Corsica) such an order ruled, as we know, until very recent times. The concepts of crime and punishment at this stage of community life were not distinguished yet from the general notion of offense and enmity; and punishment, obviously, coincides with vengeance. The offender is the enemy upon whom they take revenge. The job of later criminal justice is entirely taken up here by the generally acknowledged and absolutely obligatory custom of *blood vengeance*. Of course, this concerns offenses among members of different families or clans. But in general they do not even provide for another sort of offense here. The bond of the tight family group which is welded by primitive religion is too strong, and the authority of patriarchal power is too imposing for an individual person to decide to rise against it. This is almost as improbable as the conflict of an individual bee with the whole hive. Of course, even in clan life a man is still not a bee; even here he possesses the capacity for individual self-affirmation and arbitrary will, which was in fact manifested in individual and rare cases. But common measures were not called forth against these extraordinary manifestations; instead, they were suppressed by the extraordinary actions of patriarchal authority. The beginning of the end ensues for clan life and the transition to the State is accomplished when, as a result of a blend of various conditions, individual authority is strengthened and its bearers acquire the possibility of standing on their own and having an influence on others.

An agent of individual heroism is made the center of a new societal classification; due to compelling circumstances or some motives or others, many clans and tribes are permanently gathered around this hero as a common leader with a more or less disciplined authority, while the independence of separate clans and tribes is abolished and customary law is substituted for clan blood vengeance.

3.

The true essence of the State, its internal principles and purposes, represents a very complex and difficult question, and we mustn't be surprised that various philosophical teachings clash over it no less in our era than at the time of the Sophists and Socrates. But it is rather curious that philosophers and lawyers, apart from this more or less metaphysical question of the essence and purpose of political unification, continually built a priori theories of the actual origin of the State, as if all real States arose in some unknown and mysterious eras which have vanished without a trace. But what was—owing to the imperfected state of historical science—still permissible for Hobbes or even for Rousseau has no justification on the part of contemporary thinkers.

Clan life, which in one way or another all nations have endured, is not in itself anything enigmatic: the clan is the direct organization of a definite blood bond. The question, then, concerns the transition from the clan way of life to the State, and this now can be the subject of historical (retrospective) observation, more complete and coherent than, for example, paleontological observations. It is sufficient to recall the transformation, which was completed under the gaze of history, of the uncoordinated clans and tribes of northern Arabia into the mighty and powerful State of Mohammed and the caliphs. The theocratic character of this kingdom is not something unique: to a greater or lesser extent such were also all other important States of olden times. In general, the system of the State in its simplest form begins the following way: a member of a clan who is superior to others in individual strengths and abilities, having outgrown the low level of clan life and become dissatisfied by its strict boundaries, feels his historical calling to give to his fellowmen a broader and more perfected form of practical unity. Meanwhile, needing out of individual circumstances and external events to separate himself from his clan (at first, inwardly and then outwardly as well), he attracts to himself similar people from various clans or generations, and with this *retinue* he forms a certain *interclan* or *intertribal* nucleus. Afterward, whole clans and tribes are gathered around this nucleus either voluntar-

ily or coercively; they receive their laws and government from the newly formed supreme authority and to a greater or lesser degree lose their clan independence. When in some societal group we find a single organized government with a central supreme authority, a permanent army, finances based on assessments and taxes, and finally laws provided with criminal sanction, then we recognize in such a group the authentic character of the State. All these characteristics were visible in the community of Islam by the last years of Mohammed's life.¹¹ It is significant that the history of the original formation of this State is connected in part with the idea of the social contract (although in essence very remote from the ideas of Rousseau): all of Mohammed's major strides in his historical deeds are marked by formal agreements, beginning with the so-called vow of women and ending with the final conditions he concluded at Mecca after his decisive victory over the Qureishites and their allies. We note also that in all these agreements the fundamental point is the abolition of blood vengeance among the clans and tribes entering into the new political agreement.

4.

With the foundation of the State arises a previously nonexistent distinction between public and private law, especially clear in the realm of criminal law. In the blood vengeance law of clan life as well as in other important respects, the individual person and the collective group were in solidarity directly, the more so since in a small community aggregate such as the family or clan, all, or at least most, of the fellow members had to know one another personally, so that, generally speaking, each one represented for all and all for each represented a concrete and important figure. But with the formation of the State, when a community group embraces hundreds of thousands and even millions of people, such an individual relationship between the parts and the whole becomes impossible: a more or less clear distinction appears between common and private interests and between the corresponding spheres of law, while private law (despite our contemporary juridical concepts) is usually also concerned at this stage of development with such matters as murder, robbery, and severe mutilation. In clan life, all similar offenses were considered as directly affecting the common interest, and the entire family avenged itself upon the offender and his relations. With the formation of a wider political agreement, this right of blood vengeance, which had been removed from the family in order to curtail the endless wars springing from it, was not, however, passed on to the State in its previous force and extent. The new common authority, from which administra-

tion, laws, and courts proceed, cannot immediately go into the basic interests of all their numerous subjects to such an extent for the purpose of defending them as its own; the head of the State cannot feel and act as the elder of the clan; and here we see that in defense of private individuals and property, not only matters of mutilation or other cases of force but also of the murder of a free man are resolved by both sides bargaining (*compositio*)—a murderer or his relatives pay the family of the victim a monetary fine (*wergeld*). As we know, all the statutes or codes that are memorials to a just-established State in a given nation are full of an enumerated variety of fines based on sex, status of the individual, and other circumstances.

At this stage of development of statehood, all breaches of corporeal and property inviolability of private persons are properly viewed not as crimes but as personal quarrels, the lawful outcome of which the public authority oversees. Only a direct infringement on the foundations of the social order acquires a criminal character. That is, criminality is determined by those infringements of law which even up to the present time are singled out in a special way under the rubric of political crimes. This distinction is preserved through all history; only its evaluation and the extent of the concept change according to historical conditions. In the Middle Ages, neither the meaning of personal security for an ordinary community nor the public interest in counteracting all murder, and therefore the criminal character of this action as well, were yet fully elucidated for the legal consciousness. The killing of a man seemed to the State a matter much less important than any violation of fiscal interests. At that time, when most murderers ran free, counterfeiting entailed an excruciating death penalty as a crime harmful to the entire society, one which encroached on the privilege of State authority. That is why it was a political crime.

The elementary contrast between public and private law, which was expressed in the prevailing *compositio*, could not be stabilized. A monetary fine for any offense of a particular person does not satisfy the suffering party (for example, the family of the one who was killed) and does not restrain the offender, especially if rich, from further evil. Under such conditions, blood vengeance for personal offenses, which is rescinded by the State as contrary to its essence, is in fact renewed and threatens to take from a State structure the very reason for its existence: when each one must avenge himself for offenses, why should he carry the burden imposed by a State structure? In order to justify its claims on individual persons the State must really defend their interests; in order to abolish the private right of blood vengeance decisively the State must transform it into a pub-

lic right, that is, take upon itself its fulfillment. At this new stage, the solidarity of State authority with individual persons subordinated to it is displayed more fully. Though the distinction is still preserved between political crimes which are aimed directly against the authority itself and ordinary crimes from which only private interests suffer directly, it is only according to the degree of importance and not in essence. Each subject becomes a member of the State itself, taking upon himself in full the task of preserving its security; each violation of it is viewed by the State authority as an infringement of its own right, as a harmful action against the societal whole. Any willful violence against the person and property of anyone whatsoever is now taken not as a private offense but as a violation of State law, and that is why it is subject, on a par with political crimes, to the blood vengeance of the State itself.

5.

Thus, despite all the transformations which are called forth by the formation, consolidation, and broadening of a State regime, the prevailing concepts of crime and punishment essentially remained one and the same from primeval times to the mid-eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century (and in part up to our time as well). Crime was understood as an offense or hostile action which required repayment, the criminal was the enemy, and punishment—was blood vengeance. At first the actual object of the offense, and hence also the avenger, was the clan. Later, after a temporary and unstable transitional period of monetary payments, the State replaced it. The graphic difference was the fact that here in clan life the very act of vengeance was committed simply—at the earliest opportunity the offender or his relative in solidarity with him was usually killed like a dog—but the consequences were very complex in the form of interminable wars among tribes. In the State order it is the other way around; the very act of vengeance that the State takes upon itself becomes unusually complicated, becoming transformed into an entire criminal *process*, including in itself a special series of procedures (preliminary investigation, bill of indictment, inquest, pleading, conference, verdict, execution of the verdict) with review and repetition of some of them (appeals, cassation). But it does not entail any further complex consequences because there is no new and sufficiently powerful avenger for the private person of the criminal who undergoes this slow revenge—he is defenseless before the power of the State.

But, apart from this exterior difference, the interior attitude of human consciousness toward the crime, while remaining in its moral and practical essence

the same, has undergone an important theoretical change. The criminal continues to be understood as an *enemy*—the enemy of the society in question: but earlier, his character was fully and completely defined by the objective aspect of the act committed by him: he did this, it is necessary to destroy him. The question about his own personal attitude to the act that was committed was not raised. Whether the act occurred by chance, in the throes of insanity, or out of feeble-mindedness—this did not matter; the objective fact and the actual external connection to it of the person in question was important. The personal, subjective aspect had so little significance here that it could have not existed at all, the criminal could have not even been a person at all, that is, not a human being: in the Middle Ages criminal processes against animals were still in usage.

Although this purely exterior view, which we will call *uncivilized*, was never absolutely unique in this sphere, it was for a long time undoubtedly the prevailing one. Another, and partly contrasting, point of view was gradually being theoretically worked out with a deepening of consciousness in the framework of that same practical attitude toward the matter. Crime, earlier understood in general as a hostile action or offense, is broken back down into its elements, and the subjective or personal aspect, which earlier remained completely in the shadows, now stands out. Now, crime interests the standard community chiefly as a phenomenon of hostile and illegal, malicious will of the individual in question. The criminal is no longer an indivisible part of a malevolent fact; he is the cause or the *author* of this fact, and punishment is not an actual blood redemption of the one who committed the illegality but retribution for guilt, for the malicious will which is brought to light. This malicious will is recognized here as the single, completely sufficient cause of the crime, presupposing an absolute freedom of choice, a *liberum arbitrium indifferentiae*, and corresponding to this the punishment is also represented by the same formally absolute character of uniform retribution: you killed—you must be killed.¹²

If this “absolute” theory of crime and punishment—which we will call the *barbarian* theory—is examined according to its own claims, *to wit*: as absolute and definitive, it represents one of the most astounding wonders in the plentiful cabinet of curiosities of human errors. It is staggering, in fact, how the absurd situation here (that the malicious will of a given individual person, or empirical subject, is the sufficient cause of every individual crime) rests on a particularly ridiculous presupposition (on the absolute freedom of choice), and later a still more absurd conclusion is made (about punishment as equal retribution). However this theory, which is connected to the aberrations of such great minds as Kant’s and Hegel’s, once ruled almost indivisibly in criminal law

and even today still has several venerable defenders. We must, therefore, dwell on it for awhile.

6.

The criminal law theory of absolute guilt and equal retribution, with all its refinements, grew from the soil of the most infantile notions and is only an alteration of the primeval, uncivilized view. An understanding of the absolute or total guilt of the individual criminal, while it did not stand out in its subjective features, was, however, present in this view. When the barbarians of the Middle Ages tried and punished animals, they obviously considered them to be entirely guilty, ascribing to them a free, malicious will; similarly, now, when an infant bruises himself against a wooden bench, he considers it completely responsible for his bruise and tries to impose upon it equal retribution. And in a certain sense and to a certain extent both the barbarian and the infant are, of course, correct. A cow, having butted a man, doubtless was the cause of this misfortune; she *herself* butted him, and without her and the bad tendency that she suddenly displayed at this moment, the sad event would not have taken place at all—of course this is *her* work. In precisely the same way, the wooden bench is undoubtedly the cause of the bruise; hardness, rigidity, and an unyielding character are the proper qualities of the wood out of which it is made, and if it had not stood there, the bruise would not have occurred. The error of the barbarian and the infant consists only in the fact that they take a *particular* cause, or rather, a part of a cause, for the whole and they want to act upon it in this sense. But don't philosophical defenders of absolute criminal theory share in this error? No matter what the difference in general between the individual human will on the one hand and the tendencies of an animal or the physical forces belonging to a wooden object on the other, there can be no essential difference whatever between them in the respect which we are speaking about. Just as in the case of these forces, the human will is the cause of phenomena conditional upon it and, just like them, it is *not the single*, fully sufficient and absolute cause of the events which are occurring by means of it. The mode of its action represents a special variety of particular, causal relations, but the significance of an exclusive and absolute cause of anything whatsoever is subject as little to observed acts of the human will as is the temporary insanity of an animal or the force of gravity of inanimate bodies. To affirm the contrary means to deny the bond of all that exists and the unity of absolute principle and, in like manner also, the fundamental logical law of sufficient grounds, without which neither rational thought nor the normal course of phenomena are possible. An absolute freedom of will which

selects something without sufficient grounds, even if it is possible, is only possible in the irrational and mystical interior depths of existence, which do not concern the practical and vital exterior surface that the criminal law has to deal with.

According to the notion of indeterminists, who confuse heterogeneous points of view, the will of each individual man is an abyss with unknown substance, out of which completely unpredictable behavior leaps every moment. No matter what this notion is in itself, it is easy to notice that it not only takes away the theory of retribution's foundation, for the sake of which it is created, but completely abolishes the important concept of liability for one's behavior, or guilt, even if relative. From this point of view, who is strictly guilty, who is to be judged? The abyss, that is, the will itself? But for what, when its substance is unknown and infinite? Maybe in one bad surprise leaping out from it, an infinite number of most excellent ones will be found? Or is this unexpected act itself guilty? But, according to this theory, it has no essential connection at all with the will which produced it; this will is as free as it was; this act expressed not the will itself and not something constant in it but only that moment which produced it; it was and is no longer, and there is no one now to judge (see below: "On the Freedom of the Will").¹³

The concept of absolute blame or guilt undoubtedly rests on the testimony of an intrinsic consciousness or conscience, but it possesses an exclusively and purely moral character. To translate it directly into criminal justice means to confuse in an impermissible manner the two realms instead of establishing a normal organic connection between them. Conscience reproaches a man for his moral worthlessness in general and for any manifestation of this worthlessness in particular, but if *this* is the foundation of criminal responsibility, then a man would have to be punished each time he experiences in fact his moral worthlessness—but then all humanity would long since have been excessively punished. And as soon as they make a distinction, they take up a position on the ground of relativity and conditionality; and they divest themselves of every right to turn again to absolute guilt and retribution. The absolute guilt of each and everyone in everything, about which our conscience tells us, is something enigmatic to the mind; and if the connection of this absolute guilt to relative matters and human destiny is subject to any judgment, it is, of course, subject only to an absolute, Divine judgment; and the intervention of human justice in it is both dishonesty and insanity.

Apart from the subjective feature of crime, of the absolute guilt of a criminal, the theory of equal retribution rests also on an objective element in its favor—the violated right. In this regard, of course, abstract arguments will be in their

extreme bankruptcy the subject of amazement and mockery for posterity, similar to how we are amazed by Aristotle's arguments in favor of slavery or of several ecclesiastical writers in favor of the idea of a flat earth. Since these arguments are still reiterated in different variants, then it is also necessary to reiterate their refutation.

7.

"Crime is a violation of right in the person of the victim; right must be restored; punishment as a reciprocal and equal violation of right in the person of the criminal, which is committed on the strength of a statute that is determined by the public authority, covers the first violation, and in this way the disrupted legal state is restored."

The concept of the restoration of a violated right has a clear and just meaning when the matter concerns quantitative legal violations, that is, those which either directly express themselves in a certain volume of material injuries or can be with some precision translated into numerical expressions; for example, if anyone without sufficient grounds directly takes as one's own a sum of money belonging to someone else or chops a certain quantity of trees in someone else's forest or publishes and sells a certain quantity of copies of works belonging to another person or by nonperformance of some obligations disrupts someone else's business entrusted to him, and so forth. In all these cases, a penalty of a corresponding monetary sum transferred from one to another is an indisputable restoration (*restitutio*) of the violated right. But the transfer of this concept from the realm of property rights violations into the realm of malicious criminal deeds leads to a game of words, which could be called idle childishness if it were not meanwhile also a game played with human heads.

A true right is always *anyone's* and *everyone's*—it must be the theme of law. Whose rights are we talking about in violations and criminal restitutions? First, it would seem we are talking about the victim's rights. Let us put this real substance in abstract terms. The peaceful shepherd Abel has the right to exist and enjoy all the joys of life; but Cain comes along, a man of evil will, and to all intents and purposes deprives him of this right by murdering him. It is required that the violated right be restored; for this purpose public authority arises, and despite the direct warning of Holy Scripture (Genesis 4:15), it hangs the murderer. Is Abel's right to life restored after this or not? Because there had never yet been a case in which the execution of a murderer resulted in the resurrection of the dead man, under "right" is understood here not the right of the dead man, but someone else's. Another topic of right being violated by crime is perhaps so-

ciety itself, which is organized into the State. All individual rights are guaranteed by the State; it vouches for their inviolability, placing them under the protection of its laws. The statute which prohibits private individuals' killing their neighbors at their own discretion is lawfully created by the State, and hence the right of the State is violated in the disruption of it in a murder; this right is also restored in the punishment of the murderer. This correct reasoning is reduced to the formal definition of crime already adopted by us, as a particular infringement of a publicly instituted legal norm in its practical objective reality—and of punishment as a natural reaction of the societal whole to this particular infringement. But only the punishability of crimes in general is maintained by this; the question of the mode of the natural response or of the kind of actual punishments remains completely open.

Without any doubt, once a certain standard procedure is recognized as essential and is expressed in substantive laws, their violation should not be without consequences, and the responsibility of watching over this appertains to the State. But all crimes are alike in this respect, that is, as violations of law. If law in itself is sacred, as that which proceeds from the State, then *all* laws have this attribute to an identical degree, all equally express the right of the State, and all their violations without distinction are violations of this supreme right. Material distinctions of crimes are concerned only with those particular interests which are violated by them; from the formal aspect, with regard to that which is *common*, that is to the State, per se—to its authority and laws—each crime (of course, of sound mind) presupposes a will which does not conform with the law but which negates it; that is, a criminal will which calls forth the natural response of a lawful State with identical necessity. Therefore, if we digress from the heart of the matter and rest here on this one formal principle of the identically negative relation of each crime to the law, or of the identical illegality of each crime, it would be necessary to require an identical punishment for all crimes. Although such absurdity has not frightened some devotees of abstract thought, neither juridical practice nor science has adopted this logic by which one ought to heal all diseases with one medication on the grounds that all illnesses alike are disease and not health.

To avoid such absurdity it is necessary then to accept, apart from the formally identical principle of punishability in general, some other specific basis of actual punishment defining a special connection between *this* crime and *that* punishment. The theory of retribution perceives such a connection in that the right which is violated by a certain criminal act is reinstated by a corresponding or

equal act, for example, a killer should be killed. It already has been pointed out that a *true* reinstatement does not occur, at that, and is not subject to debate. But is there in fact any kind of correspondence or equality here at all? The issue is represented by the most famous supporters of this doctrine essentially as follows: law is something positive, let us say + (plus), the violation of it is something negative – (minus); if a negation in the form of a crime has occurred (for example, a man's life taken from him), then it should prompt another negation in the form of punishment (the killer's life taken from him), and then such a double negation, or the negation-of-a-negation, will produce a positive situation again as the reinstatement of right—*a minus times a minus yields a plus*. Let us make a conscientious effort to treat such intellectual play seriously: note that the concept *negation-of-a-negation* logically expresses a direct intrinsic relation between two opposing acts; for example, if the impulse of malicious volition in a man is “negative,” namely, the negation of a moral norm, then a contrasting act of the will which overpowers this impulse will actually be a “negation-of-a-negation,” and a positive result will be obtained—the establishment of this man in a normal moral state; similarly, if a crime as the realization of evil volition is a negation, then the repentance of the criminal, which is realized or justified in fact, would be a negation-of-a-negation (that is, not of the outward fact, of course, but of the most proximate intrinsic cause in the practical objective reality which produced it), and the result again would be positive—the moral rebirth of a fallen man. But where is the actual productive connection of one negation with another in the capital punishment of a criminal? Here the second negation is directed not at the first but at something extraneous and—as in the crime itself—at something positive besides: at the life of a man. In the capital punishment of a criminal the strict subject of the actual, exercised negation cannot be his crime, for it is an irrevocably accomplished fact, and according to the observation of the holy fathers, it is not even possible for God Himself to make it so that what has happened did not take place; but also that which is negated and exercised here is not even the malicious volition of the criminal, because it's either one or the other: either he repented in his crime, and then there is no longer malicious volition, or he is unyielding to the end, and then his will is not accessible to the given influence and, in any event, external coercion cannot change the internal condition of the will. And thus, if only the positive good of life is really negated in the capital punishment of a criminal, and not his crime and his malicious volition, then this is only a new straightforward negation, and not a “double” negation or the “negation-of-a-negation.”

But nothing positive can come out of a single external sequence of two negations. The abuse of an algebraic formula imparts to the entire argument an excessively comic character. You see, in order that two minuses, that is two negative quantities, produce a plus, it is not enough to place them one after the other, rather, it is necessary to *multiply* them; but what does it mean *to multiply crime by punishment*? Obviously, it is not possible here to go further than the *addition* of substantive results: it is possible to add the corpse of a dead man to the corpse of a hanged murderer, and this yields two lifeless bodies, that is, two negative quantities—two minuses.

8.

The intrinsic, nonsensical nature of the doctrine of retribution or “vengeful justice” is brilliantly highlighted by the fact that besides only a few apparent cases, it has no relation at all to existing criminal laws; that is, it cannot be applied in reality. If juridical practice conformed with this doctrine, then a thief’s punishment would have to be that he be robbed. Although this may in general be possible, it is always unworthy and sometimes also impracticable—to wit: in those frequent cases when theft is committed by an individual in need. But in other crimes it is not even possible to devise a method of equal retribution. By what equal action is it possible to get even with a counterfeiter, a false witness, a seducer of minors, a bigamist, or a person who moves land markers after a survey? In contemporary legislation, the single and only apparent case—and gradually disappearing, at that—of equal recompense is capital punishment for murder. Therefore, pseudophilosophical arguments in favor of this doctrine, the essence of which is transmitted above—relate precisely only to this single case—a poor omen for a principle which has claims to universal significance. Here in Russia, where capital punishment, as a rule, is reserved only for some political crimes, there is not even this single case of apparent correspondence; what kind of appearance of equal recompense, even if only outward, is it possible to find between patricide and an indefinite term of hard labor, or between common murder with a mercenary aim and a twelve-year hard labor sentence in exile?

Serving as a graphic refutation of the doctrine is the circumstance that we can find the greatest approximation to its realization (in several cases) in the justice of semicivilized societies, or in the laws of barbarian times, in which for a certain injury the guilty party was subject precisely to the same injury, and where for impertinent speech the tongue was cut out, and so on. The doctrine, the application of which turns out to be incompatible with a certain degree of culture, is certainly a doctrine which is irrevocably condemned.

In modern times, the principle of restoration of a violated right by means of equal recompense was defended in its pure form more by abstract philosophers than jurists. The latter in general adopt the equation of the punishment with the crime only in the relatively quantitative sense (*the measure* of punishment); that is, they require that a crime more serious compared to another be subject also to a more serious punishment, so that there exists a scale (*scala*) of punishments corresponding to the scale of crimes. But meanwhile the base, or the bottom end, and thus the top of the punitive scale as well, remains indeterminate from the point of view of this single requirement and, thus, the nature of the punishments themselves also can be whatever one likes—inhumanly horrible or, on the contrary, extremely mild. So the scale of penalties existed also in legislation, in which for all, or almost all, simple crimes only monetary fines were assessed; and for more serious injury a large fine was paid; for murder of a man more than for the murder of a woman, and so forth. On the other hand, wherever they already hanged a man for theft, a qualified capital punishment was determined for more serious crimes, that is, combined with various degrees of torture.

In this practical principle of criminal justice (the measurement or gradation of punishments) only the common requirement that the punitive response conform to the diversity of crimes is expressed; but the question of the essential grounds of such conformity remains here unresolved.

9.

As we have seen, the criminal law doctrine of retribution is completely devoid of both logical and moral meaning; it is only a remnant of an uncivilized state. And so long as the intentional cause of physical suffering or hardship in criminal punishments still used today is presented as the goal of a lawful response to crime, these punishments are but the historical transformation of the primitive principle of blood vengeance. Formerly, the tight social unit called the clan avenged the offended party; later, a wider and more complex unit called the State began to take vengeance. Formerly, the offender lost all human rights in the eyes of the clan offended by him; now he becomes a subject of punishment without rights before the person of the State, which takes vengeance upon him for the violation of its laws.

But what results from the indisputable fact that criminal justice is a variation of blood vengeance? Should the concept of vengeance, that is, retribution of evil for evil, suffering for suffering, ultimately determine our attitude to the criminal and the character of the lawful reaction of the State to the crime on the strength of this historical foundation? Logic does not generally permit us to draw

such conclusions from a genetic connection between two phenomena. As far as I know, not a single Darwinist has drawn the conclusion from the idea that is entertained by them of the origin of man from animals that people must be cattle. No historian has yet concluded from the fact that the civic community of Rome was a primitively cultured band of brigands that robbery should have remained the principle of the Holy Roman Empire. Regarding our subject, once the issue is the *transformation* of blood vengeance, then are there any means by which we can consider this transformation *complete*? When, at what moment precisely, was it completed? We know that the attitude of society and the law toward criminals has gone through very acute changes; merciless clan vengeance was substituted by monetary fines, and they gave way to “public punishments,” at first extremely brutal but gradually relenting since the last century. There is not even a shadow of a rational basis to think that the limits of mollification have already been achieved and that the gallows, the guillotine, life sentences of hard labor, and long-term solitary confinement must remain in the criminal legislation of progressive nations for centuries more.

Criminal justice *proceeds from* blood vengeance, but precisely because of this it is *moving away* from it gradually. “Absolute” theories of retribution are a desperate attempt to undergird with abstract arguments that which is collapsing in the living consciousness. The only-too-apparent worthlessness of these a priori arguments about “restoration” of right by means of killing and torture compels advocates with a conservative bias in criminal law to search for an empirical basis in the motif of *deterrence*. This principle, theoretically worked out with the utmost fullness and care by the famous criminalist Anselm Feuerbach (at the beginning of the nineteenth century), was always essentially associated with the principle of retribution as a reinforcing motif.¹⁴ The well-known sayings popularly expressing the idea of retribution: “Even torture serves a thief right” or “For a dog, a dog’s life and death”—usually were and are accompanied by the addendum: “in order to teach others not to do so.” It cannot be said even that this principle has stood firmly on utilitarian-empirical ground. Without a doubt, fear is one of the most important motives of action and restraint for animals and for man on the lower rungs of the development of his nature. However, the motive of predominant significance here does not even have at least the fear of death, as more and more numerous suicides on the part of ordinary people demonstrate, who not at all bring to mind Cato the Younger or Queen Cleopatra. Protracted solitary confinement or hard labor can be *in re* harder than death for the very person subjected to them, but they do not have a visi-

ble deterrent impact on the objective conception of a crude mind. I will not dwell on these and other generally known objections against the theory of deterrence, such as, for example, pointing to the ever-dwelling hope in the criminal to escape judgment or to evade punishment. The following consideration has more decisive significance. All crimes in general can be divided into those committed in passion and those carried out professionally. Concerning the very existence of the second category, the fact itself of crimes committed as a continuous occupation or profession clearly attests to the lack of reality in deterrence as a punitive motif. Concerning the first category of crimes, the essential feature of strong passion consists precisely in the fact that it drowns out the voice of reason and suppresses the very basis of all worldly prudence—the instinct of self-preservation.

Unsupportable in a practical sense, the theory of deterrence is ultimately refuted on moral grounds: first, in principle—by its direct contradiction to basic moral principle; and second, in practice—by the circumstance that it is precisely this contradiction that forces advocates of deterrence to be inconsistent and to reject gradually, more and more, the most straightforward and clear requirements of theory *on the strength of moral considerations*. Before corroborating these two positions, I should offer the proviso that here deterrence is in the sense of a basic determining principle of criminal justice and not in the sense of only a psychological circumstance, which naturally can accompany *any* method of counteracting crime. So, even if only a reform of criminals by way of educational suggestions was intended, then the prospect of such tutelage, although most gentle and rational, could have a deterrent effect upon willful and proud people and restrain them from crimes. But this does not say anything in favor of a theory which sees in deterrence not an oblique *possible* consequence, but the very essence and directly indispensable task of lawful reaction against crime.

10.

Moral principle, which is essentially recognized by all normal people (although on different grounds and with different degrees of precision), affirms that human dignity must be respected in each person, and that, therefore, it is not possible to make anyone whomsoever *only a means or an instrument* for anyone's use. But in the theory of deterrence, the punished criminal is ultimately considered to all intents and purposes as only a means of instilling fear in others for the sake of the preservation of public security. In fact, if the criminal's own good also entered into the purpose of criminal law—keeping him from committing

a crime by the fear of threat of punishment—then once it is already committed, this motive falls away on its own. And from this point of view, the criminal who is punished is left only as a means for the deterrence of others, that is, for a purpose extraneous to himself, which now directly contradicts an absolute moral requirement. From this aspect, deterrent punishment would be permissible only as a threat; but a threat never acted upon loses all meaning. Thus the principle of deterrent punishment could be morally permissible only under condition of its uselessness, and it can be materially useful only under condition of its immoral application.

In fact, the cutting edge of the theory of deterrence has been completely blunted. The theory should be considered as having laid down its arms from the time that physical torture punishments and qualified death sentences were abolished in all civilized and semicivilized countries. It is clear that if the task of punishment consists in the instilling of fear and horror in individuals who are liable to commit crimes, then the brutal means themselves would also be valid and expedient. Why do the advocates of deterrence reject what from their point of view should be recognized as the very best thing? It must be assumed that it is because these measures, superlative as regards deterrence, are, however, recognized as impermissible, as immoral and contrary to the requirements of compassion and love of fellowmen. But in such an event, deterrence now stops being the determining or decisive principle of punishment. It's one of two things: either the chief meaning of punishment is in deterrence, and then agonizing punishments must be allowed as measures which most correspond to this meaning, as being those which chiefly produce fear; or the character of punishment, above and beyond practical utility, should conform with moral principle, which decides what is permitted and what is not permitted, and then it is necessary to reject the principle of deterrence itself completely as an essentially immoral motive, or impermissible from a moral point of view.

In the past century, at the height of the movement against the cruelty of criminal law, several writers strove to show that torture of criminals is not only inhuman but even useless in the sense of deterrence because it does not restrain anyone from committing crimes. If proven, this opinion, above and beyond its direct aim, would take away all meaning from the theory of deterrence altogether. In fact, it is clear that if even agonizing punishments are insufficient for the purpose of deterrence, then milder punishments can only have less of an effect. Even if this opinion were incorrect, however, even if the inhuman torture of criminals were useful for instilling terror, then it would still be useless for the theory of deterrence ever since it had renounced these means. In any event, this

theory, which intends to *frighten* people with all measures *apart from frightening ones*—has refuted itself.

IV. ON THE DEATH PENALTY

1.

The institution of the death penalty is the last important position which *barbaric* criminal law (the direct transformation of *uncivilized* custom) still tries to vindicate in contemporary life. The matter can be considered closed. The densely numbered crowd of its defenders is gradually thinning more and more; the ancient half-rotten idol has gathered around itself what is left of them. But the idol is barely supported by two makeshift clay legs: on the theory of retribution and on the theory of deterrence.

In an interesting table of comparative statistics, which Prof. N. S. Tagantsev cites from Hetzel's book, the quick progress of science relative to this question is graphically presented.*¹⁵ Hetzel, whose works on this subject are distinguished by their bibliographic richness, takes all the (western) literature known to him on the death penalty for another century after the appearance of Beccaria's famous book (*Dei delitti e delle pene* [sic]).¹⁶ It seems that in the second half of the eighteenth century the number of defenders of the death penalty was still significant and was somewhat greater than the number of its opponents (the former—61, the latter—45), but then from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the reverse relationship was established. It is expressed in the following figures for the first half of the century: for 79 defenders there are now 128 opponents, and later in Hetzel's era (1848–69) the number of opponents (158) is more than *three times* the number of defenders (48); and it must be noted that Hetzel, with German *Billigkeit*, also ascribes to this latter number those criminalists who, denying in principle the death penalty, allow only its preservation in practice as a temporary measure. If we did not stop here in the year 1869, the result would be even more dazzling. Thus here in Russia after the death of Barshev and Lokhvitsky, not one criminalist with any scientific reputation is left who would defend the death penalty.¹⁷

Progress in legislative and forensic juridical practice corresponds to progress in the science, or in the theoretical sense, of justice. First, the volume itself of applications of the death penalty according to law, or the number of those types and forms of crimes for which this punishment is assessed, is declining. For ex-

* "Lectures on Russian Criminal Law," p. 1424 (Issue 4 St. Pbg, 1892).

ample, at the end of the eighteenth century (before the revolution) in France, the number of those criminal categories was still 115 (among that number—smuggling, protestant faith, incest, the printing and sale of proscribed books), but then according to the *code penal* of 1810 it had decreased to 38, and later still significantly decreased according to the laws of 1832 and 1848. In Germany and Austria, according to the code of Karl V, which was operative also in the eighteenth century, 44 kinds of criminal acts were subject to the death penalty (among them: libel, damaging landmark boundaries, bigamy, theft of fruits and fish); but at present the death penalty is preserved only in two cases: in premeditated murder (*Mord*) and in an attempt on the Emperor's life. According to English statutes that were still operative at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the number of all types and forms of violations of law, variously subdivided according to causes, is expressed by an enormous figure: 6,789. This seems a little less amazing when we discover that according to these laws, among other things, the felling of trees, injury to someone else's cattle, a theft higher than one shilling in some aggravated circumstances, the simple theft of five shillings, the theft of letters, fraudulent bankruptcy, threatening letters, tinting silver money with gold, or copper with silver, and so forth, were all subject to the death penalty.

Beginning with the first years of the nineteenth century in England there is an actual, and later also legislative, restriction of this criminal excessiveness; the matter went particularly quickly in the first half of Queen Victoria's reign, and after a radical review of statutes in 1861, only 2 of 6,789 cases are left: treason and murder. Since that time, a proposal for a complete repeal of the death penalty was eventually introduced into Parliament, and its adoption, which has already had a majority in one parliamentary commission, is only a matter of time. The death penalty has been completely abolished by way of legislation in: Rumania since 1864, Portugal since 1867, Holland since 1870, and Italy since 1890. In Switzerland it was abolished in the constitution in 1874, then was legislatively restored five years later in eight of twenty-five cantons; but even here it remains almost without application in practice. In Russia the legislative movement against the death penalty began earlier than in other States but did not take a direct route to its full abolition as in the aforementioned countries. Although this punishment was not assessed *de jure* for crimes against the common law from the very beginning of the reign of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna, it was in fact preserved for more than a hundred years. Besides, it was also qualified in the form of those extraordinary physical punishments, which had as their unavoidable consequences—and sometimes also as a preexecution purpose—the agonizing

death of the criminal. After the abolition of this type of torture in the regime of Emperor Aleksandr II, the death penalty vanished from our general system of justice both in fact and in law and remained a punitive measure only for cases of a special, exceptional order.¹⁸ Exceptionalism here is understood both in a criminal sense (political crimes) and in a procedural sense (conviction by military tribunals), whose special jurisdiction can have as its basis either the military rank of the convict in connection with the special requirements of military discipline, or a military situation of a given place at a given time, or last, the monstrous and especially dangerous nature of a given crime. While the first basis is in its own way general, the second is particular, and the third is singular, determined anew for each individual case.

Second, apart from the gradually greater and greater legislative restriction of the death penalty, progress in this matter can be observed even more directly in the extraordinary decline in general of the number of death sentences, and in particular of sentences which were carried out. In past centuries, despite comparatively small populations, the quantity of those punished by death annually in each of the European countries was counted in the thousands. Thus, in England for the last fourteen years of the reign of Henry VIII, nearly 72,000 people were executed; hence, the average was more than 5,000 per year. For the entire reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603) more than 89,000 were executed, that is, nearly 2,000 per year. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, in spite of the national population having increased significantly, the thousands executed per year are replaced by hundreds and tens: for the twenty-year period (1806–25) 1,614, hence 80 per year were put to death (in 1813 there were 120 executed, and in 1817, 115), and in the reign of Victoria the yearly figures of executions vacillate between 10 and 38. In France in the third decade of the nineteenth century the average number of those put to death per year was still 72, but in the 1830s only 30, in the 1840s—34, in the 1850s—28, in the 1860s—11, in the 1870s also 11, in the 1880s—only 5. In Austria the average annual number in the 1860s—7, and in the 1870s—only 2.

“And therefore,” concludes Prof. Tagantsev correctly, in a discussion of this subject in his lectures, “it is not necessary to be a prophet in order to say that the time is not far off when the death penalty will disappear from criminal codes, and for our descendents the argument itself about its expediency will seem as strange as the question of the necessity and justice of breaking someone on the wheel, or burning criminals now appears for us” (p. 1450).

But until that hoped for and proximate future arrives, until this remnant of barbarism vanishes completely from the legislation and the juridical practices of

the majority of European countries, the public consciousness must not be left without continuous reminders of this disgrace which drags on; and even if a new attempt at its moral-juridical illumination were the thousand-and-first, or the thousand-and-second, it cannot be considered superfluous.*¹⁹

2.

Regarding the view of criminal punishment (in Chapter 3) as recompense of evil for evil, we turned our attention only to the two extremes of this opinion—to the *terminus a quo*: the primitive, crude custom of blood vengeance which is connected with the clan way of life, and to the *terminus ad quem*: the scholastically abstract “absolute” theory of equal retribution.²⁰ But there is yet a third element in the development of criminal law, which having long since lost direct practical significance in this realm, is not however devoid of a latent influence on minds of a conservative bent, and precisely regarding the question of the death penalty.

It is beyond any doubt that the separation of politico-juridical institutions and norms from religious norms and institutions is a relatively recent fact; but originally these two spheres were merged with one another, which gave birth to totally unexpected phenomena and concepts in our estimation. A modern man who knows Latin, but is unfamiliar with antiquity, may read in a law of the XII Tables a designation of some crime, for example, the nocturnal theft of fruit; appended to it might be the following short formula of punishment: *sacer esto*. Even if he does not translate this as “*and he will be sacred*” (recalling perhaps *auri sacra fames*, and the French *sacre nom d'un chien*), under the influence of modern concepts, however, it will not be immediately surmised that this prop-

* As a nonspecialist, I was able to limit myself to the following works from the specialist literature on the question, which our criminalist calls “almost boundless”: Guizot, *De la peine de mort*, 2d ed. 1838; Mittermaier, *Die Todesstrafe*, 1862; Berner, *Abschaffung der Todesstrafe*, 2d ed. 1863; Kistiakovsky, *Issledovanie o smertnoi kazni*, 2d (posthumous) ed. 1896. To these monographs I should add a full list of sources on the question in the cited 4th edition of N.S. Tagantsev’s lectures (pp. 1234–53, and 1422–50). The factual data were taken by me mainly from Kistiakovsky and Tagantsev. With regard to my absolutely negative view on the death penalty, it preceded my familiarity with the literature on the subject. Once while still in adolescence I expressed my revulsion to the coldblooded murder of an unarmed man, and I heard from my father the following inspiring definition: “The death penalty is a loathsome thing, it is a betrayal of Christianity”! Since that time, the denial of this “loathsome thing” became in me a steadfast idea, which required later only a precise logical expression and factual corroboration.

erly means: *and he is to be sacrificed*, or is subject to be killed.²¹ In any event, such homonymy will appear very strange to him. Meanwhile, there was no homonymy, that is, the use of one word for various concepts, here at all. Here, one concept corresponded to one word, since in this era, when the matter concerned living creatures, under *sanctification* nothing else other than predetermined destruction was even conceived of.* In general, to sanctify meant: *to separate* some homogeneous objects out of an aggregate (people, animals, fruits, and so on) in order to devote them to the deity. The original, fundamental method of this devotion consisted in the bringing of sacrifices, that is, in the ceremonial destruction of selected objects, which was then their final sanctification. The grounds on which precisely these, and not other, objects were subject to sanctification, or destruction, were many; the main ones were of a dual sort: natural, such as *primogeniture* (*firstborn* of people and cattle were brought for sacrifice, *seeds* of fruits, and so forth) and social, by virtue of which foreigners (which was especially flattering to the national deity), prisoners of war, and criminals were brought for sacrifice. Since the norms of community were connected to divine reverence in the closest way as direct expressions of the higher will, then each violation of these norms was understood as an insult to the deity, to whom the violator gave up his head: *sacer esto!*²²

In the realm of biblical ideas, a mystical bond shines through between the two grounds for “sanctification”: primogeniture and crime, insofar as the firstborn of the human species, Adam, and his firstborn, Cain, were both also the first criminals—one directly against God, the second—against man.[†] Without regard to the theological aspect of the question, we note, however, that precisely the Bible, examined in its entirety, raises human consciousness high above the dark and bloody soil of savage religion and religious savagery, which pagan nations broke loose from only partially in their higher classes, thanks to the development of Greek philosophy and Roman jurisprudence.

Three major moments relative to our question are marked in the Bible:

(1) *The proclamation of a norm* after the first murder: a criminal, even a fratricide, is not subject to human execution: “And the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one would kill him.”

(2) *Adaptation of the norm* to the “hard-heartedness of people” after the Flood,

* In Serbian, even now *osvetiti* [Slavic root = ‘sanctify,’ ‘enlighten’] means *to murder*.

† The descendents of Cain, who were destroyed by the Flood, represented a third type of crime—that against nature, which was repeated afterward on a small scale in Sodom and Gomorrah.

which was called forth by extreme displays of evil in human nature: “He who spills the blood of a man—a man will spill his blood.” This accommodating statute is developed at great length and made more complex in the Mosaic law.

(3) *A return to the norm* in the prophets and in the Gospels: “Vengeance is mine, says the Lord; I will repay.” With what will he repay? “Mercy I desire, and not sacrifice.” “I came to recover and save the lost.”²³

The Bible is a complex spiritual organism which developed over a thousand years. It is completely free of external monotony and unilinearity but amazing in its internal unity and in the harmony of the whole. To snatch out arbitrarily from this whole only intermediate parts without a beginning and an end is an insincere and frivolous business; and to rely on the *Bible in general* in favor of the death penalty—attempts either to a hopeless incomprehension or a boundless insolence. Those who, like Joseph de Maistre, draw together the concept of the death penalty with the concept of a sin offering, forget that a sin offering has already been brought for all by Christ, that it has abolished all other blood sacrifices, and itself continues only in the bloodless Eucharist—an amazing lapse in consciousness on the part of persons who confess the Christian faith.²⁴ Indeed, to permit any kind of sin offerings still—means to deny that which was accomplished by Christ, which means—to betray Christianity.

3.

The cracking clay of “absolute” metaphysical criminalistics, which requires the preservation of the death penalty as a necessary payback for crime, cannot be repaired with useless, falsely religious putty. Let us see whether the other clay leg of this vile idol—the utilitarian view, which finds the death penalty the most expedient measure of public defense against the most consequential criminals—is stronger.

Only a very few criminalists who hold the point of view of utility understand the utility of the death penalty in a direct sense—as the simplest and cheapest method to rid oneself of a criminal. The majority of writers *are ashamed* of this simplicity. And if one holds the point of view of utility and utility alone, then what can be juxtaposed to the consideration of the reliability and low price of hanging as compared with prison? And isn’t it also clear that if these means are suitable relative to ten or twenty criminals, then they are all the more suitable relative to ten thousand, and that for society it is more suitable than anything to hang all criminals and all people who are a burden to it. And if they are ashamed of such a conclusion, then this means they are ashamed also of the principle from

which this conclusion results with logical necessity. But what value can a theory have if its advocates must recognize as shameful its intrinsic principle?

Since the time of Anselm Feuerbach, almost all criminalists of a utilitarian inclination have recognized the utility of the death penalty only in an indirect sense—from the aspect of its deterrent effect. But it is precisely with regard to the death penalty that this view allows *empirical verification*. While (as we acknowledged in the previous chapter) the question of the expediency of deterrent punishments in general remains disputed on an *empirical basis*, it is not possible to say the same of the death penalty in particular: owing to the simplicity and certainty of the data here, the question can receive an inarguable empirical answer.

If the defenders of the death penalty, in the sense of necessary deterrence which restrains one from committing crime, were seriously and consistently convinced of their thesis and acknowledged its full force, then they should have thought of the following reduction of their view to the absurd. The produced deterrence by the death penalty is the *necessary* means for restraining crime; thus according to the degree of nonutilization of this necessary means, the number of crimes should correspondingly increase; it is certain that independently of this it grows by natural increase (and with the increasing density) of the population. Let us hold this up to the facts. Under Henry VIII in England 5,000 criminals were put to death annually; since then the population has increased by a factor of twelve; thus if the “necessary” means of deterrence continued to be applied, then it would now be necessary to execute 60,000 criminals annually; instead of that, the average number of executions is now 15, that is, 4,000 times less than it should be; such a reduction of the “necessary” degree of deterrence should correspondingly affect the increase of the number of crimes. And if as many as were executed for the reign of Henry VIII were counted (in order to be generous), that is, 5,000 per year, then now not fewer than 20 million of these crimes for which the punishment is no longer death should be committed annually. That is, not only all English adults should turn out to be professional criminals one and all, but very likely also a certain number of breast-feeding infants of both sexes would have to be robbing their wet nurses or felling trees in someone else’s forests for the justification of the theory.

The adherents of deterrence have only one argument, essentially a renunciation of their principle, against such an absurd conclusion of their theory. They can say that the abundance of executions is only a conditional necessity and a question of time: in Henry VIII’s reign, 5,000 executions per year were neces-

sary owing to the crudeness and savagery of morals and the instability of society, but now even 15 is enough for the deterrence of the most dangerous criminal aspirations. But if crime has weakened to such a degree thanks to societal progress or a favorable change in standards of living, then it is now necessary on this positive foundation to struggle with crime to the end, having left once and for all execution as useless cruelty.

Isn't it in fact scandalous nonsense to maintain that yesterday the tendency toward thievery was so strong in society that thieves could be frightened only by the gallows, and today this tendency has weakened suddenly for some reason, and now even prison turns out to be frightening enough for them, but the gallows should remain only for murderers, who for some reason do not fear prison?

Empirical verification of the supposed deterrent force of the death penalty can be made directly without any comparison of remote eras with each other. In comparing the 1830s to the 1820s, there was no substantial difference in the social and cultural conditions of life, and therefore if the death penalty were to have an influence on the phenomenon of crime at all, then at this time the quick decline of death penalties (from 115 per year to 15, and even 10) which followed as a consequence of the change of the old statutes should have told of a significant increase of crime for which there was no longer threat of death. However, no increase whatever, much less a significant increase, of the number of crimes in England occurred; on the contrary, a certain decrease was displayed.* In Tuscany, where the death penalty had been completely abolished in the eighteenth century (at first, in practice, later also in law) no increase of crime appeared, and its uselessness was so apparent that all later attempts at its restoration (for political considerations) were unsuccessful: public opinion did not allow the carrying out of death sentences. In Austria, it is recognized in the imperial decree itself (1803) by which the death penalty, which had been repealed earlier by Joseph II, was restored, that during the period of its abolition the number of crimes did not increase. And in all other cases of repeal, ending with the most recent ones which have occurred right before our eyes, the result is absolutely one and the same: a noticeable increase in the number of crimes, as should follow from the theory of deterrence, in reality does not occur. It is impossible to imagine a more dazzling empirical refutation of this theory, the final blow of which was dealt in our era by the elimination of the carrying out of the death penalty in public. It is clear that an execution which is committed secretly and shamefully is not meant for deterrence. The fact of this secretiveness is rather eloquent, but still

* *Archiv des Criminalrechts*, 1840, 1841; Kistiakovsky, 40.

more eloquent is its basis: it was ascertained that public executions produced a demoralizing effect on the crowd and were accompanied by a rise of crime in a given place.

Now compare this timid, blushing, and for the victim as comfortable as possible legal murder by stealth at early dusk at the walls of a prison with all the grandiosity of times past: for entire days, on crowded squares at the ringing of a bell hundreds of people were ceremonially disemboweled or skinned alive, burned slowly in a fire, or torn apart at the joints, had lead poured down their throats, or were cooked in boiling water, or hot oil and wine! We have had to reject all of this, and if hell itself has not held its ground before the awakened conscience, then will its pale, quivering shadow?

4.

“No one,” says a noted scholar who is an expert on this question, “even among the most fiery advocates of the death penalty, could in the defense of its necessity muster even the smallest fact, which would demonstrate that its repeal in the aforementioned States (in Tuscany and others) involved an increase in crime; that it made the social order, life and property of citizens less secure. The aforementioned repeal naturally brought the study of the death penalty down from the clouds of theory to the soil of healthy and honest experience” (Kistiakovsky, p. 11). Thanks to this experience, the personal opinion of individual leading minds *about the uselessness* of the death penalty for the defense of society has now become a positive, experimentally demonstrated truth, and only either ignorance, unscrupulousness, or prejudice can argue against this truth.

But while the death penalty is materially useless for society, it is also spiritually harmful as an immoral action of society itself.

It is a profane, inhumane, and shameful act.

First, the death penalty is profane because in its absoluteness and finality it is an adaptation by human justice of an absolute character, which can belong only to the judgment of God as an expression of divine *omniscience*. After the deliberately and carefully considered expunging of this man from the ranks of the living, society announces: *I know* that this man is absolutely guilty in what took place, that he is absolutely worthless at present, and that he is absolutely irreformable in the future. In fact, nothing fully trustworthy is known to society and its adjudicating organs not only about the future irreformability of this man but also of his past guilt, even regarding the fact itself. Since this has been sufficiently demonstrated by the many judicial errors which have come to light, isn't this a glaringly profane infringement on eternal boundaries and a blind folly

of human pride, which puts its relative knowledge and conditional justice in place of omniscient Divine truth? Either the death penalty makes absolutely no sense, or it makes profane sense.

Second, the death penalty is *inhumane*—not from the aspect of sensitivity, but from the aspect of moral principle. The question is completely one of principle: *should* there be any boundary recognized in the human individual regarding external action upon it, something inviolable and not subject to annulment from without? The horror which murder instills sufficiently demonstrates that *there is* such a boundary and that it is connected with the life of man. It is not the fact itself of physical existence that is important, rather, that now in the narrow framework of this fact for us the infinite destiny of a man is placed and is also made conditional upon it. Murder is scandalous not by the destruction of visible reality, which is always limited and for the most part unimportant, but by the limitless possibilities which it unknowingly destroys. This is a crime chiefly because the last boundary is crossed here between two essences, and the uttermost foundation of all relationships is overthrown—that which is a necessary condition for all the rest. But here a frightening thing has occurred, a man has transformed another into a soulless thing. Let us assume that it was not possible to prevent this, let us assume that society is not yet at fault. It becomes exasperated and indignant, and this is good: it would be very sad if it remained indifferent. But how does it express its feeling, rightly being horrified in the presence of murder?—by a new murder. By what logic is the repetition of an evil—good? Is murder scandalous because a good man has been killed? He was, perhaps, a villain. But the very act of will which oversteps the moral boundary is disgraceful; scandalous is a man who says to another, “You are as nothing for me, I do not acknowledge in you any significance, any right, even a right to existence” and who proves this in fact. But society acts in precisely the same way relative to a criminal, and moreover without any mitigating circumstances, without passion, without wanton instincts, without spiritual derangement. The fanatical mob, which under the influence of inexplicable indignation, kills the criminal at once, is guilty but deserving of mercy; but society, which does this slowly, cold-bloodedly, calculatingly, has no excuse.

The special evil and horror of murder consist, of course, not in the actual taking of life but in the intrinsic renunciation of a basic moral norm, to sever decisively by one’s own resolution and action the connection of common human solidarity regarding the actual fellow creature standing before me, who is the same as I am, a bearer of the image and likeness of God. But this *resolution to put an end* to a man more clearly and completely than in simple murder is ex-

pressed in the death penalty, where there is absolutely nothing apart from this resolution and carrying it out. Society only has left an *animus interficiendi* in absolutely pure form with respect to the executed criminal, completely free from all those physiological and psychological conditions and motives which darkened and obscured the essence of the matter in the eyes of the criminal himself, whether he committed the murder from calculation of gain or under the influence of a less shameful passion.²⁵ There can be no such complexities of motivation in the death penalty; the entire business is exposed here: its single goal—to put an end to this man in order that he not be in the world at all. The death penalty is murder, as such, absolute murder that is in principle the denial of a fundamental moral attitude toward man.

In essence, even the defenders of the death penalty acknowledge this, those who sometimes let the cat out of the bag in a most unexpected way. Thus one of them answered a demand for repeal of the death penalty with the famous phrase: “Let the gentlemen-murderers do so first!” Execution is directly compared here to murder, and the executing society is put on the same level with the “gentlemen-murderers,” that is, with individual murderers, to whom is awarded even the privilege of being models and leaders for the improvement of the entire society.

Less naive advocates of the guillotine and the gallows resort to subterfuge and tricks, which merit attention out of their inconsistency. Death, they say, is not the end of existence; the human soul lives even beyond the grave, death is only a transition, not at all having an absolute meaning, and so forth. But if the end of visible, earthly existence is so unimportant, then why does murder horrify you to such a degree? And if, despite a life beyond the grave, there are grounds for being horrified by murder, then is it permissible to repeat it under the worst conditions possible? If you, in fact, view death so lightly, then regard murderers more lightly, and if they disturb you so, then be wary of imitating them in this life under the pretext of its continuation beyond the grave. If, in fact, the death penalty could be permitted only from the point of view of the next life, then the pronouncement and carrying out of death sentences would be in conscience permissible only to persons who believe in the eternal life of the soul, which at present is unfortunately more an exception than a general rule; and besides, is a similar conditionality upon the subjective motives of personal faith compatible with the concept of law and judgment?

While the death penalty is profane and inhumane, it also has a *shameful* nature, which was long ago secured for it by societal sensibility, as is seen in universal contempt for the *executioner*. Wars, duels, and outright murder can all be

inhuman, horrible, and from a certain point of view senseless, but there is no special, specific element of *shamefulness* in them. No matter what advocates of eternal life say, the military man who fights against armed adversaries in danger of his own life in any event cannot arouse contempt toward himself. True, it is not even possible to compare a duel with war; the duelist justly provokes indignation, and dueling is treated as a crime. Still, no one will for this alone sincerely hold in contempt a man who fights a duel for the following reason: this man is at least elevated above the instinctive fear of death and demonstrates that his physical life in itself has no value to him without certain moral stipulations (even if erroneously understood). It is also possible to a certain extent to say this about other cases of killing as well. But the entire aspect of self-sacrifice, or risk of personal life and freedom, which justifies war and excuses the duel and which even mitigates in certain cases the horror of real murder—is completely absent in the death penalty. Here, a man who is unarmed and bound is in advance and wittingly killed by an armed man, risking absolutely nothing and acting exclusively out of lower self-interest. Hence the specifically shameful character of the death penalty and the limitless universal scorn for the executioner.

The direct moral consciousness and feeling so brilliantly expressed in Khomiakov's superb poem *Ritterspruch-Richterspruch* speaks here better than any abstract arguments:

You fly—a whirlwind, on a warhorse,
 With your daring princely retinue,—
 And the defeated enemy has fallen under horse,
 And as a prisoner lies before you.
 Will you dismount, will you raise your sword?
 Will you tear off the powerless head from its shoulders?
 So, he fought with savage fury of battle,
 And laid waste cities and villages with fire—
 Now he will raise prayerful hands:
 Will you kill? O, shame and disgrace!
 And if there are many of you, will you kill
 The one who is caught in chains,
 Who is trampled in the dust, and head bowed in prayer,
 Not daring to raise it before you?
 So, his soul is black, like the gloom of the grave,
 So, the heart in him is ignoble, like a maggot in pus,
 So, he is all covered in blood and brigandage,
 Now he is powerless, the fire in his gaze is gone,

He is tied by authority, constrained by fear . . .
Will you kill? O shame and disgrace!²⁶

It would be strange to refute the shamefulness of the death penalty and the contemptibility of the executioner by pointing to those ancient times when the death penalty was a solemn performance of duty and was accomplished with sacrifices, and to that more recent antiquity as well, when refined, high-ranking persons did not have an aversion to performing the duty of the executioner. What can this prove? There was a time when prostitution, both in natural and unnatural forms, was a religious institution. But no justification of prostitution in our day results from the fact that the women of ancient Babylon looked at fornication with strangers for money as a sacred service to the goddess Militta.²⁷ Similarly, no recollections of cannibalistic antiquity will hinder the fact that on the level of moral consciousness, which the average contemporary man has now achieved, the death penalty is condemned not only as profane and inhumane, but also as a shameful matter.

Being contrary to the first principles of morality, the death penalty is at the same time a negation of law at its very essence. We know (see chapter 2) that this essence consists in the balance of two moral interests: of personal freedom and the common good, from which the direct conclusion is that the latter interest (the common good) can only *restrict* the former (personal freedom of each), but in no case can have the intention of its complete abolition, for then obviously any balance would be violated. Therefore, measures against any person whatsoever, inspired by the interest of the common good, in no way can reach as far as the elimination of this person, as such, through the deprivation of his life or through the taking away of his freedom for life. Thus, laws which allow the death penalty, life in exile with hard labor, or life imprisonment cannot be justified from the juridical point of view, as annulling finally a given lawful relationship through the abolition of one of its subjects. And besides, the assertion that the common good in certain cases requires the ultimate abolition of a given person also represents an internal logical contradiction. The common good is *common* only because it contains in itself the good of all individual persons without exception—otherwise it would be only the good of the majority. From this, it does not follow that the common good consist in the simple arithmetic sum of all particular interests separately taken, or include in itself the sphere of freedom of each person in all its infiniteness—this would be another contradiction since these spheres of personal freedom in themselves can negate one another and really do so. But from the concept of the *common* good follows with logical ne-

cessity that, while limiting particular interests and aspirations precisely as common (by common boundaries), it in no way can abolish even one bearer of personal freedom, or subject of rights, taking from him life and the very possibility of free action. The common good, according to its very idea, should be the good *of this man too*; but when it deprives him of existence and the possibility of free actions and hence the possibility of any good whatsoever—by the same token this supposed—common good ceases being a good for him too and thus loses its common character, itself becomes only a particular interest and therefore also loses its right to restrict personal freedom.

And in this point we see that the moral ideal fully conforms with the true essence of law. In general, law in its particular character of coercion toward a minimal good, although it does differ from morality in a narrow sense, in no case can contradict it, but even in its coercive character serves the real interest of that same morality. Therefore, if any positive law is found in contradiction of principle with a moral consciousness of the Good, then we can be certain in advance that it does not answer the essential requirements of rights either, and the interest of the law relative to such statutes can in no way consist in their preservation, but only in their *lawful* repeal.

V. COERCIVE JUSTICE AS MORAL OBLIGATION

1.

It is a fact that the most consistent and authentic forms of revenge and deterrence have vanished in contemporary criminal legislation. What has vanished is precisely that which should be acknowledged from the first of these two points of view (revenge) as most logical, and from the second (deterrence) as most useful. This single fact sufficiently demonstrates that the principle of “uncivilized” justice and its “barbarian” transformation have been outlived by a moral-legal consciousness and that another more lofty point of view has now arisen and achieved significant success here in the attitude of society toward crime and the criminal. Nevertheless, even in those countries where this progress is being made—in Europe and America—there still remain in punitive law and in penitentiary systems much unnecessary violence and torture, which can be explained only as the dead legacy of the obsolete principles of vengeance and deterrence. Such are life sentences, hard labor, long-term exile with ruinous conditions of survival, and so forth. And though the death penalty has lost its undergirding foundation, it is still stubbornly defended in certain circles.

All this systematic torture disturbs the moral consciousness and alters the initial feeling toward the criminal. If compassion for the one who is offended, or the victim, and the impulse to defend him sets others against a solitary offender, then when society, which is incommensurably more powerful than this criminal, turns its implacable enmity upon him, now disarmed, and makes him the subject of long, drawn-out torture, then it is *he* who now becomes the one who is offended, or the victim, and arouses in us compassion and the need to defend him. The legal consciousness of the majority as well as penitential practice have decisively rejected only the *consistent carrying out* of the principles of vengeance and deterrence and not these ideas themselves; and the existing system of punishment in civilized countries represents in its aggregate an irrational and lifeless compromise between these worthless principles, on the one hand, and the several requirements of the love of one's fellowman and justice on the other. Strictly speaking, we encounter here no unifying thought, no guiding principle, but only the assuaged remnant of ancient savagery in varying degrees. The single essential question for the moral consciousness in this matter cannot be resolved on the ground of such an outward compromise: is a criminal by the very fact of a crime deprived of his human rights or not? If he is *not* deprived, then how is it possible to take away from him the first condition of every right—existence, as is done in the death penalty, or preserving only his physical existence while taking from him in advance and forever the very possibility of a free human life, that is, the possibility of utilizing any right whatsoever—as is done in sentences of life imprisonment? If the fact of a crime deprives the criminal of his natural rights, then why all these juridical ceremonies for creatures with no rights? Empirically, the significance of this dilemma is weakened by the fact that there is a distinction assumed among crimes, in which some are considered depriving the criminal of human rights, and others—only restricting them to a greater or lesser extent. However, not only the principle and the extent of these restrictions remain indeterminate and mutable, but even the very distinction between the two main kinds of crimes—those which take away from a man his inherent rights completely, or only those which restrict them—turns out to be arbitrary and dissimilar according to place and time. Even allowing the impossible from the moral point of view, the complete removal of all rights from human beings, it would seem that, still, as important a fact as the transformation of a man from an independent and fully enfranchised person with rights into a passive substance for punitive exercises should depend on some kind of objective condition or determinate principle, always and everywhere identical. In the

meantime, it turns out that for this kind of transformation from a person into a thing, in one country it is necessary to commit simple murder, in another—murder with extenuating circumstances, in yet another—any sort of political crime, and so forth.

Such an unsatisfactory situation in this important matter and such a deplorably relaxed attitude to the life and fate of people provoke a natural reaction of moral sensibility. As is usually the case, it crosses over to the opposite extreme. It inspires some moralists to deny the very idea of punishment in a broad sense, that is, as a practical counteraction to crimes.²⁸ According to this doctrine, any coercion or force against anyone whomsoever and for any purpose whatsoever—is absolutely impermissible, and thus, the criminal must be influenced only and exclusively by word of reason. The virtue of such a view, which vainly seeks support for itself in an isolated part of one gospel dictum, consists in the purity of intent; the shortcoming is that at the very essence of the matter this intention cannot be carried out by the proposed method.²⁹

Rejecting any coercion at all, the principle of a passive attitude to criminals excludes not only measures of vengeance and deterrence—in which it is correct—but all measures of crime *prevention*, the necessary *defense* of self and others, and a positive *educational* effect on the criminals themselves as well. The State, from this point of view, does not have the right to arrest a man with respect to whom it is reliably known that he has made a decision to commit murder; neither does it have the right to incarcerate, even if only temporarily, a professional robber; in the end, it is deprived of the right to place the criminal in a more appropriate moral milieu, even if exclusively for his own personal good. In accordance with this, it is also recognized as impermissible for an individual person to restrain by force a criminal who is descending upon his victim: it is only permitted to turn to him with words of reason. In analyzing the doctrine, I will dwell precisely on the individual man's counteraction to crime as a simple and basic act. If, as I hope to show, the individual man in certain circumstances has a right and duty of coercion with respect to another person, then all the more should the collective man, who is represented by the State.

2.

In general, people commit crimes either out of deep moral depravity, or owing to mental anomalies, or last, as a consequence of losing self-control at a given moment. Apart from extremely rare exceptions, words of rational persuasion do not have any effect at all on any of these. To ascribe to one's own speech an exceptional power of influence and to expect from it useful results under any con-

ditions would be unhealthy conceit; but to be restricted to words without any certainty of their success would show a great shortcoming in truthfulness and love of fellowmen. The offended person has a moral right to all possible assistance from us and not solely to verbal defense, which in the huge majority of cases would only be comical; and precisely in the same way the offender has a right to all our assistance in order to restrain him from the act, which for him is an even greater catastrophe than for the victim. Only by first *having halted* his *outward act* can we later with clear conscience *reason* with him *verbally*. When I see the armed hand of a murderer raised above his victim and I grab it, is this an unquestionably violent act or immoral coercion? On the contrary, it is clear that it is *obligatory* according to *conscience*, as directly resulting from the demands of moral principle not only regarding the person who is threatened but also regarding the one who is threatening: in restraining a man from committing murder, I *actively* respect and support in him human dignity, for which substantial losses were in store from the fulfillment of his intention—in *standing up for his victim*, I *stand up for him even more*.

It would be strange to think that the simple fact of this application of force, that is, the contact of my hand muscles to the hand muscles of the murderer, with the necessary consequences of such contact, contains in itself something immoral; well, in that case, it would be immoral to pull a drowning person out of the water, for even this will not be managed without a great application of muscular strength to the body of the one being saved and without some physical suffering by him. If it is absolutely permissible and moral to pull a drowning person from the water, even if he resists, then all the more—to pull a criminal away from his victim, no matter what abrasions, bruises, and even dislocations would occur. And if, in restraining the murderer, we *involuntarily* inflict on him more serious injury and even death in the struggle, this would be a great misfortune for us, which should distress one as much as any involuntary sin; but in any event, to kill the criminal accidentally is a lesser evil and a lesser sin than to allow the murder of an innocent intentionally.

But apart from such an extreme case, one of two others occurs. Either the criminal who has been stopped by us still has not fully lost his human sensibilities, in which case he certainly will only be thankful that he was saved in time from his sin, not less thankful than the drowning person who was pulled from the water. And thus, in this case the violence to which he was subjected was in accordance with his own actual will, and no right of his was violated, so that here there was, strictly speaking, no violence at all in the moral-juridical sense, for *volenti non fit injuria*.³⁰ Or the criminal has lost human sensibilities to the ex-

tent that even later he will be displeased that he was prevented from murdering his victim—but it would then be supreme absurdity to employ only words of rational persuasion with a man in such a state; it would be just the same as speaking to someone who is dead-drunk about the benefit of abstinence, instead of throwing cold water on him.

3.

If the very fact of physical force, that is, the application of muscular strength, were something bad or immoral as such, then, of course, the utilization of this evil means, even if for the very best aims, would be impermissible—this would mean recognizing the rule that the goal sanctifies the means, a rule decidedly incompatible with true morality. To counteract evil with evil is impermissible and futile, to hate the criminal for his crime and therefore to *take vengeance* upon him is moral infancy or savagery. But if we restrain the criminal from committing a crime for the sake of his own good, *without hate*—on the contrary, with compassion for him—and thus through the brief external constraint of his freedom we liberate him beforehand from the incomparably greater and more protracted internal and crushing burden of an irrevocably committed crime—then in what way could there be evil here? Since there is nothing reprehensible in muscular force itself—just as in warmth, electricity, gravity, and all other physical phenomena, which can be used for good and for evil—then the moral or immoral character of the application of this force can be resolved only in each case by the intention of the individual and the essence of the matter: rationally utilized for the actual moral and material good of one's neighbors, muscular force is a *good* means and not at all bad, and such application is not prohibited but *is prescribed* directly by moral principle.

There is, perhaps, a thin but absolutely clear and precise boundary here between the moral and immoral utilization of physical force. The whole point is: in counteracting evil, how do we view the evildoer? Is there a human moral attitude preserved in us toward him also, is his personal welfare kept in mind? If a moral attitude is preserved, if his welfare is kept in mind, then there will be no elements of vengeance and torture, nothing immoral in our violence of necessity—this violence will be only a necessary condition of our assistance to this man according to the essence of the matter; it is just the same as a surgical operation or depriving a violent madman of his freedom.

Moral principle prohibits making only a means out of a man for any extraneous aims whatsoever (that is, which do not include within them his own good); thus, if in counteracting a crime we see in the criminal only a means, an

instrument, or a material for purposes of vengeance or protection, then we act immorally, although our motive was disinterested compassion toward the offended, sincere indignation at crime, and concern for public security. From a moral point of view, these good dispositions are insufficient: compassion for *both sides* is required, and if we comply with this, if we actually have in view their common good, then reason and conscience will show us in what measure and in what forms physical coercion needs to be applied here.

Moral questions are resolved ultimately by conscience, and I boldly propose to everyone to turn to their inner experience (intellectual, if not other): in which of the two cases does conscience reproach us—when, having the possibility to prevent a crime, we say a few useless words and walk by indifferently, or when we actually prevent it, although at the cost of some physical injury? Everyone understands that there is no room for this dilemma in a *perfect* society, where any coercion toward the lesser good disappears as unwanted in view of the realization of the greater good; but such perfection should be *achievable*, and it is fully apparent here now that to grant depraved, evil, and insane people the complete freedom to exterminate normal people is in no way a direct and true path to the realization of a perfect society. Some organization of the Good is advisable, if possible, but the complete freedom of evil is not.

“But,” modern Sophists say, “society has often taken for evil something which later turned out to be good and pursued innocent people and even benefactors of humanity as criminals: thus criminal law has no value anywhere, and it is necessary that all coercion be renounced completely.” By this logic, the erroneous system of Ptolemy is a sufficient basis for giving up astronomy, and chemistry should be worthless as a result of alchemists’ errors.

4.

Given the manifest unsoundness of this teaching, it would seem incomprehensible how people of a mind and character different from the notorious Sophists can defend such a point of view regarding an absolutely passive attitude toward crimes. But the point is that its actual basis lies, as far as I understand, not in the ethical but in the mystical realm. The main thinking here is as follows:

“That which seems evil to us is perhaps not evil at all: the Deity or Providence knows better than we the true connection of things and how to bring real good out of apparent evil; we ourselves can know and evaluate only our inner state but not the objective significance and consequences of our actions and those of others.” I must confess that for the mind of a believer this view is highly seductive; however, it is deceptive. The truth of each view is verified by whether it is

possible to bring it to its logical conclusion without falling into contradictions and absurdities. The point of view that was cited cannot sustain such necessary verification; it is not justified by reason, and consequently there is no good in it. If our ignorance of all the objective consequences of our own actions and those of others were enough foundation for abiding in inertia, then in that case it would not be necessary for us to oppose our manifestly immoral lusts and bad inclinations: who knows what beautiful consequences all-good and all-wise Providence can extract out of anyone's lechery, drunkenness, malice toward fellowmen, and so on? In view of the contemporary significance of this erroneous doctrine and its proximate relation to the foundations of criminal law, we must dwell on it here.

A certain person who had an inclination to get drunk on wine on a winter's evening resisted this evil temptation and for the sake of abstinence did not go to the inn. Meanwhile, if he had gone there, on the return journey he would have found a half-frozen puppy, and being in the given situation inclined to sympathy, would have picked up the puppy and thawed him out, and this puppy would have become a big dog and would have saved a girl from drowning in a pond, a girl who would later have become the mother of a great man; whereas now, owing to a misplaced abstinence which upset the plans of Providence, the puppy froze, the little girl drowned, and the great man, having been born of another mother, turned out to be an idiot.

Another certain person, who was inclined to anger, wanted to slap his interlocutor in the face but came to his senses in time and restrained himself; and in the meantime, if he had not restrained himself, the offended would have made use of this event to turn the other cheek, which would have softened the heart of the offender to the greater exultation of virtue, whereas now their conversation ended with nothing.

The doctrine which absolutely rejects any coercive counteraction to evil or defense of one's fellowman by force is based in essence and to all intents and purposes on similar arguments. Someone saved the life of a man by force, by disarming a robber who fell upon him; but later the man who was saved becomes a terrifying criminal, worse than the robber; hence, it was not worth saving him. But if this man had been threatened by a rabid wolf and not by a robber, the same disappointment could have resulted. Well then, is it unnecessary to defend anyone from savage beasts as well? Moreover, if we save anyone from a fire or a flood, then it can easily also happen that those who are saved will later be extremely wretched or will turn out to be horrible scoundrels, so that for them and

for their neighbors it would be better for them then to burn or drown—does this mean that no one in any trouble at all should be helped? *No one*, because although we knew a man who had need of our assistance from his good aspect, we can never be firmly assured either of our current perspicacity or of the future constancy of this man.

But to help our fellowmen who are in trouble is a direct moral requirement; and if the duty of active love of a fellowman is thrown away because of the fact that actions out of this motive can have evil consequences unknown to us, then it is also logically necessary to throw away on this basis the responsibilities of abstinence, meekness, and all others, since it is certain that carrying them out can have pernicious consequences, as in the examples adduced above. But if evil ensues out of an apparent good, then this also means that, conversely, good can ensue out of an apparent evil as well. In the face of such an argument, what can we contrast to any evil motives whatsoever that we might have? Happily, this entire view negates itself because a series of unknown consequences can go farther than we think. So, in our first example, when Mister X, having overcome his inclination for a few drinks, indirectly obstructed by this the future birth of a man of genius—how do we know that this great man would not create great disasters for humankind? And in that case, it is good that he was born as an idiot and hence Mister X did perfectly well in that he forced himself to stay home. Precisely in the same way, we do not know what future consequences the triumph of virtue would have owing to the magnanimously borne slap in the face; it is entirely possible that this extreme magnanimity would later be made a cause for spiritual pride—the worst and most dangerous of all sins—and the soul of a man would be lost, so that Mister Y did well in that he forcibly controlled his anger and prevented the appearance of magnanimity in his interlocutor.

In general, we can rightfully make any suppositions about the possibilities in each case identically, both in a good and bad direction, while not knowing anything with certitude. But the general notion that we do not at any time know to what consequences our actions can lead is not sufficient ground for abstinence from actions in one or another individual case. It would be another matter if we knew for certain that the future consequences of a given action, which seems good to us, will be essentially only bad. And since they equally can be both bad and good, then this means we have here an identical basis or, more precisely, the identical absence of a basis for action and counteraction. From this point of view, we cannot know what is morally better for us: to act or to remain idle and, hence, all this consideration of the possible indirect results of our actions is devoid of

any practical meaning for us. In order that it could have a really definite power for our lives, it would be necessary for us not only to know the most proximate links in the series of future consequences, but since beyond the most proximate ones we always have the right to suppose further ones of an opposite character, which destroy our first inferences, then it would be necessary for us to know *the entire series of consequences* to the end of the world and after, which for us is inaccessible.

Thus our actions or abstinence from action should be determined not at all by considering their possible (but to us unknown) indirect consequences, but by motives *directly* resulting out of moral principle. And this is so not only from an ethical, but also from a morally religious point of view. If we ascribe everything to Providence, then certainly it is not without the knowledge of Providence that a man possesses reason and conscience, which suggest to him what he must do in each case as regards the direct good, independently of any indirect consequences. And if we sincerely believe in Providence, then we also certainly believe in the fact that It will not permit that anyone's actions, in accordance with reason and conscience, could have completely evil consequences. If we acknowledge that to make a fool of oneself with strong drink is contrary to human virtue or is immoral, then conscience itself will not allow us to consider whether we would be able in a drunken state to do anything that afterward would lead to good consequences. Precisely in this way, if we prevent a robber from killing a man, even if by force, according to a purely moral motive and without malice and vengeance, then it won't even come to mind to argue whether anything evil could come of this and whether it wouldn't be better to allow a murder.

Just as I firmly know, thanks to reason and conscience, that enslavement to bodily lusts—drunkenness or debauchery—is in itself bad, or contrary to the Good, and that one should struggle with these passions, I know by virtue of that same reason and that same conscience no less firmly that an energetic love of fellowmen, as a direct expression of the Good, is good in itself, and that one must act in this sense, practically helping neighbors, defending them from the elements of nature and from savage beasts, but also from evil and insane people. Therefore, if someone out of a pure motive of love for fellowmen rips the knife out of the hands of a murderer and saves him from needless sin and his victim from a violent death, or if someone utilizes physical coercion in order to prevent someone suffering from a high fever running the streets freely, then he will always be justified by his conscience and by the common consciousness as having fulfilled in fact a moral requirement: help everyone as much as you can.

Providence certainly extracts good out of our evil. But from our good It raises still greater good and, what is especially important, this second kind of good is obtained with our direct and active participation, whereas the good which is extracted from our evil does not concern us and does not belong to us. It is better to be a collaborator with, than just the simple material of, all-good Providence.

5.

Punishment as *deterrent retribution* (a typical form of which is the death penalty) cannot be justified from a moral point of view because it negates the person in a criminal, deprives him of the right to existence and moral perfection inherent in every person, and makes out of him the passive instrument of someone else's security. But precisely in the same way, neither does a passive attitude to crime justify itself morally; it is left without counteraction, for here the right to defense of the one offended is not taken into account, nor the right of all society to a secure existence, and last, the right of the criminal himself to societal assistance for his moral reeducation; and everything is subject to the arbitrary will of the worst people. Moral principle requires a practical counteraction to crime and defines this counteraction (or punishment in the broad sense of the word, not coinciding with the concept of retribution) *as the lawful and obligatory means of an active love of fellowmen which lawfully and coercively restricts extreme manifestations of malicious will not only for the sake of the security of society and its peaceful members but also even absolutely in the true interests of the criminal himself.*

Thus, according to its true sense, punishment is something multifaceted, but its various aspects are identically conditional upon the common moral principle of love of fellowmen, which embraces both the offender and the one offended. The one suffering from a crime *has the right* to defense and compensation as far as possible; society *has the right* to security; the criminal *has the right* to instruction and correction. A lawful counteraction to crimes on the part of organized society or the State, in agreement with moral principle, must realize or at least always have in view the equal implementation of these three rights.

VI. THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCHOOL OF CRIMINALISTS, ITS CONTRIBUTIONS AND SHORTCOMINGS

1.

With all the important theoretical distinctions between the "absolute" and utilitarian views of criminal justice, they both agree in that they concentrate on the

fact of crime, and that either they do not pay attention at all to the criminal's own essence or they dwell only on those elements of his will and actions which have a direct relation to this extrinsic fact. Just as ancient dramatists portray only evil deeds in their tragic villains and make them eat, drink, and agonize not otherwise than according to villainy,* the first classical criminalists also occupied themselves only with the criminal will and criminal or injurious acts, seeing the criminal behind the crime only poorly; and they no longer saw a *person* in the criminal at all.³¹ They were concerned only with one or another *chance* representative of the general, *abstract* idea of crime, in which for some (the "absolute" criminalists) guilt prevailed over the subjective factor, and for others (the utilitarians or adherents of the theory of deterrence) the objectively practical aspect prevailed over the maliciousness of the act. A new school, imprecisely calling itself the anthropological school, issues forth from this only partially correct critique.

The main contribution of this school consists in the fact that it applies the concrete concept of abnormality, which corresponds to reality, at the basis of all teaching about criminality. Its major shortcoming is in the fact that it takes abnormal people chiefly, and even exclusively, from the anatomical—physiological and not from the moral aspect. In the expression of A. F. Koni, a man-beast appears in place of a man: "Meanwhile, as a well-known judicial personage correctly notes, those of us who have had actual dealings with criminals know that in the criminal act the inner aspect plays not less of a role than the physical, and that it throws a light on his inner world, which is accessible to study by the attentive observer."³²

As noted above, the title of *anthropological* school does not suit its actual character. In fact, this school, which it would be more accurate to call the biological or, even more accurately, the anatomic-physiological or neuro-pathological school, does not concentrate its attention on the moral individuality of a man, or that which precisely constitutes his exclusive particularity. Advantageously distinguishing itself from former criminalistics by the denial in principle of any chance in the origin of crimes, the new teaching unfortunately was exposed to the all-too-powerful influence of a tendency which has dominated natural science for the past half century: completely subordinating the phenomena of a

* A typical example of this is given by our own Sumarokov, who makes his False Dmitri die with the following villainous exclamation:

Go my soul to hell and eternally sulk as captive,
O, if only the entire universe would perish with me!

higher order to the laws of a lower order. As the majority of contemporary chemists and physicists attempts to bring together the phenomena learned by them to the pure mechanics of molecules and atoms, as biologists of that same tendency attempt to portray the phenomena of life exclusively out of lifeless physical and chemical processes, so too do these anthropologists attempt to explain the acts of a man exclusively out of the facts of his lower nature.

Although the hope of adequately knowing l'uomo *delinquente* should be acknowledged as futile once the special essence of l'uomo in general has been eliminated, the aspiration itself to learn the real facts and conditions of crime as a subject of real preventive, pedagogic, and therapeutic measures—in place of the former “abracadabra” of equal retribution and the scarecrows of deterrence—should be acknowledged as both a token and a beginning of important practical successes.³³

While not regarding criminal “anthropology” as a newly discovered America, we think that this is the erroneous “route to India” which will perhaps indeed lead to the discovery of a new world.

2.

Followers of the new school acknowledge Gall with his phrenology as their forefather.^{*34} This is very typical. What is Gall's phrenology? A reliable general idea which is embodied in a completely phoney and stupid system. The general idea consists in the assertion—contrary to abstract and one-sided spiritualism—of a close connection and *correspondence* between the inner psychic and outer physical aspects of a man.³⁵ But after that, a series of errors begins. On the one hand, psychic life is allocated with puerile simplicity according to so-called aptitudes, and on the other hand, the bones of the cranium are taken as the corresponding physical indexes of these aptitudes. Such a comparison hangs on an entire chain of erroneous assumptions, *to wit*:

- (1) the psychic life of man has the cerebrum as its immediate material organ;
- (2) the peculiarities of the psychic character of a given man can be inferred from the peculiarities of the cerebrum;
- (3) the special properties of the brain are expressed definitively (apart from the general volume and weight) in the outward configuration of its parts;
- (4) this configuration of the brain directly determines the shape of the bones of the cranium, according to which it is thus possible to form an opinion about

* See D. A. Dril', *Crime and Criminals*, chapter 1.

the peculiarities of the brain and through them also corresponding psychic peculiarities.

None of these assumptions has sufficient grounds. Beginning with the first—the data of psychopathological experimentation demonstrate only that the brain is a separate organ which consciously coordinates psychic activity, or that which certain psychologists call daytime, or waking, consciousness. But this is only half of psychic life, and if some abstract philosophers have accepted it as the whole, then there will scarcely be found an inexperienced psychiatrist or a criminalist lacking in common sense who would fall into a similar error. If the cerebrum were the essential organ of psychic life in general, that is, of every psychic action and state, then creatures deprived of this organ, like the majority of lower invertebrate animals, would have to be considered inanimate automatons, and everything brainless would be thereby also inanimate. But we know brainless or nearly brainless animals such as ants and bees that manifest a psychic activity, the high intensity and broad extensivity of which would be completely incomprehensible if psychic life were connected only to the cerebrum; these animals do perfectly well with their abdominal nerve-centers. And these centers exist also in humans in a rather developed state (especially in women), and there is no reason to consider them only a Platonic resonance of some bee-stage of existence. On the contrary, don't all instinctive psychic impulses, all inexplicably arising impulsive states of consciousness, which are sufficiently familiar both to psychiatrists and criminalists, proceed from there? And in accordance with this, for the positive part of Gall's psychical aptitudes thesis, shouldn't the position of principal organs be brought down from the cranium about fifty-three centimeters lower?³⁶

But even if the cerebrum had the exclusive significance which is ascribed to it by phrenology, then the direct inference from the organ to the agent which uses this organ cannot be logically justified. No one has yet to raise any practical objection to Plato's ancient observation that a poor or broken instrument can belong to a skillful and healthy musician and *vice-versa*.

But even if it were possible to cede this point to phrenology, then its third assumption, about the essential peculiarities of the brain being exclusively expressed in the peculiarities of its external configuration, remains completely unproven. And last, even if this were to be proven, then the final and, in practice, most important assumption of the precise correspondence between the outer surface of the cranium and the shape of the brain remains not only unproven but even directly refuted by the elementary data of anatomy. Any medical stu-

dent or natural scientist knows, for example, that the two frontal bones are hollow within, that is, consist of two walls—exterior and interior—which are more or less separate from each other and leave between themselves an empty space, so that, when we see the protuberant and overhanging brow above the eyes, this shape can originate from two completely distinct and even opposite causes: either from the greater development of the forward parts of the brain, which thrusts, so to speak, the frontal bones forward or, on the contrary, with the poorest development of these parts of the brain—from the inordinate size of the empty space between the walls of the frontal bones, so that in this case the folk saying is literally justified: big head, little brains. With the important significance which the shape of the forehead has in phrenological craniology, this single elementary fact is sufficient to overthrow the entire system.

We have dwelt a bit on this obsolete teaching because the methodological shortcomings which have manifested themselves in it with extreme acuteness are repeated, albeit in more mitigated form, in the new “anthropological” school, to which we now return.

3.

The general theoretical foundation of the anthropological school of criminal law consists in the conviction that psychic activity, if not in itself, then in any event as a subject of scientific study and reliable knowledge, is exclusively determined by the anatomical–physiological substance of human life, and thus crime, as an anomaly of psychical life, is reduced to one or another anomaly of the anatomical–physiological conditions of this life.

The founder of the new school, Lombroso, began by proclaiming that all criminals were of a particular race or organic type which represented a return to savage ancestry, and he noted the anatomical features of this type.³⁷ If his directions were to be followed, it would be necessary to put as many respected citizens, famous writers and scientists, and even highly respected dignitaries into prison because their body-frames themselves destined them to commit criminal acts. However, what kind of crime does Lombroso have in mind? What sort of act is fatefully committed by the people that constitute this atavistic race? In the first two editions of his book, Lombroso does not give a specific definition of crime; he takes criminals indiscriminately, that is, any transgressors of any public law whatsoever that has criminal sanction. And in spite of the conditional character of such a concept and the randomness of the group defined by him, he reckons all these transgressors to be of one particular race! So, any unfortunate ragged fellow who suddenly decides under the influence of hunger to pil-

fer some bread from a baker; or a German pastor in a Baltic province who considers himself morally obligated to baptize according to the evangelical rite a child of parishioners administratively registered as Orthodox; finally, any bright and refined young man who, wanting to procure a large sum of money to buy diamonds for his French girlfriend, skillfully poisons his rich but virtuous parents—all these *uomini delinquenti* represent one special race or type, with identical anatomical features!³⁸ No one could support such preposterous absurdities, and after the chief adherent of the new school in Italy, Ferri, recognized five distinct categories of criminals in place of one common race: inborn, insane, habitual, chance, and impassioned—Lombroso himself in the third edition of *L'uomo delinquente* restricted his criminal race to *inborn* criminals alone, which at the same time in a rather incomprehensible way he brought together with the psychically ill; later, he began to lump together criminality with inherited degeneracy, with epilepsy, with genius, and so on.³⁹ All these *rapprochements* are reduced to one position, which is essentially correct, though it does not exhaust the subject and is much too general, *to wit*: that actual inborn criminality usually is connected with more or less profound organic anomalies and pathological conditions.

4.

In recent years the anthropological school has added sociological factors to the anatomical—physiological factors of criminality, but because society is understood here only as a collection of individual persons who are defined in their activity only by the anatomical—physiological substance of their life, both in its normal and in its abnormal condition, then this broadening of horizon does not at all alter the principle itself. The respected D. A. Dril' hotly protests against the designation of this principle as materialistic. The anthropological school, he declares, does not deny the independent essence of spirit, but it makes do without it in its explanations, for which biological and sociological factors are sufficient. But if the essence of spirit does not manifest itself in any action whatever, and if there is no need to take it into account either in science or in life, in which it does not give any sign of itself, then there is not a rational foundation visible not only to acknowledge it, but even to speak of it, because in speaking of it, *what are we strictly speaking and talking about, if all that we know—is not spirit and does not have any relationship to it?* While not pursuing this dialectic, which would distance us from our subject, I will restrict myself to the two observations at the foundation of the declaration of D. A. Dril' himself.

Speaking of the two famous murderers Lacenaire and Avril, for which, from

the point of view of the new school, bloody crimes were a fateful physical necessity, the respected author here reports on two professional thieves who were found with them in the very same place, the permanently imprisoned Baton and Fregier, who absolutely refused to take part in any killings whatsoever, categorically proclaiming that their hands would never be stained with the blood of a man.^{*40} Such a phenomenon is not explained by the simple *absence* in these people of an organic predisposition to bloodletting. If the whole point were only in the absence of the physical conditions of bloodthirstiness, then this would be sufficient grounds for these thieves not to have murder as their goal, not to seek blood for blood; but having dedicated their life to the acquisition of money by the path of crime, even lacking organic bloodthirstiness, they did not have reason to reject murder absolutely as one of the means toward their goal. Where does this resolute and intrinsically insuperable revulsion to murder come from? From the point of view of the theory being examined, it is necessary to assume for the sufficient explanation of such phenomena that side by side with organic factors that are fatefully predetermined to the commission of certain crimes such as murders, rapes, and so forth, there also exist organic factors that just as much fatefully impede the commission of crime of one sort or another. It is possible to grant this only as an ad hoc assumption by virtue of a priori requirements of the theory, which is, however, not in accordance with the positivist-scientific claims of the new school.

Mr. Dril' finds the integral hidden lining for murderers in anomalies of the sexual sphere: "I had no shortage of facts," says he, "on the contrary, their great number weighed me down, and I encountered difficulties only in selection. In all the multitude of the cases of murder known to me, when any sufficient bits of information were collected about the person and past life of the murderers, more or less clear indications of one or another deviation, and an emphasis on the sexual sphere were always encountered" (p. 241). What does this prove?

All cases of consumption *without exception* are accompanied by periodic deviations from the normal temperature of the body. Does it follow from this that a high temperature is the cause and basis of consumption? In order that the interesting connection which is observed by Mr. Dril' between sexual anomalies and an attraction to murder have the significance which he ascribes to it, he would need to supplement his research. If it were proven not only that all murderers were subject to sexual anomalies, but also that all subjects, having suffered the same anomalies, have an attraction to bloodshed and become murderers,

* Dril', *Crime and Criminals*, p. 235.

then of course a causal connection would be established here. But since in reality these two spheres of phenomena far from overlap, and there exist many such people with sexual anomalies who not only do not have an irresistible attraction to murder but also do not generally reveal any bloodthirsty attributes at all, then the logical conclusion from the observations of our author cannot go further than the claim that inborn bloodthirstiness has as one of its accompanying circumstances a deviation from the norm in the sexual sphere—a seemingly absolutely reliable fact but one that requires further explanation, which he does not find in criminal “anthropology.”

5.

At the Brussels international congress in 1892, Mister D. A. Dril’ formulated the fundamental principles of the criminal-anthropological school in the following seven theses, containing that which all the followers of the school are in agreement with each other about and which at the same time calls forth the least objection on the part of unbiased adherents of classical jurisprudence:⁴¹

- “(1) The new trend recognizes not retribution, but the necessity of protecting society against the evil of crime as the basis of punishment and its preeminent goal.
- (2) The anthropological school aspires to learn with the help of all precise scientific methods the variety of actual criminals, the causes which produce them, their activity, their crimes, and the most efficacious means of influencing them.
- (3) The anthropological school sees in crime a result of the interaction of the peculiarities of the criminal’s psychophysical makeup and external influences.
- (4) The anthropological school examines the criminal as, to a greater or lesser extent, an unfortunate, depraved, unbalanced, and insufficient constitution, which as a result of this is not well enough adapted to the struggle for existence in a legal way.
- (5) The anthropological school divides the causes of crime into: (a) proximate causes—the depravity of the psychophysical makeup of the agent; (b) more remote causes—inauspicious external conditions, under the influence of which the former gradually work themselves out; (c) predisposed causes, under the influence of which depraved constitutions lead to crime.
- (6) The criminal-anthropological school studies criminals and the crimes committed by them as natural-societal phenomena in the entire aggregate of their various factors, even the most remote. With this, it combines the prob-

lem of criminality with the great social questions of our time and stresses the necessity of broad preventative measures for success in the struggle with crime.

- (7) Proceeding from these theses, the criminal-anthropological school denies the rationality of predetermined measures of repression and makes them dependent on the study of the individual peculiarities of each agent of crime.” (pp. 94–95)

It is possible, according to conscience and reason, to agree with all, or almost all, of what *is expressed* in these positions; the shortcoming of the school, both in a theoretical and in a practical respect, is contained in what fails to be mentioned here. Let us analyze these fundamental theses in the order in which they are adduced by Mr. Dril’.

6.

The first principle of the criminal-anthropological school, as it is expressed by its Russian representative, already contains in its definition of punishment both the chief practical contribution of the school and its essential shortcoming: the contribution—is in the absolute negation of the barbarian concept of retribution, and the shortcoming—is in the unilateral acknowledgment of *only* “the necessity of protecting society from the evil of crime” as the goal of punishment. Such a view in principle draws the new school closer to the previous theory of deterrence, which also sets its exclusively utilitarian goal as punishment. D. A. Dril’ is inspired by the most humanistic feelings and the most sympathetic aspirations, but this bestows honor only upon him personally and not upon the school, because he cannot deny that some of its representatives, such as Lombroso himself, find the most expedient means against irreformable and dangerous criminals—their simple destruction. And *this* is no longer only a personal opinion but the logical result of the utilitarian concept of punishment, which takes into consideration *only* external public utility and completely eliminates intrinsic human right. Once a man is *only* a product of anatomical–physiological and sociological conditions, and this product in a given case turns out to be hopelessly worthless, what rational grounds can hinder society from destroying him? D. A. Dril’ fundamentally defends the new school from the charge of immorality, which they see in its denial of absolute guilt or freedom of the will; but the actual and inevitable conflict of criminal anthropology with moral principle occurs not in this metaphysical point but in the moral–juridical question of

the limits of societal right over the individual. Here the new school even more firmly than the old keeps to the barbaric foundation of ancient and medieval concepts of the individual possessing no rights in the face of the societal whole: here within the man is acknowledged nothing before which society would *have to stop*—an irreformable criminal must be killed calmly like a mad beast. In the important principled question of the death penalty, the new school applies the brakes heavily to moral–juridical progress.

The aspiration of criminal anthropology to study criminality and criminals in their specific conditions is this school's great contribution, which is diminished, however, in the extent to which these specific conditions are taken only from the material aspect alone and the criminal is examined only as a sick and degenerate animal. A living brain and even the dead bones of the cranium are, of course, real objects and more concrete than the "reasoning substance." But when phrenology sees in these real and concrete objects the equivalent of the whole man, then it falls into the very same abuse of abstraction as Cartesian spiritualism. Similarly, with all the reality and specificity of anatomical and physiological anomalies on which criminal anthropology is concentrated, these natural anomalies do not constitute the whole criminal either, just as absolute guilt, the *animus nocendi* of lawyers of old, does not constitute him.⁴²

The definition of crime as a result of the interaction between the makeup of a criminal and outside influences (thesis 3) and the definition of the criminal himself as an unfortunate, depraved, irreformable, and insufficient organism (thesis 4) could be accepted. But out of this "makeup" were silently excluded the things which constitute the peculiarity of a man as an individual agent: the capability to perceive purely moral reasons experienced in practice as the voice of conscience and as a sense of repentance. Let us assume that crime is the result of an interaction between an individual constitution and outside influences; but this constitution itself in its present state is already to a significant degree (in spite of heredity) the result of interaction; or it is the result of a struggle between the force of moral consciousness and the immoral attraction of the lower nature, in which, of course, each victory strengthens the winner. And the fact that individual cases exist in which moral consciousness, either out of incomprehension or complete atrophy or temporary blackout, does not act at all and does not set any constraints to organic attraction and external arousal was also well known long ago even to classical jurisprudence, which occupied itself a good deal with the question of the conditions of responsibility and irresponsibility in crime.

In the definition of the causes of crime (thesis 5), of course, there is nothing to discuss concerning the criminal's personal freedom; the criminal is not ac-

knowledge as a *person*, he is only a passive product of biological and sociological conditions. Hence, for *consistency* of thinking there can be only one practical conclusion: society should deal with a defective product, which is called a criminal, as the police do with defective products in the marketplace: hand them over to be destroyed. This is required by logic, to which, as is known, many followers of the new teaching submit, with Lombroso at the forefront. This not only acknowledges the existence of *irreformable* criminals (which cannot be denied at all), but also ascribes to the adherents a knowledge of the definite outward symptoms of this irreformability. This is already great madness, and in the event of the success of such opinions—a great danger for humanity. No teaching can live for long with inconsistency and lack of agreement, and the new school will have to put the question point-blank: since the criminal is a phenomenon which is completely defined by empirical conditions alone, without any participation of any absolute factors, then on what basis should society exert influence upon him otherwise than it does on other pernicious phenomena, such as rabid animals, morbid microbes, and so forth? Heredity, the significance of which is especially emphasized by the new school, infinitely increases the danger of criminals and the necessity for society to subject them to the quickest destruction, because from the point of view of “anthropology” the perniciousness of this species is not restricted to its current strength of membership but stretches to infinity into future generations, which are fatalistically condemned to criminality by their descendency from criminals.

The necessity of exterminating the criminal species is not removed by thesis #6 pointing at a connection of criminality with the conditions of life in society and at the possibility and necessity of struggling against evil by means of “broad preventative measures,” that is, through the improvement of living conditions for all classes of the population. This position in itself is completely correct and very important, and directing scientific and public attention to this aspect is one of the contributions of the new school. But this point too logically loses its salutary efficaciousness in connection with the fundamental error of the entire doctrine.

In the first place, anthropological criminalistics do not give us sufficient grounds to conclude that normal societal conditions are in general a more powerful factor than the organic force of heredity; and in the second place, from the school’s point of view, how is improvement of societal conditions possible, while there exist organic, regressive elements which are perpetuated by heredity? If society is improving only through its material composition, and the quality of this composition is determined only by present organic conditions, then it is clear

that first of all the organic factor must be changed. If the root cause of illness is—the reproduction of microbes, then first of all the microbes must be exterminated, so that they themselves do not sustain the disease, and above all—that they do not sustain it through their posterity. It is clear in fact that society cannot be regenerated with the participation of *degenerates*. And so, to change the social factors of criminality first of all the criminal organisms themselves ought to be destroyed, and in the sense of consistency Lombroso is more correct than Mr. Dril’.

The seventh thesis, which denies in advance the rationality of definite measures of repression and which makes them dependent on the study of the individual peculiarities of each agent of crime, is in itself a holy truth, but from the point of view of the “anthropological” school it does not have sufficient grounds. When for the sake of public utility, the well-equipped police remove from the marketplace rotten and noxious goods, should they make their punitive measure dependent on the study of the individual peculiarities of each piece of sausage? Obviously, there is no need of this because the generally bad odor in this case is fully sufficient. But how, from the “anthropological” point of view, does a piece of rotten humanity differ from a piece of rotten sausage? Both the one and the other are “natural–societal” phenomena, products of organic material which are processed by collective efforts, and these attributes and the condition of the product are foreordained by fate: in the one case—by organic qualities, which were inherited by the pig from its parents and primogenitors, later by the socioeconomic conditions of sausage production and the market, and finally by attendant external circumstances, which inevitably produce freshness or rottenness. And in the other case—they are foreordained by the same kind of hereditary qualities of the human constitution, by social conditions in the aggregate, and finally by the individual life circumstances which, in this organism and in the social conditions in question, inevitably make one man morally normal and another a criminal. The study of all this in detail can have only an exclusively theoretical interest. But the practical attitude can here be defined only as useful or harmful. A rotten sausage is simply destroyed—while not indicting it at all. It is destroyed not in the sense of retribution but only as an expedient punitive measure for the damage produced by it. One should also act in exactly the same way with rotten pieces of humanity—and the more compounded the harm caused by them through heredity, the more urgent it is.

The identification or the close association of criminality with disease is a thesis that cuts both ways; this can directly result in contrary conclusions depending on the point of view. On the strength of a certain purely ethical principle, I

can conclude that criminals, as sick people, ought to have treatment. But on the strength of another, utilitarian—materialistic principle, which the “anthropological” school holds in *theory*, it is imperative to draw the directly opposite conclusion: that harmful sick people, like criminals, should be destroyed.

If Lombroso and his logical disciples have nothing against the destruction of irreformable criminals, whom they consider, however, only a special kind of terminally ill people, then what can they logically say in opposition to the destruction of all other terminally ill people as well, those who are dangerous to the public welfare in that they directly infect the environment and they hereditarily transmit a contagion to posterity?

If individual representatives of the school, for example, the esteemed D. A. Dril', are sincerely disturbed by such a conclusion, this speaks only of their personal sensitivity. But does it befit a scientific school to be founded on personal feelings?

The positive contribution of criminal anthropology remains its aspiration to study criminals as a living reality, but the preconceived limitation of this reality to the material aspect of existence alone leads to practical conclusions which contradict the moral consciousness even more than the former positions of classical jurisprudence. Fortunately, it is not necessary for us to select among various errors since there is a true path which makes it possible to treat even the abnormal part of humanity normally.

VII. A MODEL FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1.

The criminal is a person who is consciously evading in fact the minimal requirements of good conduct, which are instituted in the criminal law for the sake of the security of the human community. Social conditions, life circumstances, and a given psychophysical constitution can predispose one to crime, but its actual cause, as is demonstrated by the fact of conscience and repentance, is one's own resolution.* In distinction from accidents and psychophysical illnesses, an actual crime *of a sound mind* is the result of an inner process in which there is always at least one instant of actual decision, that is, of the conscious rejection of a moral norm, of the conscious repudiation of good inner influences,

* Writers of the new school like to dwell on unquestionable cases of unrepentant criminals, forgetting that these cases could not be noted as something special if repentance were not the general rule.

and of the conscious giving over of oneself to a malevolent bent. It is only in this that there can consist a definite distinction between crime and neuropsychosis. The more prudent followers of criminal anthropology also reluctantly allow this distinction, although they cannot explain from their point of view what it consists of.

The criminal, just like any immoral man in general, obtains his actual punishment from the court of God according to the laws of moral order; human justice should be only an expedient reaction of society against the manifestations of criminal nature for the sake of necessary self-defense, for the actual defense of threatened persons, and for the possible correction of the criminal himself. Since no action of the criminal can abolish the absolute rights of the man, then lawful criminal punitive measures, in protecting society from the harmfulness of crimes, should without fail have in view also the criminal's own benefit; otherwise it would be the same kind of actual force as the crime itself.

2.

The first step of a lawful and expedient influence upon the criminal is the temporary deprivation of his freedom. This is necessary not only for the protection of others from him but also for the criminal himself. Just as a spendthrift justly loses his liberty to dispose of his property not only in the interests of his fellow-men but in his own personal interest as well, so too—and all the more essentially and justly—a murderer or a seducer of minors should be first of all deprived of freedom to abuse his body, both for his own good and the good of someone else. This is especially important for the criminal himself as a decisive *break* in the realization of malevolent will, as an opportunity to come to one's senses, to change one's mind, and to change one's disposition. For this it is necessary that the brief confinement before trial be solitary. Even if the prisoner turns out to be innocent, then this is not a great calamity because solitude and a change of environment are beneficial to every man. But to put the accused, who is perhaps innocent, into forced association with convicted criminals and into the same conditions with them—is in any event barbaric nonsense.

The preliminary investigation establishing only the facts can basically remain the same as it is at present in the criminal process, although in dubious cases it would not hamper the process to expand the participation of scientific experts, not limiting it to physicians alone.

At the present time, the fate of the criminal is ultimately settled almost everywhere by a court, which not only determines his guilt but also designates a punishment for him. And with the valid and logical elimination of the motives of

revenge and deterrence, the concept of punishment itself, in the sense of measures of influence on the criminal which are predetermined *beforehand*, *definitively*, and in essence *arbitrarily*, should also disappear from criminal justice. Absolute predestination does not exist, of course, even now: a certain leeway is given both to jurors in the determination of guilt and to judges in determining punishment, and afterward a mitigation of the sentence is granted to a supreme power, by virtue of the right of pardon which belongs to it. But all this is only a concession to moral sensibility, still far from a principled and consistent acknowledgment of the truth that a just and expedient punishment should respond to a given criminal *in concreto*, that is, to this living individual being and not to a random specimen of one or another genus, species, or subspecies of crime. Bringing a given criminal under these formal definitions constitutes only the preliminary task of criminal justice, which belongs completely to the judicial power, the representatives of which also possess the formal legal education necessary for this. But the ultimate, practical influence of society on the criminal, desirable for the good of both sides, is obviously not found in general concepts of law or in one or another legal statute but in an actual intrinsic connection with the real mental conditions of the criminal himself, whose subsequent transformations cannot be foreseen. Thus the court can ascertain only the actual legal part of the matter, determine the extent of guilt, the degree of the criminal's responsibility, and his future danger to society, out of which results also the State's right to take further measures of coercive influence against him. But these measures themselves, provided they be expedient, cannot be established in advance. The court can and should make a general diagnosis and prognosis of a given disease, but to prescribe an irrevocable method and duration of therapy is contrary to reason. The length and doses of treatment, obviously, should vary in accord with the changes in the course of the disease itself, and the court, which at the end of its session discontinues any actual relation to the criminal, should leave him completely to those penitentiary institutions under the jurisdiction of which he enters after the final judicial sentence. Besides the general fairness of such a situation, it is also important particularly because it practically and easily eliminates the heavy consequences of judicial errors.

3.

Taking away from the court the right of predetermined punitive sentences, making out of it an expert examination of learned jurists, a kind of commission of criminal legal advisers—here is a view which only recently would have seemed to be an unheard of heresy possible only from a pathetic ignoramus who is com-

pletely alien to both juridical science and practice. But now in certain countries there is a reconciliation taking place with this offensive idea to professional pride not only in theory but now even in practice. In Belgium, Ireland, and other countries, an important step to its realization has been made, namely, through the assumption of *conditional sentences*. In certain cases, in view of the possibility of the accidental character of a first offense, a man who has committed a certain crime for the first time, though sentenced by the court to a fixed term of punishment, can see his sentence reduced and his release until a relapse or the commission of a new crime; and in that case he must also serve the former sentence above and beyond the new one.

In other circumstances the conditional character of punishment is with respect only to the time of imprisonment, which is reduced in consideration of the convict's subsequent behavior. Despite the currently small circle of those applying the idea, these conditional sentences, with their huge significance in principle, open up a new era of criminal justice, one with a new moral outlook which takes notice of the living man and is not confined to the dead letter of statutes and paragraphs of the legal code.

After the abolition of torture there wasn't another success as important as this in the area of criminal process, and henceforth model justice stops being a dreamlike ideal and begins becoming a reality. An expansion of legal education which is subject to this process should be accomplished and is now taking place. Although this process should not reject its connection with the past—in Roman law and the history of local legislation—it should more distinctly and consistently include elements of the future, which consist in the study of the actual man—in psychology, psychopathology, and moral philosophy.

4.

Apart from the consistent practice of conditional sentencing, model justice requires changes also in the very substance of punishments, in the sense of their greater expediency. The true interest of the criminal himself certainly should enter into the purpose of criminal punishment. But while turning urgent attention to this formerly unknown or denied aspect of the matter, another aspect also should not be forgotten—the satisfaction of the victim's interest, which should also as far as possible enter into the substance of the punishment. Just as a threatened society has the right to safeguard its security, just as a degenerate man who has reached the point of crime has the right to reform, so too the innocent victim of crime has the right to the greatest possible compensation.

The victims (alone, or in the case of murder—in the person of their family)

could obtain this recompense from the State, which, in its turn, would be entitled to recover this expense concerning criminals. There can be two sources for this: confiscation of properties and income from the forced labor of convicts. The majority of legal experts are up in arms against the first, chiefly owing to the following reasons: first, confiscation affects the rights of innocent persons—the family of the criminal; and second, it introduces inequality into punishment since the rich criminal from whom property is taken suffers more than the poor one, from whom there is nothing to confiscate.

It is not possible to agree with either consideration. There is no need for confiscation to be extended without fail to all property—a portion sufficient for the security of the family can always be allotted. And if despite this, in rare cases of *very* rich criminals, should the material situation of their families for all that substantially change, then there is nothing unjust here: on the contrary, it would be disturbing to moral sensibility to encounter extreme luxury in the family of a murderer or robber—it would make no difference even if there were joyous celebration at the home of the deceased—and, in any case, the State has no cause to concern itself any more about the families of criminals than about the families of innocent victims. Precisely in the same way, there is nothing unjust in the inequality of the force of punishment owing to confiscation because up to the commission of the crime the rich criminal had wealth that the indigent criminal was lacking in and, thus the subsequent inequality only balances the former one; moreover, wealth which is connected to great possibilities of education and intellectual development is in itself—*ceteris paribus*—an aggravating circumstance for the criminal.

However, the question of confiscation, owing to the comparatively small number of rich criminals, does not have great practical significance. More important is the question of the utilization of criminal labor. Forced labor, which now serves in the capacity of an essential educative instrument, should be preserved as a constant ingredient of any punitive measures. It is just and expedient that the income from this work be used in part for the compensation of the victims or their families. I do not know of any serious objections to this, and in this way punishment manifestly acquires the desired character of natural justice in distinction from arbitrary revenge.

5.

Here is the entire substance of model punishment: the deprivation of freedom for a more or less protracted time, not determined beforehand and conforming with real changes in the condition of the criminal, and afterward forced work

for his own benefit and for the compensation of victims. It is reduced to the conditional restriction of the criminal's individual and property rights as the natural result of crime. This is what society should *take* from the criminal; but in place of this it should *give* him active assistance in his correction and moral regeneration. It is precisely from this aspect that a radical reform of prison institutions to transform them into moral–psychiatric establishments is particularly essential.

There was a time when people who were mentally ill were accosted as wild, subdued animals; they were shackled, beaten with sticks, and so on. This was considered completely in the order of things even less than a hundred years or so ago; now these things are recalled with horror. Since the historical process is moving faster and faster, I still hope to see the day when our average prisons and camps today will be viewed as we all now view ancient psychiatric institutions with iron cages and chains for the sick. The contemporary situation of prisons, despite indubitable successes everywhere in recent times, is still determined to a significant degree by the ancient concept of punishment as *torture*, deliberately imposed on the criminal according to the rule “Even torture serves the criminal right.”*⁴³

According to the real concept of punishment, its positive task in relation to the criminal is not physical torment, but his moral recovery or correction. This idea has already long been entertained by various writers (chiefly theologians and philosophers, and only a few jurists) and calls forth against itself firm objections of a dual sort: on the part of legal experts and on the part of “criminal anthropologists.” On the juridical side, it is maintained that to correct the criminal means to intrude into his inner world, and that society and the State do not have any right to this. But there are two misunderstandings here.

First, the task of criminal correction is only one of the cases, in the indicated aspect, of the obliging and positive effect of society or the State on its needy and its not fully enfranchised. In denying such an influence in principle as an intrusion into the inner world, the teaching of children in public schools, the treatment of the insane in public hospitals, and so on, would all have to be rejected.

* Incidentally, graphic details of the application of this rule among us in the recent past (and very recent indeed) can be found in A. F. Koni's excellent monograph about Dr. Gaaz (*Vestnik Evropy*, Jan.–Feb. 1897). Much good was undertaken within the Russian corrections department on the initiative of K. K. Gort and in the administration of M. N. Galkin-Brasskii as well.

Where, then, is there an intrusion into the inner world here? In fact, by the act of the crime the criminal has *revealed, has laid bare* his inner world and has need of a reverse influence in order to be returned to his normal boundaries. Especially strange in this objection is that society acknowledges the right to put a man in conditions *which are corrupting*, as incidentally both today's prisons and camps are, but the right and the duty to put a man in conditions *which build morals* are removed from society.

The second misunderstanding consists in the fact that the term *correction* is understood as foisting some prepared rules of morality from without; but why the clumsiness in adopting this as a norm? For a criminal who is at all capable of correction, it is, of course, for the most part *self-correction*, while external assistance should strictly only place a man in the most favorable conditions for this, to help as well to sustain him in this inner process.

But is the reform of criminals possible at all? Many representatives of criminal anthropology assert the physically fateful character of inherited and innate criminal tendencies and thus their irreformability. That hereditary criminals and born criminals exist is without doubt; that among them are irremediable ones—is rather hard to deny; but the assertion that all or even the majority of criminals are absolutely irremediable—is completely arbitrary, contradicts experience, and does not merit criticism. If we are right to grant only that certain criminals are irremediable, then with the impossibility of saying beforehand with full conviction whether a given criminal belongs or does not belong to this group, it is necessary to place *all* of them in conditions that are the most favorable for their possible correction.

The first and fundamental condition of the successful solution of the corrective problem is certainly that there would stand at the head of penitentiary institutions people capable of this kind of difficult and lofty purpose—selected legal experts, psychiatrists, moralists, and persons with a true religious calling.

A public trusteeship over the criminal with the aim of his possible correction is entrusted to people who are particularly talented for this—this is the definitive definition of *punishment* or a positive counteraction to crime in agreement with moral principle. The right to self-defense, which undoubtedly belongs to society, is satisfied better than anything by this kind of punishment: a reformed criminal not only will not be dangerous to society but will repay it with interest for its care. Model criminal justice and a penitential system which corresponds to it—real justice and mercy to criminals without injury to the innocent—here is the most explicit and complete proof of the true connection between law and

morality, or the true concept of law as the balance of two moral interests: the public good and individual freedom. Without this connection or this balance, a humane corrective establishment for criminals, just like a clinic for dangerous patients, is just nonsense. If the public good is given preponderance, the criminals as well as the harmful sick should simply be destroyed. If individual freedom is given preponderance, then every coercive measure against both must be rejected. Conscience and reason, and today now also experience, point out the correct path, which neither permits the inhuman extermination of harmful people, nor inhumanly allows them to exterminate others.⁴⁴

9 Plato's Life-Drama

Having undertaken a complete Russian translation of Plato, I first of all ran up against a problem: in the absence of a generally accepted order, in what order should the Platonic dialogues be translated and published?¹ In the face of the inadequacy of historical data and the shakiness and contradictoriness of philological considerations, I became convinced of the impossibility of firmly establishing and thus putting them into chronological order. At the same time, I found that squeezing the living image out of Plato's creations and putting them into the wooden frames of scholarly categories according to abstract themes and disciplines of later origin was both uncomfortable and unworthy. I had to search for an intrinsic principle of unity which embraced the sum total of the Platonic corpus and gave each of the dialogues its relative significance and place within the whole.

Many of Plato's publishers, translators, and critics have searched for such a principle of origin for his works over the entire course of the

Source: "Zhiznennaia drama Platona," *Vestnik Evropy* 3 (March 1898): 334–56, and 4 (April 1898): 769–93. See also *Sobranie sochinenii* 9:194–244.

nineteenth century, but not one of the existing attempts to establish and construct such a principle in all of Plato seems to me satisfactory. In one particular treatise, which will accompany my translation, I analyze in detail the major of those attempts but will now indicate for the purpose of example only two of the most striking—Schleiermacher and Munk.²

According to Schleiermacher, the order of Platonic works was established in advance by Plato himself: it was his intended idea. All the dialogues are only the consequential fulfillment of one program, or one artistic—philosophical—pedagogical plan established by Plato yet in youth, and which gradually clarified itself in parts over the course of all of his philosophic activity.

According to this view, each great dialogue (after the first—the *Phaedrus*) is the direct, predetermined continuation or fulfillment by Plato himself of the preceding one and a preparation for the subsequent one. And this main growth-stem in ideas is accompanied as if by branches—a few petty dialogues deliberately written for the purpose of clarification of one or another second-degree problem connected to the subjects of the main dialogues. Thus, all Plato is one a priori constructed system of philosophical ideas, a course of philosophy which is artfully expounded.

In Munk, the matter appears in a more animated way. The task of Plato was to portray the life of an ideal sage in the person of Socrates. After the first introductory dialogue, *Parmenides*, in which Socrates appears as an inquisitive youth, there follow three consecutive groups of dialogues in which Socrates appears first as a defender of truth against prevailing sophistry, then a teacher of truth, and finally, a martyr for the truth. The final dialogue, naturally, turns out to be the *Phaedo*, containing the deathbed discourse of Socrates and the description of his death.

The unsoundness of both views is striking. Schleiermacher directly supposes something psychologically and historically impossible. Of course, such a purely cerebral philosopher and theoretical writer as, for example, Kant would more closely resemble Schleiermacher's conception. If one recalls the many centuries of development of the purely formal power of thought—from the first scholastics and the pre-Leibniz-Wolf philosophy, which trained the author of the three critiques; if one takes into consideration the national character of the German intellect, the personal character and style of life of Kant himself—a life completely closed into a tight circle between his desk and the university auditorium—then, regarding him, perhaps one could allow that the entire sum of his works is only a methodical fulfillment of one program drawn up in advance. However, we know positively that here as well there was nothing of the kind.

The intellectual work of Kant passed through at least three completely distinct stages, not at all having been a direct continuation or preparation of one another: we know of his mind's long "dogmatic dream" in the comfortable cradle of the Leibniz-Wolf system. We know how he was awakened by the strong stimulus of Hume's skepticism to the discovery of critical idealism and, later, stirrings of another order led him to the creation of an ethics of absolute duty and a religion within the limits of pure reason. Of course, in that same dogmatic dream, Kant did not dream his ruinous criticism, and after he produced it, he did not think up a definite plan of a new moral and religious order. If even Kant—a priori and method personified—could not complete and also plan his half century of intellectual labor according to one program or definite plan drawn up in advance, then what can one say about Plato? To begin with is the fact that in ancient Greece there were no scholarly chairs, and thus there could be no armchair scholars. But the main thing is the person of Plato himself. He was a person living a full life not only open to all impressions but thirsting and searching for them, a person who at the beginning of his walk in life suffered through one of the greatest tragedies of world history—the death of Socrates. After that he fled from his native city, traveled extensively in the world, entered into relations with the clandestine Pythagorean union, and then repeatedly, and in the depths of his old age for one final time, drew very near to powerful rulers in order to create with their aid an enlightened State. Such a person could in no way throughout his entire life be a methodical fulfiller of one philosophical-literary agenda established in advance.

What remains of Schleiermacher's view is only the general truth that there is an intrinsic connection among all the works of Plato. But this connection did not consist of the premeditated design of a complete course in philosophy. Plato had no such project. He also did not intend to devote his life to an idealized biography of his teacher. According to Munk, Plato was fiercely devoted to the image of Socrates as the ideal of wisdom and truth, which controlled Plato's mind completely. And this was objectified in his mind so that the order of Plato's works was not expressed in the course of Plato's own life but only in the recollected and reproduced course of Socrates' life. But actually, there is none of this. In several dialogues, Socrates in fact does dominate Plato's work and is embodied in him with the entire fullness of artistic truth; and Socrates' actual speeches are here only transmitted through the mind of Plato, which is directly accessible to us. They might have received from it a few new lines and colorings, but all their essence was preserved. However, in others—in the greater part of the dialogues—Socrates is used only as a literary device. It is Plato's common pseu-

donym but not always a successful one. Sometimes he makes speeches that the real Socrates not only did not make but could not have made: for example, when the imaginary Socrates seriously discusses metaphysical and cosmological questions which the real Socrates acknowledged as fruitless and not worthy of attention, but in which Plato became particularly interested long after the death of the teacher and under other heterogeneous influences. What kind of biography of Socrates is this, even as an idealized one?

Clearly, Socrates himself and the events of his life cannot be accepted as the focus of Plato's works; rather, it is only through the place which he occupied in the life and thought of Plato that we see Socrates: and this place, with all its importance, was not all-important; the individuality and image of Plato's thought took shape under the predominant influence of Socrates but were not swallowed up by him. So, we must search for the proper source of the unity of Plato's works not in Socrates, as Munk assumes, and not in the abstract theoretical half of the Platonic essence, as it is according to Schleiermacher, but in Plato himself as a whole, living person. *Here*, of course, is a real unity. His age, attitudes, and requirements changed, as did his psychology and perspectives on the world. But all this changed in a living person who remained himself, and his internal unity connected all the works of his creative mind.

The dialogues of Plato certainly express most proximately his philosophical interests and the philosophical labor of his mind. But the attribute of philosophical interest itself obviously depends also on the person of the philosopher. For Plato, philosophy was first of all *a life pursuit*. And life for him was not the peaceful day in, day out intellectual labor of, for example, a Kant, but rather a profound and complex drama embracing his entire being. The development of this drama, of which we in part have direct evidence and in part have to surmise from indirect indications, is reflected and immortalized in the dialogues. So, we have Plato himself as the hero of his own life-drama—here is the real principle of the unity of Plato's works, the order of which naturally was determined by the course of this drama.

I.

Without any doubt, the plot of Plato's life-drama is given in his attitudes toward the still-living Socrates in the first act. The memory of the deceased Socrates recurrently resounds as a leitmotif in the following acts as well. Who is this Socrates, and in what is the essence of his significance? Socrates was the *tertium*

quid, the third sought for, and searching, aspect of a Greek life shaken to its foundations—a just, unbiased party who was in the process of reconciling the two other parties at odds and thus was irreconcilably hated by both. At issue was the very principle of humankind's existence. Originally, ancient Hellenic life, just like all pagan life, rested upon the dual but indivisible foundation of religious and State law. *Theios nomos*—*nomos Basileus*.³ The ancestral gods and the ancestral community way of life—are only two expressions, two aspects of one vitally important principle. The origin is a common one: the sacred object of the hearth with a cult of ancestors indivisible from it. When the clan—ancestral community, the domestic community, was included in a wider and more powerful civic community, when the city became superior to and stronger than the clan, then naturally the gods of the civic community became supreme in place of family and domestic gods.

New eras attempt, although not always and everywhere successfully, to remove from the Deity the police function and from the police—divine sanction. The task is a difficult one. In those times, the issue didn't even come up. This combination of primitive religion with politics, or the police, was so distinctive and so altered both elements that it is almost impossible to conceive of it clearly. As water when taken separately in its specific properties resembles neither hydrogen nor oxygen in the least, so the religious police regime of ancient life recalled neither religion nor the police in our sense of these terms. And if the chief ancestral gods were essentially municipal guardians, then the human guardians of the city (the *phylakes* of Plato's Polity) were also in essence divine, more so, certainly, than the *Odyssey's* "divine" swineherd, Eumaeus.⁴

Such a chaste integrity of consciousness could not remain long-lived. It was held together by the fact of a direct and spontaneous faith of the people in the reality and strength of family and civic gods and in the sanctity and divine nature of the native city. And from whichever of the two ends one shook this dual faith, the entire edifice would at once be destroyed. If the ancestral gods were not real or were powerless, then where was the sanctity of ancestral laws derived? If the ancestral laws were not holy, then what was the prescribed ancestral religion founded upon? So then, it was necessary that the dual faith, which held together the entire social structure of the society in question, remain an inviolable whole. But how is this accomplished? When faith is only a fact accepted through tradition, it is an unusually fragile, unstable thing, always taken unawares by everything. And thank God that it is so. An exclusively factually based, blind faith is incompatible with the dignity of the human being. It is more character-

istic of either demons, who believe and tremble, or dumb animals, which, of course, receive the law of their life *on faith* “without reflection, without anguish, without fateful meditation, without vanity, without shallow doubts.”⁵

I spoke of demons and animals not for the beauty of style but for the purpose of historical reminder. Religions founded on virtually blind faith, or those rejecting other, better foundations, always end either with diabolical blood-thirstiness or bestial shamelessness.

II.

A blind and unaccountable religion is offensive first of all to its object, to the Deity itself, which does not require this from man. As the infinite Good that is foreign to every envy, its joy is not in demons and animals, although it gives a place in the world to them both, but rather in the “sons of men.” And so that this joy would be perfect, it gave to man special gifts, which the demons envy and the animals know nothing about. These gifts are of course important because they are the means by which the original outward form of human (supra-brutish) existence was created—that which we call culture. It would not exist without fire and agriculture.

“The great benefactors of humankind are Prometheus, Demeter, and Dionysus. But ‘three times greater’ is our father Hermes Trismegistos. He invested his living soul and the motive force of life—philosophy—into the physical form of human community, not so that man would receive for free and in readied form eternal truth and blessing, but so that the laborious human path to truth and blessedness would be preserved from both quarters—from superstitious trembling before demons, and from dumb animal instinct.”⁶

This is why people who have yielded to one or another dark force and have themselves become misled and then try to mislead others are justly called *obscurantes*. They constantly and stubbornly, although fruitlessly, focus their own hatred precisely on philosophy as if it undermines every faith, whereas in truth philosophy undermines and makes impossible obscure, idle, and stagnant faith. The bearers of true, pure faith highly valued this contribution of philosophy. They found, as we know, that philosophy for the Hellenes had the same meaning as the Law for the Hebrews. It had the significance of Providential guidance during the transition from the darkness of paganism to the Light of Christ. At

* Vladimir S. Soloviev, “Hermes Trismegistos,” *Encyclopedic Dictionary*, Brokhaus and Efron, VIII (2).

the same time, they allowed that in paganism as well everything was not just darkness. To unenlightened faith, Greek philosophy and subsequently Christianity both seemed to be atheism. Meanwhile, according to ancient knowledge, the first forefather of this philosophy, Thales, announced that “everything is full of the gods.” But this was too much for the adherents of ancestral religion. Of what use was this plenitude of gods for them? They considered only their own civic and war gods as necessary for the course of life, and they had absolutely nothing to do with the divine content of “everything.” Their ancestral traditions and laws vouched for their own gods—and what vouched for the plenitude of the universal gods? An idea of Thales? But here the thought of other philosophers—Xenophanes, Anaxagoras—went further and discovered something else. They rejected any multiplicity of gods, and in its place, deity appeared as absolute unity in the former (Xenophanes) and as the creative intelligence of the universe in the latter (Anaxagoras). For the conservative mentality of the mob and its rulers, this was now explicitly a rocking to the foundations, and it evoked a corresponding counteraction.

III.

The philosophers were the first to cause a real schism in Greek life. Prior to them, only material parties, in a manner of speaking, could exist among the cities. These parties resulted to all intents and purposes from the collision and conflict merely of the societal groups, forces, and interests that arose. But there was no contradiction of principle among them, for all alike acknowledged one principle of life—ancestral tradition. No one encroached upon it, and because of the absence of any violators of this principle, neither could there be any guardians of the principle. They inevitably appeared just when the philosophers touched on the sacred relic of ancestral law and subjected its very content to criticism. Two *formal* parties appeared everywhere in Greece: one defended the existing foundations of community life, on principle; the other—shook these foundations, also on principle. The first victories everywhere belonged to the guardians. Their principle rested on the instinct of self-preservation among the masses, on all the power of the counteraction of societal organisms, which, although now affected, had not yet dissolved. The very proximity of dissolution intensified conservative desires with the fear of their failure.

“Don’t dare touch this, or it will collapse.”

“But is it worth conserving?”

“Don’t dare to ask! It is worthy simply by the fact that it exists, that we have

grown accustomed to it, that it is *ours*; and as long as we are powerful—woe unto the philosophers!”

The philosophers could respond thus:

“Great is the truth, and it will overcome!” But in the expectation of this, Xenophanes roamed all his life as a homeless wanderer, and Anaxagoras avoided the death penalty thanks only to personal connections; it was substituted for him by banishment. But in Anaxagoras’s fate there was already a presentiment of the victory of philosophy.

This chief forerunner of Socrates, Anaxagoras, who came from the Ionian Clazomenae in Asia Minor to the City of Athens, where he gained both glory and persecution, marks in his person the transition of ancient philosophy from its place of birth in the Greek trading colonies to the true center of Hellenic culture and education, where, despite persecution, philosophy became a genuine social force of pan-Hellenic and, later, worldwide historical significance.

IV.

It is not by random chance that Hellenic philosophy sprouted in the colonies and blossomed in Athens. The merchant-navigators, by whom a swarm of Greek colonies was founded and settled, inevitably broke down the exclusiveness of the traditional ancestral structure and brought into the native city a familiarity with many and diverse *foreign* things. This gave to talented minds the material and stimulation for a comparative appraisal of what was “one’s own” and what was “foreign,” leading to inevitable judgment and the opportunity for condemnation. In any case, immediate faith in the absolute significance of “one’s own,” as such, was itself undermined by all this, and the philosophical aspiration for *inner* truth was awakened. If all this was taking place in the colonies, then at the other end of the Mediterranean in the lively Athenian democracy, the activity of critical thought which had been generated by the comparison of diverse ways of life *coexisting* in the known world obtained a new power and a new justification here, where the exclusivity of the ruling law of existence was now being smashed by temporal change as well, by the passing and abolition of laws according to the fickle will of the multitudes, as it was in the shifting Athenian democracy.

For the colonial Greeks, the *conventions* of ancestral law came to light in space, for the Athenians, in time. If the inquisitive seafarer began to relate skeptically to the traditional ancestral order because he saw far too *much* variety in a foreign land, then the Athenian citizen, neither going outside his native walls

nor viewing "foreign" things, had to doubt the worthiness and significance of "one's own," since it changed much too *often* before his eyes and even with his own participation. This does not prevent a love of one's homeland; perhaps it even strengthens it as something absolutely intimate and stirring. But a religious, reverential attitude to national laws as to something superior and absolute must certainly fall apart under the first impact of critical thought. Here the biblical writer's mockery of the idolator is quite applicable: he takes a piece of wood, marble, or metal and makes a statue out of it with his own hands and then brings sacrifices and supplications to it as to a god.⁷ Law—as the product of unstable will, opinion, and whim of the people—no more deserves reverence than material articles made by human hands.

V.

All the power of the criticism that ancient (that is, pre-Socratic) philosophy turned upon gods and ancestral statutes can be expressed in one word—*relativity*. "That which you deem absolute and thus inviolable," said the philosophers to their fellow citizens, "in fact is completely relative, and thus subject to scrutiny and judgment, and in its phoney absoluteness, it is subject to condemnation and abolition." The cause of the philosophers, as we know, was not restricted to this denunciatory and negative mission. Their attempts to determine a true absolute were connected to this criticism of a phoney absolute. Having repudiated or relegated to the background the given traditional foundations of human life, they asserted systems of universal, cosmic existence discovered by reason—from the water and air of the first Ionians, to the equilibrium of attractive and repellent forces of Empedocles, to Anaxagoras's universal mind, and Democritus's atoms and void.

There was truth in all this, but in order to find it amidst such diversity, in order to comprehend and evaluate all these diverse and seemingly contradictory ideas as parts comprised in an intellectual whole, the rare gift of speculation and synthesis was needed, and it subsequently appeared in the persons of Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus. But at first, the more intelligible negative aspect of the philosophical process which the Greek intellect had endured naturally took precedence. After two centuries of intellectual exercise, an entire class of people was spawned in Greece with formally developed intellectual abilities, with literary education, and with lively intellectual interests. These people had lost all faith in the teetering traditional foundations of the national way of life but, for all that, did not have the moral insight to devote themselves wholeheartedly to a

search for better and genuine norms of existence. These people, whom the perspicacity of public awareness both immediately connected with philosophy and distinguished from philosophy by the peculiar term *Sophists*, greedily grasped for that concept of relativity by which the philosophers undermined obscure faith. Elevating this concept to a boundless universal principle, the Sophists also turned its cutting edge against philosophy itself, utilizing apparent contradictions among the multiplicity of philosophical teachings.

If the experience of familiarity with foreign countries across the sea and the experience of democratic changes at home yielded knowledge of the twofold relativity of traditional vital norms according to space and time—and challenged along with that the philosophers in their negative criticism—then the experience of philosophy itself in the wide variety of its systems also apparently compelled them to apply to it the same criticism. And from the relativity of philosophical constructs they concluded that all conceivable standards, or any determined principles of existence whatsoever, were groundless. Not only the beliefs and laws of the cities, proclaimed the Sophists, but everything in general is relative, conditional, inauthentic. There is nothing good or bad or true or false *in essence*, but everything only according to convention or circumstance—*ou phusei, alla thesei monon*.⁸ And in the absence of essential and objective norms, only practical expedience remains the sole guide in any matter, and the only goal can be success. No one can vouch for the absolute truth of their aspiration or for the truth of their opinions, but all alike, without exception, anticipate the success or triumph of their aspirations and opinions. Here, then, is the sole genuine substance of life—to search for practical success by all possible means, and since the individual man achieves this goal only with the support of others, then one's main task is—to persuade others of what one needs for oneself. And thus, the most important and useful skill is the skill of verbal persuasion, or *rhetoric*.

VI.

The Sophists, who believed only in *success*, could not be persuaded by reasoned arguments but only by the actual *failure* of their cause. They did not persuade Greece in the rightness of their absolute skepticism, and they did not succeed in replacing philosophy with rhetoric. There appeared Socrates, who succeeded in ridiculing the Sophists and discovering new and glorious pathways for philosophy. The enmity of the Sophists toward Socrates is understandable. But at first glance it might seem strange that another party turned out not only to be in sympathy with the Sophists in this enmity, but surpassed them in it.

Enmity would seem natural between those who stood for the inviolability of traditional beliefs and vital norms and those who, like the Sophists, were chiefly naysayers denying, without exception, all foundations defining community life, in principle rejecting the very possibility of such foundations, that is, any bases whatsoever for life and thought. And there was, of course, animosity between the conservatives and Sophists, but it did not take a tragic turn at all. In the end, the Sophists prospered, and the entire weight of conservative persecution fell right upon the philosophers of the most positive bent, those who affirmed a good and true meaning of order in the world and society. First it fell on Anaxagoras, who taught that the world is founded upon and is directed by a supreme Mind, and then it fell on Socrates particularly. The superficial enmity between the conservatives and the Sophists subsided, and the two former adversaries united their forces in order to save themselves from what was to both sides the hateful embodiment of a higher truth. What bound them together was the fact that they were both wrong.

And in the meantime, on the part of Socrates there was no absolute, irreconcilable enmity at all, either to Sophist principle or to the principle of the guardians of ancestral tradition and law. He sincerely and readily acknowledged those grains of truth which both sides possessed. He was indeed a third, synthetic, and conciliatory principle among them. He stood together with the Sophists for the right and for the necessity of critical and dialectical investigation; he was, just as they were, against blind, unreasoning faith and did not want to accept anything without prior testing. Because of this critical inquisitiveness, which struck one more than anything else, both the masses and such poor thinkers as Aristophanes directly lumped together Socrates and the Sophists.⁹ But on the other hand, he acknowledged meaning and truth both in the people's beliefs and in the practical authority of ancestral laws. He demonstrated both his honor and his patriotic loyalty right up to the very end. One should not hold suspect his sincerity in the sacrifice at Aesculapius, which took place just before his death.¹⁰ And by refusing to flee his dungeon after the death sentence had been passed, he placed his duties to his native city higher than the preservation of life itself.

VII.

In the absence of direct antagonism based on principle, what explains this irreconcilable hatred for Socrates from both sides? The point is just that here the antagonism was based not on principle in an abstractly theoretical sense but, rather, was vital, practical, and, it can be said, personal—in the more profound sense of this word. Socrates became intolerable to both sides with what he im-

plied and sometimes by the direct thrust of what he said, but they could find no rational response.

It was as if Socrates was saying to the conservatives, "You are completely right and deserve every praise for wanting to protect the foundations of civic community—this is a most important matter. It's fine that you are guardians, but the trouble is only in the fact that you are—*poor* guardians: you don't know what to conserve or how to conserve it. You act, fumblingly, helter-skelter, like blind men. Your blindness is born of conceit, and though this conceit is unjust and pernicious for you and for others, it, however, deserves pardon, for it depends not on malicious will but on your stupidity and ignorance." How is it possible to answer this, apart from the dungeon and poison?

And to the Sophists, Socrates said, "You do very well to occupy yourselves with arguments and to put to the test of your critical thought all that is material and nonmaterial; it's a pity only that you are poor thinkers and do not at all understand either the purposes or the methods of real criticism and dialectics."

Socrates pointed out and, more important, proved irrefutably the intellectual bankruptcy of his adversaries, and this was, of course, an unforgivable sin. Their enmity was now irreconcilable. Even if Socrates had never directly exposed the Athenian city fathers as poor guardians and the Sophists as poor thinkers, the situation would not have changed: he still unmasked both of them by his very person, by his moral force and the positive significance of his speeches. As the embodiment of truly conservative and truly critical principles, he was a living insult to both poor guardians and poor critics. Even if both parties had been dissatisfied with each other, each had been imperturbably smug without Socrates around.

Although the conservatives could see in their adversaries godless and impious people, they were conscious of their inner superiority and celebrated their victory in advance: it could seem in fact that they stood for truth and piety themselves; there was an outward appearance of an argument of ideas based on principle, in which they represented the positive, correct side. But during the clash with Socrates, the situation completely changed: one could not defend faith and piety, as such, against a man who himself was a believer and pious—one had to defend not belief itself but only the distinction between their belief and that of Socrates, but this distinction consisted in the fact that Socrates' belief had vision while theirs was blind. Thus, the *poor quality* of their faith at once came to light, and its weakness and *insincerity* appeared in their attempts to affirm absolutely this erroneous blind faith. By what rationalization could they stand for *obscure* faith? By the rationalization that *every* faith should be obscure? But here was Socrates on hand, graphically refuting such an assumption by the very fact of

his radiant, visionary faith. It was clear that they stood for darkness not in the interests of faith but in some kind of other interests alien to faith. And indeed, Athenian conservatives of that time—at least the more educated among them—were unbelieving people. It could not be otherwise. Once an intellectual movement began in a certain milieu, philosophy sprang up and developed—a spontaneous faith requiring an infantile mind became impossible for every person touched by this movement. It was impossible to protect that which had collapsed, and the faith of obscurantists was only a deceptive mask, worn over their real unbelief. Among the more vital and gifted of the Athenian conservative people, for example, Aristophanes, genuine sentiment broke through the mask: in exposing the supposed impiety of the philosophers, he revealed his own—in a crude mockery of the gods. What was being protected by such guardians, and what motivated them? It was clear that it was not even a fear of god, but only fear for that old, customary social order, which had been historically bound to a given religion.

Socrates, by the very fact of his positive and, at the same time, intrepid and radiant faith, exposed the intrinsic worthlessness of such a faithless and corrupt conservatism. And what is more, by the very fact of an absolutely critical and, at the same time, completely positive attitude of his thinking toward real life, he exposed the intrinsic bankruptcy of Sophist pseudocriticism. While the Sophists had against them either the masses or people of the upper class, who only weakly adhered to the philosophical movement and were unskilled in dialectic, then it could seem that sophistry represented the laws of progress against national stagnation, the laws of reason against backwardness, the laws of knowledge and enlightenment against dark ignorance. But when the “wisest of the Hellenes,” a man in any event of greater intellectual power and dialectical skill than the Sophists, armed himself against the Sophist havoc that was being wrought upon all vital principles, then all saw that the purely negative character of Sophist reasoning was at best a function of the incompleteness and one-sidedness *of their* views and methods, and not out of any necessity of human thought. It became clear that the issue here was not in thinking and criticism *per se*, but only in poor thinking and poor criticism.

VIII.

Thus, the fault of Socrates, apart from his direct polemic against the conservatives and the wreckers (the Sophists), consisted in his very point of view itself revealing the ideological nakedness of both one and the other.

Within him there was a ray of true light which unveiled both the man himself and the darkness of others. The phoney guardians maintained that one must absolutely, without any thought, accept national beliefs and submit oneself to their ancestral statutes only because they had been given and instituted, *established prior to us*. And the phoney thinkers taught that it is not necessary to obey anything at all, but only to search for one's own advantage and success. Faced with this twofold falsehood, in both his words and his life Socrates confirmed that *there is* an absolute duty, but only to that which is itself absolute, which *in essence* and, consequently, always and everywhere is good and worthy. And this absolute *exists*, there is an existing norm for the life of humanity, *the Good* exists in itself. It alone is truly desirable, or is the highest good for man, the foundation and measure of all other good things; and human community should be constructed upon it as the absolute truth and the criterion of all that is just. If national beliefs and ancestral statutes conform with or can be connected to the absolute norm of life, they should be accepted and obeyed. What is required, then, is a precise evaluation of everything in question. Reflection and criticism are required, but not as art for art's sake, rather, as *a search for truth*, for the purpose of actually discovering it.

Socrates believed that there is an absolute Good and, that "what is" is genuinely only that which deserves to be. However, his faith was not blind but completely rational; this was, first, a strict faith in reason, requiring that what exists conform to it, have meaning, or properly be of objective reality. And second, Socrates' faith had a rational character also because it searched for its realization or justification in everything and indispensably required for this the logical work of a reflective mind.

Believing in the existence of an absolute Good, Socrates did not provide it in advance with any immediate definitions; for him it was not presented in prepared form but *sought for*. However, it is impossible to search for something if you don't believe that it exists.

IX.

In accordance with rational belief, the absolute Good *exists* in itself; yet possession of it is not given to man unconditionally but requires essential conditions. The goal lies ahead, and a process is needed for achieving it. Socrates proposed only the general concept about something which, being good in itself, can make everything else good also. In order actually to attain that which alone is properly worthy of attainment, the first condition is—to repudiate everything that

is not so, to regard everything else as nothing. "I know only that I know nothing."—Socrates thought that it was for this confession that the Pythia pronounced him the wisest of the Hellenes.¹¹ The first condition of true philosophy is *spiritual poverty*. This amazing foretelling of the first Gospel commandment, the surprising agreement of the Delphic Oracle with the Sermon on the Mount, was noticed even by the church fathers in the first centuries of Christianity!

The declaration of one's spiritual poverty amidst an apparent wealth is certainly a spiritual feat. But this accomplishment loses all its value if one rests on it, as do the skeptics, in whom the humble consciousness of their insufficiency is converted into the opposite, into smugness and pride. For such a transition, a small addition is required, one which was alien to Socrates and to the Gospel: "I don't know anything, it is impossible to know anything, and unnecessary to know anything." A consolation decidedly not based on anything. True spiritual poverty does not console itself by itself alone, between it and consolation lies *grief* concerning one's condition: "Blessed are those who weep, for they will be comforted." And Socrates' laughter did not contradict this Gospel weeping. He did not express joy about his destitution but only the censure of a supposed wealth. The declaration of his ignorance was for Socrates only the first principle of his *quest*; spiritual poverty called forth in him spiritual hunger and thirst. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for truth, for they will be filled"—a new harmony of true philosophy and true religion, Hellenic and Hebraic wisdom.¹²

X.

If Socrates had restricted himself to the confession of his ignorance, he would have certainly been a most pleasant man both for the conservatives and for the Sophists. The obscurantism of the former and the gossip of the latter alike required ignorance—ignorance of that which in essence is desirable and obligatory, what is worth knowing and should be known. "We really don't know anything," said the conservatives, "therefore it is necessary to believe blindly in the ancestral laws."

"Yes, it is not possible to know anything," affirmed the Sophists, "therefore it is necessary to aspire to one's advantage and success, and to any power which yields advantage and success." Both hurried to elevate factual ignorance arbitrarily and unscrupulously to law, in order to conclude from this what they wanted, in order to justify and foist on others their ignorance and their idle talk.

And they would have succeeded, their conclusions did so gratify the spiritual indolence and all the lowest aspects of human nature. They were also apparently justified by the bankruptcy of philosophical teachings which contradicted one another. It seemed to both the conservatives and the Sophists that it was easy to get rid of the philosophers, who had ruined themselves with such contradictions. But they “reckoned without a master”—without Logos-Hermes and his eternal gift to man.¹³ Neither the persecution of the cities nor the contradictions of the philosophers themselves frightened Philosophy, which through the lips of one man drowned out the ignorant and empty words of the many-headed mob. She lifted up her voice and was embodied in Socrates on the streets and in the squares of Athens, and having proved to everyone that he knows nothing, She reached a troubling conclusion, but the only one deserving of man: “He who recognizes his ignorance, still knows something and can know more; if you don’t know—then learn; if you don’t possess the truth, then look for it; when you search, it is already near you, only with a hidden face, and it requires your intellectual labor to be discovered.”

This requirement of an inner effort on the part of man, in the face of the tireless spiritual asceticism of Socrates himself in his search for truth, which unmasked the ignorance and obscurantism of the conservatives and the idle activity of the Sophists, removed from both of them the possibility of being complacent. And the man who encroaches upon the complacency of obscurantists or shallow people is at first disturbing, then unbearable, and finally—a criminal deserving of death.

XI.

Socrates was charged, as is well-known, with “not revering the gods revered by the city, but introducing other, new deities,” and also that he “corrupts the youth.”¹⁴ The true essence of the matter shows through clearly in these accusations. It was not possible simply to charge Socrates, like Anaxagoras, with atheism; his piety was manifest. And even for the accusers, the issue was not the gods in general, but only those which the city revered or legitimated (*nomisei*). And the real meaning of the charge was not that Socrates did not revere them. He did, in fact, incidentally revere them as well. But he revered them not because the city recognized them; rather, only because, or to the extent that, there was or could be something divine in them—he honored them *in their essence*, in their inner connection with the absolute, and not according to convention—*phusei ou thesei*. In this was his crime. It was aggravated by the fact that he “in-

roduced *other, new* deities.” And here is true evidence to the positive character of Socrates’ teaching and especially of his attitude toward religion: he did not diminish the capital of national piety but, on the contrary, added to it. However, this increase of faith also was a crime because here too Socrates acted *according to essence*, not dealing with the outward circumstances of truly divine phenomena acknowledged by him, whether old or new, whether revered by the city or not. A third crime consisted in the fact that they listened to Socrates, that he had an effect on bright minds and hearts which had not yet hardened. He corrupted the youth by the fact that he undermined in them trust and respect for ignorant and shallow leaders, for the blind leading the blind.

XII.

Socrates had to die as a criminal. Here was the tragic blow at the very outset of Plato’s life-drama. Similar to some ancient tragedies, and to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* as well, this drama not only ends but also begins with a tragic catastrophe. But how much more profound and more significant is historical reality than poetic invention! Take the work of Shakespeare. Inspired by gross personal passions, a villain murders the father of young Hamlet. The natural sense and the natural duty of clan vengeance require that the murderer be punished, and thus duty becomes complicated for Hamlet by the criminal participation of his mother in the terrible act. A clandestine fratricide, the murder of a husband, regicide, the theft of a throne, double, triple betrayal—all this in the closest family circle of the hero and in his own being—a hopeless contradiction of conscience and will, sensibility and temperament. Here, inarguably, is a splendid specimen of a tragic situation, worthy of the most powerful of poets.

But note that although the drama takes place after many centuries of Christianity, it has meaning only owing to a purely pagan conception of clan vengeance as moral duty. The heart of the drama is precisely that Hamlet considered it his duty to avenge his father, but his indecisive temperament constrained the fulfillment of this would-be duty. But wait—this is only an isolated case, there is no general or essential necessity that a man confessing a religion which forbids revenge preserve the concepts and rules which require vengeance.

Remove this idea of obligatory vengeance, natural in a pagan and completely against the nature of a Christian, and what will be the basis for the drama? A man’s noble father was killed in the vilest manner, his mother taken from him, and he was thrust aside from his hereditary throne. What great grief and disas-

ter! But suppose that this man holds with deep conviction, I won't say even a Christian, but at least a Stoic, Buddhist, or Tolstoyan point of view; then there results from his pitiful situation but one simple and purely intrinsic responsibility—resignation. He can courageously accept this duty or faintheartedly grumble against it, but in either case there is no overt and necessary action and, hence, neither does a tragedy result from his misfortune. Clearly, to create a real tragedy from the situation of a man who submits to, or at least endures, his calamities with grumbling is absolutely impossible no matter how great the calamities and the genius of the poet.

In order that the magnificent tragedy which we know emerge from the pitiful situation of Hamlet, it was necessary for Shakespeare to create *special* conditions which did not result from the essence of the situation. First, it was necessary that all the horrors committed in Elsinor fall on the head of a man who, despite his nominal belonging to Christianity, sincerely believes in his own duty of blood vengeance; if not for this blind belief, if Hamlet had doubted his would-be duty to avenge and recalled but for a minute his true duty to forgive enemies—the tragedy would be lost, and the lamentable fact would retain only the one meaning of life's tribulations. And was there indeed any intrinsic necessity for Hamlet to believe so strongly in the law of clan existence, rendered obsolete by higher human consciousness?

But second, even having granted Hamlet the fortuitous power of this historically obsolete law, we see nevertheless that the tragedy would not have come off if Hamlet had simply fulfilled his would-be duty, having killed the villain-usurper and rightfully taken his throne. Then it would have remained for him only to marry Ophelia, as in Sumarokov's adaptation of the play, and the performance would end with the tender words of Ophelia instead of the stately prayer of Fortinbras:

Go my prince to the Temple
 Show yourself among the people
 And I will go and pay
 My final debt to nature!¹⁵

XIII.

Thus, apart from the fortuitous belief of Hamlet in the law of blood vengeance, yet another condition was required for the tragedy—the incapability of Hamlet to execute any law at all. It was required that this man be only a thinker of evil, if you like, a moralizer, but not an agent. However, I won't begin to exam-

ine the character required by these circumstances in order that I not reiterate the sufficiently well known and excellent analysis of him in Turgenev's brilliant essay "Hamlet and Don Quixote."

So, extrinsic chance acquired a tragic interest thanks only to the individuality of the hero. But it will be said: and so it must be. Not absolutely. There have been poetic tragedies founded chiefly on intrinsic, though not absolute, necessity but dependent upon objective historical forces and not on an individual, subjective character.

It is seldom noticed that the subject of *Hamlet* is only a revival of the ancient *Oresteia's* theme. Orestes, like Hamlet, had a noble father murdered by a villainous relative, with the major participation of the murdered father's own wife, the mother of Orestes. But here the situation itself creates a tragedy independent of the individuality of the hero. Humility, resignation, forgiveness of enemies are not at all possible for Orestes—such concepts did not exist in his day. The natural law of clan existence still dominated all consciousness, but the tragedy was in the fact that this law itself *became split* on the eve of its collapse. The family is all-powerful, but who represents it: the mother or the father? Which natural union is the real one: the matriarchal or the patriarchal? The center of gravity of the tragedy is not in the person of Orestes but in the objective historical clash of two laws, which jostled one another in natural humankind—gynocratic and androcratic law. The tragedy in its essence takes place here, whatever the character and the thoughts of Orestes may be—it's all the same: these two objective laws—of paternal and of maternal right—make their contradictory demands on him, they collide in his breast.

But, it will be said, out of this advantage of ancient tragedy also results a major shortcoming—namely, the weakness of individual and subjective interest. Certainly, this is so; and here two types have already long ago been distinguished by aesthetics: ancient tragedy of common necessity and modern tragedy of individual character. But is the essence of the tragic in the life of humanity indeed exhausted by this contrast? Is there indeed an intrinsic reason that either *this* or *that* aspect prevail in tragedy? Is a tragic situation indeed impossible, wherein the most significant and universal clash of objective, active principles in the world demonstrates its effect upon the most powerful and profound individuality?

XIV.

There is no intrinsic necessity that a drama be absolutely one-sided. But where is this superior, synthetic, and complete drama? I know of no such drama in po-

etry, but it actually took place in history, and it is to just such a living drama, superior to both the ancient *Oresteia* and the modern *Hamlet*, that we now turn.

Although it took place earlier than Christianity, the situation which takes shape in it is already on spiritual firmament. A kindhearted father, an educator of wisdom is murdered—not a blood-kin father but a spiritual one. This is still a personal, although an elevated relationship. But now there is something beyond the personal; *a righteous man has been killed*. Killed not by a gross individual crime, not by self-seeking betrayal, but by the triumphant public sentence of a legitimate power, by the will of his native city. And this still could have been accidental, if the righteous man had been lawfully killed for some matter extraneous to his righteousness, even if he were guiltless. However, he was killed precisely for this, for the truth, for the determination to fulfill his moral duty to the end.

The fate of Socrates was sealed with the following words to his judges: "You, men of Athens, I respect and love, but I will obey god more than you, and while there is in me breath and strength, I will not stop philosophizing and admonishing and unmasking you with my usual speeches."¹⁶

The tragedy was not personal, not subjective, not in the parting of student and teacher, son and father: in any case, there remained for Socrates but a short time to live. The tragedy was in the fact that the best public community in all humankind of that time—Athens—could not endure the simple, naked principle of truth; that public life turned out to be incompatible with personal conscience; that an abyss of pure, unalloyed evil opened up and swallowed a righteous man; that death turned out to be the sole destiny for truth, and life and reality were lost to evil and falsehood.

How does one live in this kingdom of evil, how does one live in a place where a righteous man must die? See how much more profound and significant is this "To be or not to be" which Plato would say over the corpse of a legally and obviously poisoned Socrates, than Hamlet's "To be or not to be," provoked by the lawless and clandestine, essentially chance poisoning of his father.

Of course, only such a towering and fertile mind as Plato's could consciously feel the main thrust of the tragedy of this situation. But the very principle of the tragedy was not in individuality, not in the subject, but in the deep, fateful, and objective clash of the most profound evil with the embodiment of truth. And this clash is stipulated not upon a historical stage of social development, as in the *Oresteia*—it is absolute and universal, as the very principle of supreme truth which was proclaimed by Socrates: "I must obey god more than you." And how

malevolent was the response: "You must die, for the life of society is incompatible with truth, human and divine."

When Hamlet speaks his "To be or not to be" he means—Should I, Hamlet, be or not be?—which is a personal question, and the entire monologue is full of the personal element: the blows of fate, the weeds of life's garden, dreams beyond the grave. For Plato, the question was: will there be or not be truth on the earth—a universal question, though certainly only a great individual could keenly experience its significance—here is a true correspondence, a real synthesis of the universal and the individual, the subjective and the objective principle in drama, and this synthesis took place in actual history and was not invented by any poet at all.

Having elucidated or emphasized the well-known opening of Plato's life-drama with the help of a novel comparison, I must now pass on to its further development and to that final tragic catastrophe to which, if I am not mistaken, enough attention has hitherto not been paid.

XV.

Both Plato and Hamlet actually acquired only a series of dialogues from the horrible situation at the start of their life. The dialogues of Hamlet are thoughtful and witty. The dialogues of Plato, with the rejoinders and addenda of Aristotle and the Stoics and with the conclusions of the Neoplatonists, created an entire intellectual world called Greek philosophy, and they entered into the historical development of Christianity as its main foundation. And yet, it has to be said that Plato's life-tragedy had not only a horrible beginning, but a lamentable end as well, just as real tragedy deserves. He emerged from his life's trial without victory, though not without glory. Like Shakespeare's Hamlet (in contradistinction to Sumarokov's) he could not marry his Ophelia: she drowned. In the end, like Hamlet, Plato turned out to be a *failure*, though of course the failures of a great man give the world much more than a multitude of the most brilliant successes of ordinary people.

One can imagine what an effect Socrates' death sentence had on such a disciple of his as Plato, who succeeded in becoming firmly attached to the captivating person of the teacher and was permeated by the lofty spirit of his words; but now owing to his very age (twenty-eight years) he was incapable of easily reconciling himself with the triumph of evil.¹⁷ And what a triumph! The sweet habit of existence compels people for the sake of preserving their life to forget

and lose sight of its meaning and true reason—that, *for which life is worth living*—*propter vitam vitae perdere causas*.¹⁸ Such a habit could not yet take shape in Plato. The force of moral shock expressed itself in a serious illness, which prevented him from participating in the conversation of the teacher with his disciples, occurring just before his death.* After that, he had to resettle in Megara and there at his doleful leisure to resolve his own “To be or not to be.”

XVI.

There are grounds for surmising that the thought of suicide occurred to Plato. In any event, the reasons he could stop at the thought are absolutely clear. As we know, the essence of Socratic teaching, enthusiastically taken up by his disciple, consisted in the fact that independent of any facts and situations, *there exists* an absolute, essentially *good meaning* to objective reality; and, in acknowledging this, such an act of despair as suicide is directly excluded. To reject that very truth—because of the teacher's tragic death—to which Socrates dedicated his life would be both a logical contradiction and a psychological impossibility. Logically, a dilemma was unavoidable: either Socrates really was a teacher of the truth, and so, one had to obey him and not kill oneself contrary to his teaching; or he was not a prophet of the truth, and then his death, as sad as it was, lost its special principled and fateful significance and was only the death of a good and remarkable but *mistaken* man, one who had lost his way. And here was no cause for hopeless despair; in the first case, suicide would be an impermissible matter and in the second, it would be an act without sufficient foundation.

But from the psychological aspect, both the fact of the teacher's death and the level of moral virtue displayed by him in the circumstances of this death must have to an unusual degree strengthened the enthusiastic and reverential love of Plato for the dead man; and this did not permit him either to doubt the truth of the teaching or to betray it by fainthearted despair. In any event, for the first time, if not for good, the influence of the dead Socrates must have been even stronger than the influence of the living one in having an effect on the deliberate decisions of his disciple.

Yet another psychological reason would not permit Plato to commit suicide. I will elucidate it by comparison. Everyone will acknowledge it as psychologically impossible that a man who is devoted, for example, to material interests, would decide to do violence to himself owing to the death of a close and sin-

* A positive and apparently intentional indication—“Plato was ill,” *Phaedo*, 59.

cerely beloved person, when this person, having died, had left him a rich inheritance. Clearly, in such a man the aspiration to utilize this inheritance would overtake his grief at the heartfelt loss. Plato was another sort of man, but the relationship remains the same. Plato was devoted to the higher interests of the mind, and, besides the great grief, the death of Socrates left him a great spiritual legacy enhanced even by this death itself. The fullness of youthful intellectual power, imbued with the abundant ideological content of Socrates' life and death and lifted to a new height by all the stress of a reverential and grieving love for the dead man, required a positive and creative way out. This fullness, occupying the entire soul of Plato, did not leave within it any barren places where despairing decisions nest. And the fateful question itself of the life and death of *truth* with its suprapersonal, universal significance led his thinking out of a meaningless and narrow personal melancholy, fraught with suicide, into the freedom and light of productive activity.

XVII.

When Plato recovered from it, the death of Socrates gave birth to a new view of the world—Platonic idealism. The primary foundation, the “first premise” of this view, was contained in the teaching of Socrates; the minor premise was given by his death. The genius of Plato derived the conclusion which remained concealed for the other disciples of Socrates.

That world in which a righteous man must die for the truth is not the real, authentic world. Another world exists, where *Truth lives*. Here is the true life basis for Plato's conviction of a truly existing ideal cosmos, distinct from and in contrast to the illusory world of perceptible phenomena. Plato had to acquire his idealism—and this in general was little noticed—not from the abstract discourses by which he later elucidated and demonstrated it, but from the profound psychological ordeal by which his life began.

Socrates taught about an absolute, or a self-existing, Good; yet he took it chiefly not as an antithesis but as an *assumption* of our reality. For Plato, the reality in which the death of Socrates occurred was not a casual fact but the expression of a law, the manifestation of a life norm. Such a reality arose, first of all, from its negative aspect, as a contradiction to the Good and to the Truth! Plato sensed, under the influence of the teaching and in particular the death of Socrates, an *ethical* opposition between what should be and what is, between the true moral order and the set of rules of a given community. Plato sensed this before a dialectical and metaphysical antithesis was created between that which

“exists in essence” (*to ontos on*) and the imaginarily “extant” (*gignomenon*), the apparent, or the phenomenon.

And just as to Hamlet, the world appeared to Plato to be a garden overgrown with weeds; but his pessimism was caused not by personal calamities but by the fact that in this world there turned out to be no place for righteousness and for a righteous man.

For Socrates, the order of true existence was *conventional*—good if it conformed with the Good in essence, bad if it contradicted it. But in the death of Socrates himself, the problem actually received its general solution in a negative sense: it came to light in fact that the existing order in principle contradicts the Good, that it is, in essence, bad. So it is impossible for a man who is not searching for external success in anything that occurs, neither for apparent enjoyment nor for supposed benefit, but searching for true Good or virtue, to participate actively in that order. Although for people of truth and goodness the impossibility of life in general does not follow from such an outlook, evidently, the impossibility of a practically applied and active life does.

We see a certain historical dialectic (in the Hegelian sense) which was expressed in Plato unintentionally and unnoticed by him. Socrates renounced the theoretical speculation about the universe with which his predecessors occupied themselves and brought philosophy down from the heavens to the earth and human society.¹⁹ But his spiritual heir, the successor to his genius and glory, to begin with had to renounce life and public matters and anticipated in principle the idea of eastern monasticism.

The entire world lies in evil; the flesh is a grave and a dungeon for the spirit; society is a grave for wisdom and truth; the life of a true philosopher is a continuous process of dying.²⁰ But this dying of life interests gives way not to emptiness but to a better life of the mind, which contemplates that which is in itself absolute. The Good—is that which Socrates searched for as a moral norm for practical, community life, but which for Plato became now a subject for the time being only of purely theoretical interest, as the supreme Idea, the focus of another, “intellectually conceivable” world.

XVIII.

Plato, by conviction, had to flee the world; his escape under duress from his native city was connected with this.* He took up residency with other Socratics in

* Moral duress, of course; formal legal prosecution of Socrates' disciples was not undertaken, but they could not count on the free dissemination of his ideas.

Megara for a few years far away from any concerns, devoting himself to pure theory and to mathematical and dialectical problems and exercises.

In all probability, Plato undertook his first ocean voyage from Megara—to Syria, Egypt, and maybe farther also, to Asia—before his return to Athens. Be that as it may, having returned to his homeland (five years after the death of Socrates), he continued at first to lead the life of a philosopher remote from public affairs. An extremely pessimistic view of society and public activity speaks out in the dialogues of *Gorgias*, *Meno*, *Phaedo*, and in the second book of the *Republic*; and the character of several other dialogues by the very quality of their missions attests to the estranged idealism of Plato at this time (*Cratylus*—on the nature of words; *Theaetetus*—on what is knowledge; the *Sophist*—on the relationship between essence and nonessence; *Parmenides*—on the one and the many, or on ideas).

This idealism was maintained on the basis of the opposition between the intellectually conceivable sphere of the truly existing and the deceptive stream of sensory phenomena as “nonexistence,” to which all everyday social practice is exclusively related. If such an estranged point of view is compared directly with the ensuing aspirations of Plato to sociopolitical reform, with his stubborn attempts not only to determine the true norms of societal relations but also to embody these norms in the system of a truly model state, then an obvious contradiction presents itself, an impassable abyss. It is not bridged in those refined dialectical considerations of the *Sophist* and *Parmenides*, by virtue of which in a certain sense existence is also taken for “nonexistence.” The attitude of the philosopher to this semixistence remains here also resolutely negative, incompatible with any serious practical aspirations in this fraudulent world. Dialectical diversions are not needed to bridge this abyss but, rather, a new point of view, which we indeed find in the two central dialogues of Plato—the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*.

XIX.

The numerically few, but harmonious, testimonies of antiquity say that up until the time of his encounter with Socrates, Plato wrote love poems, which he burned when he became carried away by the speeches of “the wisest of the Hellenes.” The several erotic poems which have been preserved and left to us with the name of Plato, if only they were authentic, would indicate the real attitudes of the future philosopher to actual people of both sexes. This is in itself also likely both from the psychological and the historical point of view. Yet it is not these

unaccountable phenomena of instinct that are interesting but the erotic crisis consciously endured by Plato in midlife and immortalized in the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*.

Foremost among the many reasons that I will not speak about the external biographical circumstances of this incident is that we know absolutely nothing about it. But if history is silent about the personal details of this interesting love affair, with whom and how it took place, then the two cited dialogues sufficiently attest to both the fact itself and to what Plato concluded from it. Only this little known, but imperative, proposed fact yields the key to the subsequent change in Plato's worldview, and it alone can explain the appearance and character of the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*. These two works, both in the bright, cheerful mood reflected in them and in the subject itself, stand out sharply from the other writings of Plato. And is it possible to grant that the philosopher, having prior to this viewed all human affairs and interests as "nonexisting," and who occupied himself with the most abstract thoughts concerning gnosiological and metaphysical questions, should suddenly from neither of these perspectives, without any real and vital stimulant, dedicate his best works to love, to a subject which did not at all enter into his philosophical range of interests? However, now it was a subject about which he set forth a new theory, one not having any bearing on his former views but which left a deep and indelible, though oblique, trail in the entire appearance of his subsequent thinking. The content of the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* is theoretically unconnected and incompatible with the aloof idealism of "two worlds." It can be understood only as a transformation, as progress in this idealism, which was called forth by the demands of a new life experience. In saying this, I presuppose that these two dialogues belong to the *middle* of Plato's life and work. And it is accepted as such by the majority of authoritative scholars. True, Schleiermacher deemed the *Phaedrus* to be the first, youthful work of Plato, although we can find no attempt on his part actually to prove what for him is a fundamental position. But on the other hand, the contemporary philologist Constantine Ritter finds it possible, according to philological notions (which, however, have appeared convincing to no one except him), to attribute that same *Phaedrus* to Plato's elderly age. These two paradoxes mutually negate one another and leave the general opinion unaltered.

Upon the first serious encounter with the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*, the contemporary reader should experience some bewilderment and embarrassment. The natural basis of the erotic feelings and attitudes here is not at all the one which is commonly taken as normal in contemporary life and literature.

Where one kind of relationship is intended among us, the ancient Greeks, corrupted by Asiatic influences, allowed at least three.

One of the surviving odes of the famous poetess Sappho of Lesbos begins with this appeal to the goddess of love: *Poikilothron athanat Aphrodite*, that is, *multi-hued* patron, everlasting Aphrodite!²¹ This *mixed* character of Aphrodite, which is assumed even by Plato, embarrasses his contemporary reader and admirer, who is used to attributing certain subjects not to philosophy and poetry but to psychiatry, on the one hand, and to the criminal code on the other. Of course, our anomalies in this realm are in fact even more varied than in the classical world; but we are struck by the fact that the foremost among them were taken by the Hellene not for abnormal deviations but for something simple and natural, and even preferable to what we now acknowledge as the solely natural thing.

But it would be unjust in essence, and not only from the historical point of view, to accuse Plato—I mean Plato-the-philosopher—of this reprehensible peculiarity. Finding the “multi-hued” Aphrodite as a fact legitimized by general opinion, he himself *in principle* rejected her entirely, without distinction of her forms. All physical love, independent of one form or another, was acknowledged by him as something vulgar and vile, unworthy of a true human calling; this was *Aphrodite Pandemos*,—literally “of the whole people,” in the sense of cheap, worth nothing, and in distinction to the true or heavenly Aphrodite of Urania, which was worth a great deal.²²

True, for earthly man both have one root, grow from one and the same material soil—but what of it? We know that the most beautiful flowers and the tastiest fruits grow from the earth, and moreover, from the dirtiest and most fertilized earth. This does not ruin their taste and aroma, nor does it impart fragrance to manure, which does not derive nobility from the noble sproutings which it serves.

XX.

While the specialist in agronomy is interested in analyzing various kinds of organic manure, only two truths are of general importance here: first, that *every* sort of this thing is the same product of the decomposition of life, and that only worms and not people can live and find nourishment in such a decomposing milieu. And second, people can and should by their spiritual labor extract from this dark rot the beautiful flowers and immortal fruits of life.

Light from darkness! The images of your roses
 Would not be able to rise
 Above the black clod
 Unless their dark root
 Did sink and plunge
 into the dark bosom.²³

Yes, certainly, such is the law of soil. But from this does it follow that darkness itself is now light? Or even that light is the direct and natural fruit of darkness, a fruit brought forth without struggle, without labor on the part of this dark matter, without the action of another, ancestral principle more closely related to it, without the decisive subjection of the inferior to the superior?

It is not unjustly, not by naive misunderstanding, that the idea of a lofty, pure, and ideal—in a word, *platonic*—love has been connected with Plato's name. Plato raised if not the living fruits of spiritual regeneration, then at least the brilliant and pure flower of his erotic theory out of the erotic mud which, apparently, in a fateful hour dragged down his soul but could not hold it down for very long. Let us recall this theory: it will help us to understand and to evaluate the central turning point in the life-drama of its author.

XXI.

Under the influence of the death of Socrates, which revealed to the eyes of his disciples the entire abyss of the world's evil, Plato composed, as was stated earlier, a dualistic idealism, which in its very essence directly contrasted all our reality with that which truly is and should be. In corporeal and practical life there is nothing that is authentic and worthy; all that is authentic and worthy abides in its own pure idealness, beyond the boundaries of this world of ours; it is "transcendental" and there is no actual bridge between the two worlds. Man himself, although belonging to both worlds, does not, however, form the intrinsic, connecting link between them; dualism annuls even the unity of man. The two heterogeneous parts of our factual essence are joined only in an external, casual way. In an authentic or normal man, that is, in a man who is wise and just, his true essence is his contemplative mind, which is directed exclusively and completely toward the other world beyond. Such a man, in truth, lives only in the cosmos of Ideas, and his illusory life on earth in common with other people is for him only a process of dying. When this temporal dying ends abruptly, the casual bond is broken finally and absolutely, and the philosophic mind which is liberated from the prison of life, shaking the dust off its feet, passes completely and

without regret into the ideal cosmos and then enters into communion with other pure minds abiding there.

I was always struck in the dialogue *Phaedo* where this dualism is expressed in a particularly striking way by a characteristic touch of callousness and indelicacy for which I am convinced Plato and not Socrates must be held accountable. At one point in the conversation, the dying sage clearly indicates, and in another expressly states, to his weeping disciples that his parting from them does not grieve him at all since in the world beyond the grave he counts on meeting and conversing with people who are much more interesting than they are.* I think that if illness had not prevented Plato himself from being one of those weeping disciples, out of conceit alone he would have taken care not to put into the mouth of Socrates such an unceremonious consolation. However, although in this particular case dualistic idealism might have been expressed in a more refined and graceful manner, its essence was sufficiently well defined in Plato's mind, and it is perfectly clear in this view that there was no logical support for establishing a positive connection between the two worlds.

XXII.

The father of idealism found no connecting pathway between the essence of truth which abided at heights accessible to the mind and this vale submerged by the stream of sensory illusions. There was no connection between the perfect plenitude of the gods of ideas and the hopeless emptiness of mortal life. There was no connection for the rational mind. But something irrational took place. An intermediate power between gods and mortals appeared—neither god nor man, but a kind of demonic and heroic being.[†] Its name was Eros, and its official job was to construct a bridge between heaven and earth, and between them and the netherworld. This was not a god but the natural and supreme priest of the divinity, that is, the *intermediary*, the bridge-builder. The younger brother and heir of Greece, the Roman nation, expressed the identity of these two concepts by a single word, *pontifex*, which means both priest and builder of a bridge—of course, not across ordinary rivers, but across the Styx and Acheron, across Phlegethon and Cocytus.²⁴ And that same universal polity preserved the

* It is instructive to compare this with the farewell conversation of Christ with the Apostles in the Gospels. (Matthew 26; Luke 14; Mark 18; John 13).

† In the original religious views of the Greeks *daimon* and *eros* had, in general, one and the same meaning.

tradition that the true name of the Eternal City should be read in a priestly or pontifical way, from right to left, and then it changes from *force* to *love*: "Roma,"* which read in an elementary Semitic manner yields "Amor."²⁵

Nothing that lives could do without the mediation of this mighty demon; in one way or another, all has passed or will pass across its bridge. The only question was, How would man utilize this aid, what grain of heavenly blessings would he carry over the holy construct into mortal life?

When Eros enters into an earthly being, he at once transforms it; the lover feels within himself a new power of infinity; he has received a new and great gift. But here inevitably arises the rivalry and struggle of two parts, or tendencies, of the soul—the higher and the lower; which of them will capture for itself and turn to its advantage the mighty power of Eros, in order to become infinitely fruitful or productive in *its own* sphere and *its own* direction? The lower soul desires infinite creativity in sensory excessiveness—a negative, evil infinity, solely accessible to matter as the victor: a constant repetition of the same elusive and vanishing phenomena, eternal hunger and thirst without satiation, a living emptiness without being filled, an infinity and eternity of Tantalus, Sisyphus, and the Danaides. The sensuous soul drags down the winged demon and blindfolds him, in order that he should maintain life in the empty sequence of material phenomena, in order that he preserve and bring into action the law of an evil infinity, in order that he work as a subservient tool for the senseless immensity of material lusts.

But what will the infinite power of Eros give to the higher, rational soul? Will it direct it to the thoughtful contemplation of the truly existent, Ideal cosmos? But this is already proper to the mind according to its own nature and happens without the help of Eros. By his very substance and consequently even in the loftier essence, he himself is not a theoretical or contemplative force, but one which is infinitely *productive*. Not only people, but even animals and plants know sufficiently well what the infinite productivity of Eros consists in, and what puts it under the power of the lower, sensual essence. But what then does he impart to the essence which has risen to something higher than the service of mortal life? Where can *its* brood be—not of Apollo, not of Hermes, but of Eros? Not in the world of Ideas and of pure, divine Humors, for there abides only the unchangeable truly existing, which neither needs nor has the possibility of re-

* Corresponding to the Greek word *Rome*—'force'—according to the Greek Doric dialect *Roma*, compare the well-known, *Khairé moi Rima*, *Thugater Areos*.

production in its own *eternal* realm. But to generate in the nonexistent does not suit the winged and sighted demigod, when he is free and not in bondage to the lower physical essence, which deprives him both of wings and vision. Thus for his true creative power there remains that point of contact, or boundary, of the two worlds which is called *Beauty*.

According to Plato's definition the true work of Eros is—to *generate in Beauty*. What does this mean? If it were possible to assign to Plato the point of view of modern "aesthetes," then this definition might be understood as a somewhat pompous designation for artistic creativity or for activity in the arts. But such an understanding is completely inconsistent with the shape of our philosopher's thought at various periods of his life. He might have recognized art—and only in a certain elementary part of it at that—as a second-degree, preliminary phenomenon of Eros but never as his major and definitive work. From his ideal City he banishes the most important forms of poetry and even all music (in our sense of the word) with the exception of battle hymns.²⁶ Nowhere does he show any interest in the plastic arts. "Birth in Beauty" is in any event something much more important than activity in the arts. But what then exactly is it? We shall not find a direct answer in Plato. In Diotima's ingenious speech, related by Socrates in the *Symposium* (but which belongs, of course, not to Diotima or Socrates but to Plato himself) he reaches the logically clear and very promising idea that the work of Eros, even in the best souls, is an essential task, just as real as generation in animals but immeasurably higher in meaning and corresponding to the true dignity of man as a rational, wise, and just being. Reaching this point, it is as if Plato loses his way and begins to wander along obscure and desperate pathways. His theory of love, profound and daring, unheard of in the pagan world, remains incompletely articulated. But what he has given us in it, in addition to certain things that the world discovered after him, allows us to complete Diotima's speech and at the same time to understand why Plato did not finish it. And having surmised the true reason for this incomplete articulation, we shall also see how it was reflected in Plato's later fate.

XXIII.

If Eros is a positive and essential connection between two natures—the divine and the mortal—which are separated in the universe and are joined in man only in an external way, then in what else can his true and definitive work consist, if not in making the mortal nature itself immortal? According to Plato, in the high-

est aspect of his being, in his rational soul, man *is* immortal—here there is no work to be done at all and Eros has no business here. The erotic *mission* can consist only in the imparting of immortality to that part of our nature which in itself does not possess it and is usually swallowed up by the material stream of birth and dying. Logically, Plato should have arrived at such a conclusion. Both in the *Phaedrus* and in the *Symposium* he clearly and decisively distinguishes and contrasts the lower and the higher work of Eros—his work in the animal-man and his work in the true, super-animal man. Here it must be remembered that, even in the higher man, Eros *acts, creates, generates*, and does not only think and contemplate. So here, too, his direct object is—not only intellectually conceivable ideas but a *full corporeal life*, and the contrast between the two Eroses is only the contrast of a moral and an immoral attitude to this life, with the corresponding contrast of the aims and results of activity within it. If the animal-Eros, submitting to blind, elemental attraction, reproduces life for a short time in bodies which are continuously dying, the higher human Eros must have as his true aim the regeneration or resurrection of life forever, in bodies removed from the material process.

The Greek language is not poor in expressions which signify love. And if such a master of thought and word as Plato, in philosophizing about the supreme phenomenon in human life, does not use the terms *philia, agape, storge*, but says precisely *Eros*—an expression which applies even to lower, animal passion—then clearly, the whole contrast in the tendency of these two soul dynamics—the elemental-animal, and the spiritual-human—does not annul their real root commonality in each other's substance. Love as *erotic pathos*—it makes no difference whether in its lower or its higher tendency—does not resemble love for God, or philanthropy, or the love for parents and country, for brothers and friends. This is absolutely *love for the physical body*, and the only question is—to *what end*? What is love relating to the physical body directed toward? is it so that the very same elemental facts of emergence and disappearance, the very same infernal victory of ugliness, death, and corruption, may be endlessly repeated in it? or is it in order to impart to the physical body true life in Beauty, immortality, and incorruptibility?²⁷

Since Plato defines the mission of Eros as generation *in Beauty*, then clearly his mission does not end with the physical generation of bodies for mortal life—in which there is no Beauty—and he must turn to the regeneration or resurrection of this life for immortality. Plato does not say; but to all intents and purposes, tied to this failure to say is also the fact that his theory of love is a beautiful double flower which yields no fruit.

XXIV.

If when Eros, the son of Poros and Penia (divine abundance and material poverty), is conquered and imprisoned by his lower maternal nature, and in this fall and captivity wastes in vain his powers in her empty excessiveness and can only cover up the ugliness and corruptibility of her brood by the temporary appearance of life and beauty, then what does he do when the paternal principle vanquishes in him the lower nature? What does Eros-the-Victor do? And in what could his victory itself consist, if not in the fact that he halts the process of death and corruption, fortifies life in the temporarily living and dying, and with the surplus of his victorious power animates and beautifies the dead? The triumph of the mind—is in the pure contemplation of truth, the triumph of love—is in the full resurrection of life.

If Eros is the true mediator and *pontifex*—bridge-builder—between heaven, earth, and the netherworld, then his true aim is their full and final union. Where could the restriction in his purpose come from? Yield beauty, but only an apparent and superficial kind—the beauty of the whited sepulchre; yield life, but only a momentary, rotting, and mortal kind! He might get such stinginess from his mother, but isn't he the son of a wealthy father? In what does this wealth consist, if not in the abundant fullness of life and Beauty? Why doesn't he give them in full measure to all that need them—to all that is mortal or corruptible? And the nobility of the father's descendancy will not allow him to take back his gifts.

The true mission of love—is actually to immortalize the beloved one; actually to save it from death and decay and finally to regenerate it in Beauty. The fateful erotic ruin of the philosopher of love could consist only in the fact that while approaching this task in contemplation, he halted before it, did not resolve to understand and to apply it fully, and of course later, in fact, he also rejected it. Having learned in sensation the power of both Eroses and acknowledged intellectually the superiority of one of them, he did not in fact allow it the victory. He was satisfied with its mental image, forgetting that according to the very meaning of *this* thought, the necessity of its fulfillment is irrevocably tied to it—the requirement that it not remain only as an idea. Having forgotten his own awareness, that Eros “generates *in Beauty*,” that is, in the *perceptible* realization of the Ideal, Plato left it to generate in speculation only.

What was the reason for this inconsistency? A very common one: even he, who having elevated himself in theory above the majority of mortals, turned out in life to be an ordinary man. The clash of lofty demands with actual weakness is more dramatic in Plato precisely because he recognized these demands more

clearly than other people did and with his genius could have conquered this weakness more easily than others could.

XXV.

At the fateful time when eros is implanted within man, hell, earth, and heaven as well, all follow him with special concern. Each of these parties wants for its own purpose to take the surplus of spiritual and physical power which at that time comes to light in man. Without a doubt, this is the central, most important moment of our life. Not infrequently it occurs very briefly, but it can also become split up, it can repeat itself, or be extended for years and decades. But in the end, no one can avoid the fateful question: for what purpose are those powerful wings which Eros gives to us? This is a question about the main *character* of life's path, about whose image and whose likeness man will acquire or leave behind him.

Here *five* main paths can be clearly distinguished. The first is the infernal path, about which we will not speak. The second is less horrible but also unworthy of man, although it is normal for him; it is the path of animals, who accept Eros only in his physical aspect and act as if the simple fact of a certain attraction is now sufficient basis for its limitless and indiscriminate gratification. Such a naive form of thoughts and actions is completely excused on the part of animals. And a man who devotes himself to it will in the end finally resemble the corresponding creatures, also not even undergoing the afterlife metamorphosis assumed by Plato. The third, truly human, path of Eros is the one on which a reasonable measure of animal impulse is assumed—within limits necessary for the preservation and progress of the human race. If we mimic the etymology of Plato's *Cratylus*, then perhaps the term *defective article* could be produced from that which a man repudiates in the institution of marriage; he *scraps* his direct animal nature and adopts or *takes* on the norm of reason.²⁸ Humankind could, of course, exist without this great institution, as without bread and wine, without fire, and without philosophy, but in a manner unworthy of man—by animal instinct.

XXVI.

If a man in his essence could be *only* a man, if the so-called "human limitation" was not only a fact but also an absolute and final law, compulsory for each and

every one—then for human dignity marriage would always be the highest and natural path conforming to love. But man distinguishes himself chiefly from other creatures by the fact that he wants to and can rise above himself; his distinguishing mark is precisely this noble dynamism, a capability and striving to infinite growth and ascent. And we know that from the beginning of history, purely human paths and manners of life have not satisfied all people. Neither did this generally necessary, honorable, and blessed, but at its root only natural, purely human pathway of Eros-Hymen satisfy them. If not in Beauty, then at least in law it generated and brought up new generations for the preservation and continuation of the human race, as long as *this kind* of continuation was needed by it. Dissatisfaction with this legitimate path led in the majority of others to a sad return to the lower, illegitimate paths abandoned by the literate cultures of humanity. It returned people to prehistorical animal instinct and also even to the antediluvian “depths of Satan.”²⁹

But some, shunning the human way of marriage, honestly strove to replace it not by inferior and illegitimate pathways but by paths which were lofty and transcended law. Of these, the first (overall, it counts as the fourth) is *asceticism* (sexual, or celibacy), which aspires to something more than a mere limitation of sensual inclinations—to their complete neutralization by the negating forces of the spirit in abstemiousness. Asceticism is a very early practice in historical origin and universal dissemination, if not in a completely successful sense, at least in the sense of intention and enterprise. It is notable, however, that the most fully developed historical organization on this pathway—Christian monasticism—is now accompanied by the involuntary realization that with all its lofty merit it is not the highest, final, superhuman path of love.

Monasticism itself considers and calls itself an *angelic* order; a true monk carries the image and likeness of an angel, he is an “angel in the flesh.” The greatest monk of western Christianity, St. Francis of Assisi, remains known as *pater seraphicus*, and so forth. But from the Christian point of view, an angel is not the highest of the creatures: in essence and significance, an angel is lower than a man, which an angel must in certain cases become and be. The queen of the angels is recognized as the representative of Christian humanity, and in Apostle Paul we read that all true Christians will judge even angels.³⁰ Angels don’t judge people, but only fulfill through them their divine duty.

If a man is chiefly and in essence the image and likeness of God, then to bear this image and likeness of subservient spirit is for him only a temporary honor of devotion. The same eastern fathers of the Church who praised and instituted

the “angelic order”—monasticism—recognized as the highest purpose and destiny of a man, perfect union with divinity—*theosis*,* and not *aggelosis*, deification, or achieving the likeness of gods, and not angels.

And actually, asceticism cannot be the highest pathway of love for man. Its aim is the defense of the power of the divine Eros against plunder by rebellious material chaos, the preservation of this force pure and inviolate. Preserved in purity—but *for what?* The purification of Eros is helpful and necessary, especially when for long centuries of human history it has succeeded in polluting itself so terribly. But for the son of divine abundance, purity alone is not enough. He requires full power for his lively genius.

Thus apart from and superior to the four ways of love indicated above—two cursed and two blessed—there must be yet a *fifth*, a perfect and final pathway of truly regenerating and deifying love. Here I can only point out the basic conditions that determine the *principle* and *aim* of this higher path. Eternal God created man in his own image and likeness: male and female created He them.³¹ Hence, the image and likeness of God, that which is capable of restoration, does not refer to half of a person, not to sex, but to the whole person, that is, to the positive union of the male and female principle.³² A true androgyny—without an external fusion of forms (which is a monstrosity) and without an intrinsic separation of individuality and life, which is imperfection and a principle of death. Another principle of death abolished by the higher pathway of love is the contrast of the spirit to the body. In this respect as well, the issue is the whole person, and the true principle of its restoration is a *spiritual-corporeal* principle. But just as it is impossible for the deity to regenerate man spiritually and corporeally without the participation of man himself (this would be a chemical way or some other way, but not a human way), it is just as impossible for man to create superhumanity out of himself, for this would be like lifting oneself up by one's own hair. It is clear that man can *become* divine only by the actual power of an eternally existing Divinity and not of one in the making. It is also clear that the path of supreme love, which perfectly unites the male with the female, the spiritual with the physical, is essentially now in its very principle a union, or interaction, of the divine with the human, or a *divinely human* process.³³

Love, in the sense of erotic pathos, always has *corporeality* as its proper object; yet, a corporeality that is worthy of love, that is, beautiful and immortal, does

* A term most frequently used by St. Makarius of Egypt, St. Athanasius of Alexandria, St. Gregory, and others.

not grow out of the ground on its own and does not fall ready-made from heaven but is achieved by a spiritually physical and divinely human feat.

XXVII.

The three concepts indicated, which determine the higher pathway of love—the concepts of androgyny, spiritual corporeality, and divine humanity—we find even in Plato, if only in vague form. The first—is in the myth which is put into the mouth of Aristophanes (the *Symposium*), the second—in the definition of Beauty (the *Phaedrus*), and the third in the very concept of Eros as an intermediary power between Divinity and mortal nature (Diotima's speech in the *Symposium*).³⁴ But in Plato, these three principles appear as fleeting fantasies. He did not tie them together and did not place them into an actual principle of a higher life pathway, and thus the end of this path—the resurrection of mortal nature to eternal life—remained for him hidden, although it logically flowed from his own thoughts. He approached the creative work of Eros in concept, understood it as an important mission—of “birth in Beauty”—but he did not define the definitive substance of this mission, not to mention its fulfillment.

Plato's Eros, whose nature and general purpose were so beautifully described by the philosopher-poet, did not accomplish this, his purpose. He did not unite heaven with earth and the netherworld, did not construct any true bridge among them, and he flew away indifferently and empty-handed to the world of ideal speculation. Yet the philosopher remained on earth empty-handed as well, but on a barren earth, where truth lives *not*.

XXVIII.

Plato did not gain control of the infinite power of Eros for the actual work of the *regeneration* of his nature and that of others. Everything remained as before in reality, and we do not see Plato himself drawing near at all to the divine or even to the angelic order. But in him still remained a portion of that abundance which the son of Poros inherited from his father. Plato now could not return to that aloof idealism which does not desire to know life. It was not without reason that with all the power and depth of his individuality he endured and thought better of that feeling, which now as a subjective condition in itself removes, if only for a time, the absolute barrier between the Ideal world and real life and constructs a bridge between heaven and earth, even if only an ethereal one.

In a very intimate way, human society and the world in general became for Plato the object not of denial or estrangement but of lively interest. The contradiction of reality to ideal requirements remained as before, but Plato viewed it differently. He did not want to escape from the world of evil to the heights of contemplation, but to contrast it in practice, to correct the injustices of the world, and to aid the world's distress. And because real, profound correction and full assistance—through the *regeneration* of human nature—proved to be beyond his powers, he took up the more superficial but also more accessible task—the *reform* of societal relations.

He thought of a model of a better society, and he elucidated his plan in the ten books of the *Republic*.^{*} But, alas! Having left in the philosopher's soul a new desire for life and politics, the faithless Eros carried away on his wings that creative power, without which this desire had to remain fruitless. Having turned away in the face of a higher life mission, Plato did not master the lower one either: despite all his striving, no social and political reformer emerged out of him; and this was not due to the fact that he was too much of a utopian, but because of the absence of an actually progressive principle within his utopias, owing to their superfluity and lack of interest for humanity. What interest could the proposal to organize a state modeled more on the example of Sparta than on Athens arouse, when it was already recognized that both the Spartan and the Athenian civic idea had proved unsound? One may find Plato's schema of three social classes, corresponding to three basic qualities of the soul and three basic virtues,[†] to be correct, and in any event it must be acknowledged as ingenious and graceful. But this schema is so general and formal that within it the medieval European order might easily be included, in spite of the essential distinction between the historical and moral substance of ancient and medieval society. But it was precisely to the substance of collective life that Plato did not turn with any moral question at all, and thus there can be no talk at all about any actual reformation and improvement of collective life in terms of his political constructs.

^{*} Parts of this work were written at different times, but as a whole it undoubtedly belongs to that epoch in the life of the philosopher about which we are speaking—between his erotic enthusiasm and unsuccessful political forays in Sicily.

[†] Here is the triple, threefold division:

<i>Psychological</i>	<i>Ethical</i>	<i>Political</i>
The rational part of the soul	Wisdom	Rulers
The affective part	Courage	Warriors
The passions	Prudence	Artisans & farmers

Apart from the depth and daring of a few individual thoughts, the general ideal of the social order is striking in its superficial character and the absence of truly ethical principles. Plato desired, as it were, to legitimize and immortalize the major moral ulcers of ancient life—slavery, the division between Greek and Barbarian, and warfare among them—as a normal condition. To this was appended as a general rule and law that which was in the actual life of the ancient cities only an exceptional occurrence—coercive measures against poets and their expulsion from the State. More important, Plato's ideal community returned to an uncivilized model of life after the manner of beasts in the mutual relations of the sexes. As a philosophic reformation of community, the extension of compulsory military service to women is quite distinctive, but even more distinctive is the basis for such a reform—since dogs which guard and defend a flock perform this service without distinction of male or female, then clearly, women should go to war. And here you have it: a collegium of philosophers has to create an ideal State with the aid of a good education based on such practical foundations as slavery, warfare, and the indiscriminate mingling of the sexes and generations!

XXIX.

Plato was not satisfied with the role of theorist of a social ideal. He, of course, wished to begin the practical realization of his plan. Since his principle required that philosophers govern the model society, Plato naturally turned to the school of philosophy which from the beginning had social aspirations and had played a visible role in politics. He went to the Pythagoreans in Greater Greece (that is, southern Italy). The first result of this journey was a more intimate familiarity of Plato with Pythagorean teaching than was previously the case, which was reflected in his cosmological dialogue, the *Timaeus*. But, on the other hand, the *Timaeus*, just like another important work, the *Philebus*, bears deep and apparent traces of that general change in worldview which took place in Plato in connection with his erotic philosophy, independently of Pythagorean influences. There was now no trace of the absolute opposition of two worlds and two existences; there remained only a relative opposition of the principles shaping the universe. In the *Timaeus*, the central place belongs to that which connects ideal existence with the practical *conciliatory spirit* (another name for Eros).

As far as Plato's practical intentions were concerned, the Pythagoreans could render him only indirect support. Their union, weakened and intimidated by

democratic chaos, was not chancing more serious political enterprises, and represented something like the mystical freemasonry which flourished in Russia at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The Pythagoreans could only direct Plato to Syracuse to the court of the tyrant Dionysus (the Elder), where they had certain connections and some influence. Although, according to Plato's earlier concepts, tyranny, that is, monarchic power seized through violence and force of will, is the very worst of all bad forms of government, he now arrived at the opinion that the only practical way of installing truth upon the earth was through the influence of a sage upon a tyrant who was suitable or favorably predisposed to this purpose. Dionysus the Elder was, without question, a genuine and typical tyrant, but Plato came to doubt his *suitability* when their acquaintance ended by Dionysus selling the philosopher into slavery—a good lesson for a thinker who, with all his lofty speculation about a truly existent and a supraexistent Good, could not hit upon the simple truth that one man cannot be another's implement, deprived of civil and political rights.

Plato did not avail himself of this lesson. Instead of reflecting (keeping Socrates in mind) on the important moral norms of society, he reiterated still another vain attempt to cultivate for himself a "suitable" tyrant in the person of Dionysus's successor, Dionysus the Younger.

XXX.

Finally disillusioned at Syracuse, Plato turned in contemplation to Crete, the homeland of wise Minos, and in the expectation of discovering there a suitable tyrant, he wrote his code of laws in twelve books for a future exemplary city on the island of Crete. This last work of Plato is remarkable in the highest degree. Beginning with its external characteristics, though it is written in dialogue form (which is not sustained in places), Socrates not only does not appear as usual as the chief character or discussant, but his name is not mentioned at all, just as if Plato *had forgotten* about his existence. More important still is that in its content, the *Laws* not only forgets, but directly renounces Socrates and philosophy. I am not speaking of the generally lower disposition of thought in these books, about the barbarity of the penal code with its qualified death penalty, with its persecution of sorcerers and conjurers. I am not speaking of the shocking injustice of particular laws, for example, of those which impose the death penalty in the case of the slave who does not inform the authorities of a known breach of public order by foreign individuals. Apart from all this, a direct, principled

renunciation of Socrates and philosophy is expressed by Plato in those laws, by virtue of which any man who rejects or upsets the authority of the ancestral laws, both relative to the gods and relative to the public order, is subject to the death penalty.

Thus the greatest disciple of Socrates, who had been called to independent philosophical creativity by his indignation at the *legal* murder of his teacher, toward the end totally rests on the point of view of Anytos and Melitos, who had obtained the death sentence for Socrates precisely because of his liberal attitude to the established religious–civil order.

What a most profound and tragic catastrophe, how total the inner fall! The author of the *Apology*, the *Gorgias*, and the *Phaedo*, after a half century cult of the wise-and-righteous-man who was killed by the law, openly accepts and affirms in his “Laws” the very principle of blind, slavish, and phoney faith, by which the father of his better self had been put to death!

The fateful question in the death of Socrates, with all its drama: is life worth living when truth in its best incarnation is legally executed? The answer: the meaning of life is in another ideal world, and this one is only the kingdom of evil and deception. The manifestation of Eros, casting a bridge between the two worlds and posing the problem of their union, of the salvation of the lower world, of its regeneration; the impotent rejection of this mission; its substitution by another—the transformation and reform of society by wise political regulations through the action of an obedient tyrant; and, finally, under the pretext of correcting the injustice of the world, the triumphant confirmation of this wrong *in the very same form* in which the righteous man had been condemned and killed. I do not know of any more significant and more profound tragedy in *human* history.

If Socrates brought philosophy down from heaven and gave it into the hands of men, his greatest disciple raised it high above his head and cast it down from on high to the ground and into the filth and rubbish of the street. It is good that the actual vessel of wisdom is not a poorly constructed one. The philosopher's unworthy political quests and plans were smashed into smithereens, but the ideas of his better days remained completely intact. The verdict of posterity has been not merely just but even merciful. Plato is known in the *Phaedo*, *Theaetetus*, in the *Phaedrus*, and the *Symposium*, in the *Philebus*, the *Timaeus*, and the best chapters of the *Republic*. His crude communism is indulgently pardoned as the accidental aberration of a great mind—*quandoque bonus dormitat et Plato*—but no one reads his *Laws*, except specialists.³⁵

It is not in vain, however, that from the great number of poor works of antiquity which happily have perished, the *Laws* of Plato have been preserved inviolate. The work is important, first, from a *historical-aesthetic* point of view, because the renunciation of Socrates which is immortalized here gives to Plato's life-drama a tragic ending essentially equal in force to its beginning. Second, this testimony to Plato's profound fall is important for knowledge of his personal traits. It is said that he was nicknamed Plato, that is, *the Broad* (his original name was apparently Aristocles) for the breadth of his face and, according to others, for the breadth of his spirit. His spiritual diapason was really very broad and had to include for the fullness of its range even the *low* notes which resound in his last work.

And in conclusion, this must be said: by his noble death Socrates exhausted the moral power of purely human wisdom and reached its limit. In order to go farther and higher than Socrates—not only in speculation and not only in aspiration but in true and vital deed—more than a man was needed. After Socrates, who by word and example taught a death worthy of man, only the One who has the power of resurrection to eternal life could go farther and higher. The weakness and the fall of the “divine” Plato are important because they keenly emphasize and explain the incapability of man fulfilling his destiny, that is, becoming a true *superman* solely by force of mind, genius, and moral will—they elucidate the necessity for an authentic, substantive *God-Man*.

10 The Idea of a Superman

In a review of a recent translation of Nietzsche appearing in the last issue of a Moscow philosophical journal (Jan.–Feb. 1899), an expert on this writer, and a fan as well, notes among other things that “unfortunately for Nietzsche, it seems he is becoming a writer in vogue for Russia; at least he’s in considerable demand.”* (Book Review, p. 48)

The “misfortune” of such *vogue*, however, is only the necessary outward reflection of the intrinsic fact that a certain idea really has started to live in the public consciousness: you see, before it became a subject of market *demand*, it was responding of course to some spiritual *question* of thoughtful people.¹

Fifty or sixty years ago, Hegel was in vogue—also “unfortunately” for Hegel himself. However, if it turns out that Russian culture, apart from the enchanting flowers of our poetry, also yields mature fruits of a correct understanding of the mechanism of existence, then Russian

Source: “Ideia sverkhcheloveka,” *Mir iskusstva* 2/9 (1899): 87–91. See also *Sobranie sochinenii* 9:265–78.

* V. P. Preobrazhenskii, book review of F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (St. Petersburg: 1899), in *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii* 46/1899, p. 48.

Hegelianism of the 1830s and 1840s will have to be acknowledged as the first uncertain *seeds* of such fruits.

The same must be said about the intellectual passions which have replaced Hegelianism “unfortunately” for Darwin, Kant, and many others. I think one needs to look at all this as the amusing outward expression of transitional stages, which are in essence unavoidable; and as the “passions of youth,” without which real maturity cannot be achieved.

I’m not at all sorry that at one time the greatest objects of my love were paleosaurs and mastodons. And a “philanthropy for small beasts,” in the expression of one of Dostoevsky’s heroes, even up to the present time makes me experience certain pangs of conscience for those leeches that I cut to pieces in biology class with a razor (usually adding a “cross-cut”). Moreover, this was useless mischief, inasmuch as my histological exercises turned out more pernicious for the laboratory microscope than edifying for me. But, repenting in the senseless destruction of these young relatives, I recall the excitement I experienced only with thanks. I know that it was useful for me, and I think that passing through the cult of natural science after Hegelian abstraction was necessary and useful for all of Russian society in its youth.

Moving on from memoirs to the subject before us, we notice one distinction between formerly idealistic passions and their contemporary counterparts in Russian society. Before, although these passions changed rather quickly at any given moment, one of them predominated indivisibly (although certainly with the variation of every nuance). The inner growth of our society presented itself as some triumphant procession straight ahead, and whoever did not want to be “the last” and to be subject to general disdain had to strive simultaneously with all “progressive people” for one and the same intellectual station. Such a unilinearity and, if one might say, single goal of our cultural movement disappeared long ago. First, it is because the number of people involved in certain kinds of cultural education has increased substantially, and unifying them is not so simple or easy. And second, it is because these people turn out to be, if not more mature, then in any case less naive, and thus less prone to the “singlemindedness” of the herd. Hence, everywhere we see both individuals and private groups that are isolated, go their own way, not affiliating with the more extensive, general movement.

And there isn’t just one idea; there are at least three foremost or, if you like, stylish ideas that rule those people who are especially sensitive to the general demands of the historical moment: economic materialism, abstract moralism, and the demonology of the “superman.” Of these three ideas, which are tied to three

great names (Karl Marx, Lev Tolstoy, Friedrich Nietzsche) the first appeals to the urgency of the “now,” the second captures in part tomorrow as well, and the third is tied to what will happen the day after tomorrow and beyond. I find this the most interesting of the three.

Every idea is in itself a tiny mental *window*. Through the tiny window of economic materialism we see one backyard or, as the French say, lower courtyard (*la basse cour*) of history and the contemporary era; the window of abstract moralism looks out onto an excessively pure, perfect void, a clean yard of impassivity, the adoption of the simple life, nonresistance, inaction, and similar negations. But the window of Nietzsche’s “superman” opens out directly onto the immense expanse of every one of life’s roads. And if one sets out without caution on this expanse, and one falls into a pit or gets stuck in a swamp or vanishes into a majestic painting, one will hopelessly disappear. You see, such directions do not represent absolute necessity for anyone. And everyone is free to choose that true and beautiful mountain path, at the end of which elevated peaks from afar now shine illuminated by an eternal sun amidst a storm.

Now, I do not want to analyze Nietzscheism from the philosophical or historical point of view, but I want only to apply to it the first condition of true criticism: to demonstrate the main principle of the intellectual phenomenon under analysis—as much as is possible—*from its positive, good side*.

I.

I think there is no argument about the fact that every error—at least every error about which it is worth speaking—holds in itself an indisputable truth and is only a more or less profound distortion of this truth; error holds onto this truth, dangerously and attractively, and through this truth only can it be understood as it should be, then evaluated, and finally refuted.

Thus the first task of rational criticism relative to any error whatsoever is to define the truth which it adheres to and which it perverts.

The bad side of Nietzscheism is striking. Contempt for weak and ill humanity, a pagan view of Strength and Beauty, the appropriation to oneself *in advance* of some exclusive superhuman significance—first to oneself personally and then to oneself collectively, as a selected minority of “the best,”—that is, the stronger, more talented, powerful, or “lordly” natures, to which all is permitted insofar as their will is the supreme law for others.² Here is the obvious error of Nietzscheism. Where is that truth which makes Nietzscheism strong and attractive to a living soul?

The distinction between truth and error does not even have for itself two separate words here. One and the same word combines in itself both the lie and the truth of this amazing doctrine. The entire matter is in how we understand and how we pronounce the word *superman*. Within it resounds either the voice of narrow and hollow claims or the voice of a profound self-consciousness—open to the best possibilities and anticipating the future.

Of all earthly creatures, only man alone can relate to himself critically: not in the sense of a simple dissatisfaction with one or another of its situations or actions (this is possible also for other animals) nor in the sense of a dark, undefined feeling of melancholy which is characteristic of all the “groaning creation,” but in the sense of the conscious negative evaluation of the very method of one’s being and the basic course of one’s life, no matter how they correspond to that which ought to be.³ We judge ourselves, but in a court of reason, conscientiously, and then we pronounce sentence upon ourselves. Some voice of a higher nature in the depth of the human soul forces us to want eternal perfection. Reflection indicates to us the ordinary and common fact of our imperfection, and the conscience says that this fact is not *only* external reality for us, but it *also* depends on us ourselves.

Man naturally wants to be better and more than he is in reality; he is *naturally* drawn to the idea of a superman. If man *truly* wants something, then he can have it, and if he can, then he must. But isn’t this nonsense—to be better, superior, more than one’s reality? Yes, this is nonsense for an animal, since for it reality is that which makes *it* and controls it. But man, although *also* a creation prior to which reality already existed, can at the same time act upon reality from within, and hence, his reality is to one extent or another what *he himself makes* it. It is what he makes more notably and evidently in the capacity of a *collective* essence, and less notably but also just as undoubtedly in the capacity of an *individual* being.

II.

One can argue about the metaphysical question of the absolute freedom of choice. But the spontaneous action of man, his capacity to act according to inner impulses, according to motives more or less of higher value, and ultimately according to the ideal of the perfected Good itself—is not a metaphysical question but a fact of intellectual experience. Yes, and all of history speaks only of how human beings collectively make themselves better and more than they are alone; how they *outgrow* their present activity and move it aside into the past,

pulling into the present that which recently was something contradictory to reality—a dream, a subjective ideal, a utopia.

At its real source, the inner growth of the individual and of humankind is clearly affiliated with the increasing complexity and perfection of natural existence as a process. It is affiliated with the *cosmic growth* which is expressed especially vividly in the development of organic forms of plant and animal life. Forms of sentient life developed widely and variously earlier than the first appearance of man; the development of rational life began prehistorically with man and continued under the gaze of history. From the point of view of what is most objective and realistic—apart from all debatable distinctions—there is one inarguable root and common distinction between the world of nature and the world of history: namely, that the growth of physical complexity takes place through the gradual production of new corporeal forms, which according to the measure of the continuing course of development, so distance themselves from the old ones, become so unlike them that one could not immediately recognize their genetic connection. Who would, for example, without the help of science, notice the natural relation of a horse to a snail, a deer to an oyster, a lark to a sponge, an eagle to a coral polyp, a palm to a mushroom?

The development of the mental life of organisms (at least in the animal kingdom) also depends on such a multilateral variety and complexity of corporeal forms. If the formation of *new* corporeal forms stopped, let us suppose, with the form of an oyster, then there would also be no further development in the psychic relationship, inasmuch as it is completely evident that within *this* form of being—“oyster”—not only would the spiritual essence of man not fit, but neither would the mental processes of a dog, a monkey, or even a bee. This means a long line of new corporeal mechanisms for internal, mental processes. But with the appearance of the human body, there enters into the world such an animal form which, thanks to a specially developed neurocerebral apparatus in it, does not require more new essential changes or corporeal complexity; because this same form, preserving all its typical characteristics, remains essentially the same. It *can* fit into itself an infinite series of degrees of internal—mental and spiritual—growth: from the savage half-beast, which is distinguished almost solely by potentiality from the world of the other animals, up to the greatest mental geniuses and creative minds.

This inner growth, which is being perfected in history, is also reflected of course in the outward aspect of man, but in characteristics which *for biology* are nonessential and untypical. The spirituality of man does not change the anatomical type. And no matter how lofty the contemplation of a genius, the crudest

savage also has the same structure of head as he does, which allows him as well to gaze freely at the boundless heavens.

III.

No new superhuman form of organism is created or required by history because the human form can infinitely perfect itself—outwardly and inwardly, *remaining all the while the same*: it is capable according to its prototype, or type, of fitting and connecting within itself *everything*, to become the instrument and bearer of everything, to whatever one could aspire—it is capable of being the form of a perfected unity-of-all, or divine being.

Such a morphological stability and completeness of man as an organic model does not contradict the truth acknowledged by us in the aspiration of a person to become more and better than one's reality, or to become a superman, because the truth of this aspiration is related not to any forms of human existence, but only to the capacity of man functioning in these forms. There is no necessary connection with the forms themselves. We can, for example, be dissatisfied with the real condition of human vision but not, certainly, with the fact that we have only two eyes, and only with the fact that we see poorly with them. In order to see better, man has no need to change the morphological type of his visual organ. He has no need at all to have many eyes in place of two because with these two eyes weak vision (in the literal sense) is eliminated by invented human means like telescopes and microscopes, and in a higher sense man's "prophetic pupils, as on a frightened eagle" can open wide.⁴ With these two eyes he can become a prophet and a superman, whereas a creature of another organic form, supplied even with a hundred eyes, is still only a fly.

IV.

It is exactly the same with the rest of the entire human organism as it is with our visual organ. In no standard trait of its morphological structure does it impede us from raising ourselves above our adverse conditions and becoming superhuman relative to them. Impediments here can proceed only from the functional aspect of our existence, not just in individual and particular pathological deviations, but also in phenomena which human custom compels many to consider normal.

Such is, first and foremost, the phenomenon of *death*. If there is a reason naturally for us to be burdened, if there is a reason to be basically dissatisfied with

present reality, then, of course, it is in this concluding phenomenon of all of our known existence, in this its graphic upshot: coming to naught. A man who thinks only of himself cannot reconcile himself with *his* death; a man who thinks of others cannot reconcile himself with the thought of the death of others. Both the egoist and the altruist alike (and it is logically necessary for all people to belong in varying degrees to one or the other of these moral categories) must feel death as an unbearable contradiction, both alike cannot accept this known result of human existence as the ultimate one. And according to logic, this is what those people who want to raise themselves above present reality, desiring to become supermen, should concentrate their attention on. What, in fact, particularly distinguishes the humanity over which they think to raise themselves, if not the fact that it is *mortal*?

“Man” and “mortal” are synonyms. Already in Homer people constantly contrast themselves to the immortal gods, namely, as beings subject to death: *theoi te Brioi te*.⁵ Though all other animals die, no one gets it into their head to characterize animals as mortals—not only is this label used for man as a trait, but some kind of melancholic reproach to oneself is still felt in the expression “mortal.” One senses that man, recognizing the inevitability of death as an existential peculiarity of his actual condition, decidedly does not want to reconcile himself to it, does not at all find peace in this perception of its inevitability *in the present conditions*. And he is, of course, correct in this. Because if death is absolutely necessary in these present conditions, then who says that the conditions themselves are immutable and inviolable?

An animal does not struggle (consciously) with death and consequently cannot be conquered by it; and thus, its mortality has no pangs or description for it. A person is first and foremost “mortal”—in the sense of *conquered, overcome* by death. And if so, then this means a “superman” must be first of all, and particularly, a *conqueror of death*—a liberated-liberator of humanity from those essential conditions which make death necessary, and consequently, the *executor* of those conditions by which it is possible either not to die at all or, having died, to rise from the dead to eternal life. The task is a bold one. However, he who is bold is not alone, but with God who has power over him. Let us suppose that even with this assistance a victory over death cannot be achieved at all in the boundaries of solitary existence in humanity’s current condition. Although one is permitted to doubt this, for there is no possibility to prove it beforehand until it is experienced, let us suppose that it is proven that each of us, people of the past and next century and many other centuries, will certainly die, not having prepared ourselves and others for the immediate resurrection. Let us suppose

the objective is remote now as well, as remote as it turned out for those irrational Christians of the first century, who thought that eternal life in resurrected and imperishable bodies would immediately fall down to them from heaven. Let us suppose it is remote now as well. But the path which leads to it is undoubtedly possible and actually exists. Even though it is slow in fulfillment and incomplete, it is in process of being perfected all the while in the fullness of conditions required for a triumph over death.

Those conditions under which death appropriates power over us and conquers us are sufficiently well known to us both in personal and common experience. So, then, the antithetical conditions should be known to us as well, under which *we* appropriate power over death and, in the end, can conquer it.

V.

Even if there were no real “superman” before us, even if the image of a true “superman,” the image of a real conqueror of death and a “firstborn of the dead,” did not arise in our consciousness (and wouldn’t this be too absentminded on our part?)—or even if this image was so obscured and confused by various extraneous features, so that it could not say anything to our consciousness of its significance for our life’s purpose (why, then, don’t we untangle and clarify it?)—then in any case *there is a superhuman path* over which man has gone, goes, and will go for the good of all.⁶ And certainly, our most important and vital interest is in more people embarking upon this path, and that they pass more directly and farther upon it, because a full and decisive victory over death is at its end.

And here is the real criterion for evaluating all matters and phenomena in this world: the extent to which each of them corresponds to conditions necessary for the rebirth of a mortal and suffering man into an immortal and blessed superman. And if the old, traditional form of the superhuman idea, fossilized in scholarly minds, has shielded for many people the living essence of this idea, leading man to forget it—to forget his true, higher purpose of reconciliation with all other creatures—then shouldn’t we rejoice now also at the simple fact that this forgetfulness and this fainthearted reconciliation with reality are coming to an end and that declarations, although unsubstantiated as yet, are ringing out: “*I am a superman,*” “*We are supermen*”? Such announcements, which at first cause annoyance, now should gladden us in essence because they create the opportunity for interesting conversations, in which it is not at all possible not to express other points of view.

At the time I was cutting leeches to pieces with a razor and I preferred the zo-

ologist Haeckel to the philosopher Hegel, my father once related to me a rather well known anecdote about a “backward” Muscovite merchant who got the better of an “advanced” scientist who was attempting to convert him to Darwinism.⁷ This teaching, according to the fashion of the time, was understood as the essential equality of man with other animals. Having slandered very much on this theme, the advanced representative of the Enlightenment asked the listener:

—Understood?

—Understood.

—Well, what do you have to say?

—What’s left to say? Why, if I’m a dog and, well, you’re a dog too, then what kind of a conversation can a dog have with a dog?⁸

Today, thanks to Nietzsche, progressive people are now turning up to the contrary, people with whom a serious discussion is both possible and logically required—and about superhuman matters besides. I wanted to create access to such a discussion on these pages.

11 A Brief Tale about the Antichrist

Panmongolism! Though the name is savage,
It caresses my ear
As if it is full with portent
Of a great Divine Fate . . .

The Lady: Where is this epigraph from?

Mr. Z: I think the author of the tale himself created it.

The Lady: Well, read it.

Source: “Kratkaia povest’ ob Antikhriste,” in *Tri razgovora o voine, progresse, i kontse vsemirnoi istorii, so vklucheniem kratkoi povesti ob antikhriste i s prilozheniiami* (St. Petersburg: Trud, 1900), 151–98. See also *Sobranie sochinenii* 10:81–221. The story begins with the first lines of Soloviev’s poem “Pan-mongolism” (1894), reproduced in full in Appendix B below. The *Three Conversations*, of which this tale is the concluding section, are presented in dialogue form. The several characters, each representing a particular point of view, include The Lady, The General, The Politician, The Prince, and a certain Mr. Z, who represents the views of Soloviev. The putative author to whom Mr. Z refers at the outset is identified earlier in *Tri razgovora* as a certain Father Pansophius.

Mr. Z (reads):

The twentieth century after the Birth of Christ was the epoch of the last Great Wars, civil conflicts, and revolutions. The very largest of the these wars had as its remote reason the intellectual movement of *Panmongolism* in Japan at the end of the nineteenth century. The imitative Japanese, having copied the material forms of European culture with surprising speed and success, adopted also some European ideas of a lower order. Having learned from newspapers and historical texts about the existence in the West of pan-Hellenism, pan-Germanism, pan-Slavism, and pan-Islamism, they pronounced the great idea of Panmongolism, that is, the gathering under their leadership of all the nations of East Asia with the goal of a decisive war against foreigners, that is, the Europeans. Making use of the fact that Europe was occupied in a final, decisive battle with the *Islamic* world, at the beginning of the twentieth century they set about the realization of a great plan—at first, the occupation of Korea and then also of Peking, when, with the help of a progressive Chinese party, they overthrew the old Manchurian dynasty and seated in its place a Japanese one. Even Chinese conservatives were soon reconciled to this. They understood that it is better to choose the lesser of two evils, and that one is a brother to one's people even if it is against one's will. In any case, the *State* independence of ancient China was unable to be maintained, and submitting either to the Europeans or the Japanese was inevitable.

But clearly, in abolishing the external forms of Chinese national statehood, which, besides, had obviously turned out to be suited to nothing, Japanese rule did touch upon the intrinsic principles of national life, whereas the predominance of the European powers, which had supported Christian missionaries for the sake of politics, threatened China's deepest spiritual foundations. The previous national hatred of the Chinese toward the Japanese had arisen when neither the one nor the other had had any experience with Europeans, in the face of which the hostility of the two related nations became internal and civil and lost its significance. The Europeans were *entirely* alien, *only* enemies, and their predominance in no way could gratify racial pride, whereas in the hands of Japan, the Chinese saw the sweet lure of Panmongolism, which at the same time justified in their eyes also the sad necessity of outward Europeanization.

"Stubborn brothers! Understand,"—reiterated the Japanese—"that we take from the western dogs their weapons not out of partiality to them, but for the purpose of beating them with these same weapons. If you unite with us and accept our practical leadership, then we soon will not only drive the white devils out of our part of Asia, but also conquer their countries and establish a true Mid-

dle Kingdom over the entire globe. You are correct in your national pride and in your contempt for the Europeans, but you vainly feed these feelings only with dreams, not rational action. In this we precede you and must show you the path of common benefit. Otherwise, see for yourselves what your politics of self-confidence and distrust of us has given you—your natural friends and defenders: Russia, England, Germany, and France have nearly completely divided you amongst themselves without a remnant left, and all your tigerlike inventiveness has revealed the impotent tip of a “snake’s tail.”

Judicious Chinese found this to be sound, and the Japanese dynasty was firmly supported. Its first concern was, of course, the creation of a powerful army and navy. The greater part of Japanese military forces was transferred to China, where it constituted the cadres of a huge new army. Japanese officers who spoke Chinese acted as instructors much more successfully than the dismissed Europeans, and enough suitable military material was located in the countless inhabitants of China, including Manchuria, Mongolia, and Tibet. Now the first Chinese Emperor of the Japanese dynasty could make a successful attempt at the arming of a renewed empire, having squeezed the French out of Tonkin and Siam, and the English out of Burma and having now included in the Middle Empire all of Indochina. His successor, Chinese on his mother’s side, combined in himself Chinese craft and resilience with Japanese energy, agility, and enterprise and mobilized in Chinese Turkestan a four-million-strong army. And when Tsun Lia Min confidentially communicated to the Russian ambassador that this army was poised for the conquest of India, the Chinese Emperor then invaded our Central Asia and, having raised up the entire population there, speedily moved through the Urals and inundated all of Eastern and Central Russia with his regiments, while hastily mobilized fragments of Russian armies hurried from Poland and Lithuania, Kiev and Volhynia, Petersburg and Finland. In the absence of a preliminary war plan and given the huge numerical advantage of the enemy, the military merits of the Russian armies allowed them only to perish with honor. The speed of the invasion did not leave time for necessary concentration, and military corps were destroyed one after another in terrible and hopeless battles. Neither was this achieved cheaply for the Mongols, but they easily replenished their losses, having been in control of all the Asiatic railroads. At that time, a two-hundred-thousand-man Russian army, which had long since amassed at the Manchurian border, made an unsuccessful attempt to invade a well-defended China.

Having left a part of its forces in Russia in order to *confound* the formation of new armies and also to *pursue* multiplying partisan *factions*, the Chinese Em-

peror crossed into Germany with three armies. They succeeded in their preparations here, and one of the Mongolian armies was routed. But at this time in France a party of belated revenge gained the upper hand, and there soon appeared at the German rear a million hostile bayonets. Caught between hammer and anvil, the German army was forced to accept the honorable conditions of disarmament offered by the Chinese Emperor. The exultant French, fraternizing with the yellow adversary, inundated Germany and soon lost all semblance of military discipline. The Chinese Emperor ordered his troops to cut off his no longer necessary allies, and this was accomplished with Chinese accuracy. In Paris, a revolt of emigrant workers occurred, and the capital of western culture joyfully opened its gates to the leader of the East. Having satisfied his curiosity, the Chinese Emperor set out for maritime Bologne, where under cover of a navy which came from the Pacific Ocean, ships were readied to transport his armies to Great Britain. But he needed money, and the English paid a ransom of a billion pounds. Within a year, all European states declared their vassal dependency on the Chinese Emperor, and he, having left enough occupying forces in Europe, returned to the East and undertook sea campaigns against America and Australia.

The new Mongol yoke lasted for half a century. In its internal aspect, this epoch was unique, with its omnipresent deep mutual penetration and mixture of European and eastern ideas, a grand repetition of ancient Alexandrian syncretism: but in practical areas of life three phenomena became the most distinctive: there was a broad influx into Europe of Chinese and Japanese workers and an acute sharpening of tensions as a result of the socioeconomic problem; there continued a series of palliative attempts at resolving this problem on the part of the ruling classes and a strengthened international activity of secret societal organizations, which formed a broad pan-European conspiracy whose goal was to drive out the Mongols and reestablish European independence.

This colossal plot, in which local national governments participated insofar as this was possible given the control of the Chinese Emperor's governors, was masterfully prepared and succeeded in brilliant fashion. At the appointed hour, a slaughter of Mongol soldiers and a massacre and expulsion of Asiatic workers began. Everywhere secret cadres of European armies were unveiled, and a general mobilization took place according to a most detailed plan prepared long before. The new Chinese Emperor, a nephew of the Great Victor, hurried from China to Russia, but here his countless hordes were smashed by the pan-European army. Their scattered remains returned to the heart of Asia, and Europe became independent.

If the half-century subjection to Asiatic barbarians occurred as a result of the disunity of States thinking only of their separate national interests, then the great and glorious liberation was achieved by an international organization of the united forces of the entire European population. The natural result of this apparent fact appeared to be that the old, traditional structure of separate nations everywhere lost its meaning, and the last remains of the old monarchic institutions disappeared almost everywhere. In the twenty-first century, Europe became a union of more or less democratic governments—a European United States. The progress of outward culture, somewhat restrained by the Mongol invasion and the liberation struggle, accelerated once more. But the themes of inner consciousness—the questions of life and death, of the ultimate destiny of the world and humanity—which had been complicated and clouded by a plethora of new physiological and psychological research data and discoveries—remained unresolved as before. Only one important negative result became clear: the absolute collapse of theoretical materialism. Not one thinking intelligence was any longer satisfied by such conceptions as, for example, the universe being a system of dancing atoms and of life being the result of the mechanistic accumulation of the smallest changes of matter. Humanity had forever outgrown this degree of philosophical infancy. But it became clear on the other hand that it had also outgrown the childlike capacity for a naive, inexplicable faith. Such concepts as God *creating* the world *out of nothing*, and so on, ceased to be taught any longer in primary schools. A certain generally higher level of conception of such subjects was worked out, beneath which no dogmatism could fall. And if a large majority of thinking people remained believers not at all, then some believers out of necessity became *thinkers* as well, fulfilling the prophecy of the Apostle: be children at heart, but not of mind.

At this time there lived among the few believers-spiritualists one remarkable person—many called him a superman—who was equally as far from intellectual naiveté as from infancy of “heart.” He was still young, but thanks to his lofty genius, by the age of thirty-three he was widely hailed as a great thinker, writer, and social influence. Recognizing in himself a great power of spirit, he had always been a convinced spiritualist, and his bright intellect always suggested to him the truth of that which should be believed: the Good, God, the Messiah. In these he *believed*, but he *loved* only *himself alone*. He believed in God, but in the depths of his soul involuntarily and unconsciously preferred himself to Him. He believed in the Good, but the omniscient eye of Eternity knew that this man would bow before an Evil power as soon as it could corrupt him—not by deception of the senses and the baser desires, nor by the lure of

lofty power, but through this single limitless Vanity. Yet this Vanity was neither involuntary instinct nor absurd pretense. Apart from his exceptional genius, beauty, and nobility, his imperial displays of temperance, unselfishness, and active good works seemed to justify completely the enormous self-love of the great spiritualist, ascetic, and philanthropist. And he could hardly be blamed for that with which he had been so abundantly blessed by the gifts of God. He saw in these the special marks of exclusive benevolence to him from on high and counted himself second only to God; in a special way the only son of God. In a word, he recognized himself as being what in reality Christ was. But this consciousness of his higher merit in fact took shape in him not as a moral obligation to God and the world, but as his right and privilege before others, and first of all before Christ. Originally, he had no enmity toward Jesus either. He acknowledged his Messianic significance and merit, but he sincerely saw in him only the greatest of his own precursors. The moral feat of Christ and His absolute uniqueness were incomprehensible to this intellect, which was clouded by Vanity. He reasoned thus:

“Christ came before me; I am second; but that which appears in the order of time later, is in essence first.¹ I come last, at the end of history, namely, because I am the perfected, ultimate savior. That Christ—he is my precursor. His calling was to give notice and prepare my way.”

And in this thinking, the Great Man of the twenty-first century applied to himself all that is said in the Gospel about the Second Coming, explaining it not as a return of that very same Christ, but as a substitution of the first Christ by the ultimate one, that is, by himself.

At this point, this “Man of the Future” represented little that was distinctive and original. For example, Mohammed, a just man, whom one cannot accuse of any kind of evil design, viewed his relationship to Christ in a similar manner.²

This Man also justified the vain preference of himself to Christ by the following logic: “Christ, in preaching and manifesting in his life the Moral Good, was the *reformer* of humanity; I, however, am called to be the *benefactor* of this only partially reformed, partially as-yet-unreformed humanity. I will give to all people everything that is necessary. Christ, as a moralist, separated people by Good and Evil; I will unite them with blessings, which are needed alike by good and bad. I will be the genuine representative of that God whose sun rises over the good and the bad, whose rain falls on the just and unjust. Christ brought a Sword, I will bring Peace. He threatened the earth with a terrible final Judgment, but I will be the final Judge, and my judgment will be not a verdict of justice only, but a judgment of mercy. And there will also be justice in my judgment—

not a retributive justice, but a distributive justice. I will distinguish among people and give to each his due.”

And in this splendid frame of mind he waited on a clear calling from God to the mission of a New Salvation of Humanity—any kind of clear and striking evidence that he was the eldest son, the beloved firstborn of God. He waited and nurtured his Ego with the awareness of his superhuman virtues and gifts—as it was said, this was a man of blameless morality and uncommon genius.

The haughty Righteous Man waited for the highest sanction in order to begin his salvation of humanity—but it didn’t come. His thirtieth year passed, and still another three years slipped by. And then a thought flashed in his mind—a violent trembling penetrated to the very marrow of his bones:

“And what if . . . ? What if not I, but that other one . . . the Galilean . . . ? What if He is not my precursor, but the genuine One, the First and the Last? But then He must be *alive*. . . . Where is He? What if He comes to me . . . now, here . . . ? What will I say to Him? I will have to bow before Him like the most foolish Christian, muttering nonsensically like some Russian peasant, ‘O Lordy Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner,’ or prostrate myself like a Polish peasant’s wife—I, the serene Genius, the Superman! No, never!”³ And here in place of the former rational, cold respect for God and Christ, at first a kind of horror arose and grew in his heart, then a burning *envy* filled and choked his entire being, as it became a raging, breathtaking hatred.

“I—I, and not He! He is not among the living, He is not and will not be. He is not risen! He is not risen! He is not risen! He rotted, putrefied in the tomb, rotted like the least. . . .”

And foaming at the mouth, he rushed out of the house and through the garden, leaping convulsively, running into the wild black night along a rocky path.⁴ The rage then died down, displaced by a despair as cold and heavy as the rocks and as dark as the night. He stopped at a sheer cliff and far below heard the dim sound of a stream rushing across stones. An intolerable grief weighed upon his heart. Suddenly something stirred within him.

“Should I call to Him—to ask what I am to do?”

And amid the darkness, a gentle and sad Image seemed to appear before him.

“He pities me. . . . No, never! He is not risen! He is not risen!”

And he threw himself from the cliff. But something resilient like a column of water held him up in the air; he felt a shock, like an electric jolt, and a force hurled him back. For a moment he lost consciousness and came to on his knees a few steps away from the cliff. Before him was outlined a sort of figure glowing

with a misty phosphorescent radiance from which two unendurably brilliant, sharp eyes penetrated his soul.

He saw those two piercing eyes and heard—either from within himself or from without—a strange voice, desolate and constricted, and at the same time distinct, metallic, and absolutely soulless, as though from a phonograph. And this voice was saying to him:

“My beloved son, in you is all My benevolence. Why have you not sought Me out? Why did you venerate that other, the bad one, and his father? I am your god and father. And that beggar, the crucified one—is a stranger to Me and you. I have no other son besides you. You are the only one, the only begotten, coequal with Me. I love you and demand nothing of you. You are so beautiful, great, and powerful. Do Your work in *your* own name, not in Mine. I have no envy, I love you. I have no need of anything from you. He whom you regarded as God demanded of his Son obedience, boundless obedience even to a crucified death—and He did not help him on the cross. I ask nothing of you, and I will help you—For your own sake, for the sake of your own dignity and superiority, and for the sake of My pure disinterested love for you—I will help you. Receive My spirit. Just as once My spirit gave birth to you in *beauty*, so now it gives birth to you in *power*.”

And with these words of the unknown entity the lips of the superman opened involuntarily, the two piercing eyes came right up to his face, and he felt the sharpness of an icy current enter him and fill his entire being. And at the same time he felt an unprecedented strength, vivacity, lightness of being, and rapture. At that very instant the luminous outline and the two eyes suddenly disappeared, and something lifted the superman up over the ground and deposited him in the garden by the door of his house.

The next day, not only the Great Man’s visitors, but even his servants were amazed by his somehow especially inspired countenance. But they would have been even more struck if they could have seen with what supernatural speed and ease he, locking himself in his study, wrote his celebrated work entitled *The Open Way to Universal Peace and Prosperity*.

The earlier books and public involvement of the superman had been met harshly by critics, although these were for the most part particularly religious people and therefore bereft of any authority—you see, I am talking about the time of the arrival of the Antichrist—so that not many listened to them when they pointed out the signs of an absolutely exceptional, intense pride and conceit and the absence of true simplicity, directness, and sincerity in everything

that had been written by the “man of the future.” But with his new work he attracted to himself even several of his former critics and opponents. This Book, written after the adventure on the cliff, demonstrated in him an unprecedented power of genius. It was a comprehensive thing which reconciled all contradictions. It combined noble reverence for ancient traditions and symbols with a broad and boldly radical sociopolitical agenda and program; unrestricted freedom of thought with the deepest understanding of all things mystical; unconditional individualism with ardent devotion to the Common Good; the loftiest idealism of guiding principles with a careful definition and vibrancy of pragmatic solutions. And all of this was combined and linked through such ingenious artistry that it was easy for each narrowly focused thinker and activist, from his own vantage point, to understand and accept in its entirety. They neither sacrificed anything for *truth itself* nor rose above their own egos for truth’s sake. Neither did they have to give up *in practice* their narrowly focused perspective nor in any way correct the mistakenness of their views and aspirations or their deficiencies.

This remarkable Book was translated immediately into the languages of all highly developed (and some lesser-developed) nations. Thousands of newspapers in all parts of the globe were filled with publishers’ advertisements and ecstatic reviews. Inexpensive editions with pictures of the Author were printed in the millions of copies, and the entire cultured world—by this time, almost the entire earthly sphere—was filled with the glory of the Incomparable, the Great, and Only ONE. Nobody objected to this Book; it appeared to everyone as the revelation of all truth. It gave such justice of treatment to the past, evaluated all current events so impartially from every angle, and so vividly and palpably moved a better future within reach of the present that everybody said,

“This is it, the very Thing we all need; here is the Ideal which is not utopia; here is the Plan that is not a chimera.” And this wonderful Writer not only carried everybody away but became pleasing to each one, so that the word of Christ could be fulfilled:

“I came in the name of the Father, and you did not receive me, *another* will come in *his own* name—him you will receive.” For in order to be *received*, it is necessary to be *pleasing*.⁵

True, some pious people, while passionately embracing the Book, began to ask one question: why was there not a single mention of Christ in it? But other Christians objected:

“And thank God! It is enough already that in past centuries all that was holy was worn thin by all sorts of self-appointed zealots, and now a deeply religious

writer should be very careful. And since the content of the Book is permeated with a truly Christian spirit of active love and comprehensive goodwill, what more do you want?"

And everybody agreed with this.

Soon after the appearance of *The Open Way*, which made its Author the most popular person who had ever lived on earth, an international constituent assembly of the Union of European States was scheduled to take place in Berlin. This Union, created following a number of civil and international wars connected with the liberation from the Mongol yoke (wars which had significantly changed the map of Europe), ran the risk of a dangerous clash—no longer now among and between nations, but among political parties and interest groups. The bosses of overall European politics, belonging to the powerful Brotherhood of Freemasons, sensed the lack of a common executive power. European unity, which had been achieved with such difficulty, was now ready to disintegrate anew at any moment. In the Union Council, or world headquarters (*Comité permanent universel*), there was no unanimity because not all seats were indeed occupied by genuine initiates of the Freemason cause. Independent members of the Council entered into separate agreements with each other, and the matter threatened a new war.

Then the "initiates" decided to institute a single person as an executive power with full plenary authority. The main candidate was a secret member of the Order of Freemasons, the "Man of the Future." He was the only person who possessed the status of worldwide celebrity. Being by profession an artillery man trained in the military and by status a wealthy capitalist, he had friendly ties with financial and military circles everywhere. In another, less enlightened time, it would have been said against him that the circumstance of his descendency was shrouded in mystery. His mother, a personage of loose conduct, was perfectly familiar to both hemispheres of the globe, but too many individuals had identical grounds to consider themselves his father. These circumstances, of course, could not have any meaning in a century which was so progressive, so advanced, that it was to be the last one. This *Man of the Future* was elected almost unanimously President-for-life of the European United States. When he appeared on the platform in all the splendor of his superhuman youthful beauty and strength and with inspired eloquence set out his universal program, the charmed and captivated assembly decided in a burst of enthusiasm without even voting to render to him the highest honor by electing him Roman Emperor.

The congress ended amid general rejoicing, and the Great Chosen One published a manifesto, which began like this:

“Nations of the earth! My peace I give to you!” And ended with the following words: “Nations of earth! Fulfilled are the promises. Eternal universal peace is secured. Any attempt to disturb it shall be met immediately with invincible opposition. For, henceforth there is on earth One central power stronger than all others, either separately or taken together. This completely invincible and insurmountable power belongs to Me, the plenipotentiary and elected One of Europe, the Emperor of all her forces. International law has, finally, sanction which has hitherto been lacking. And henceforth no power will dare to say, ‘War!’ when I say, ‘Peace!’ Nations of the earth—peace be with you!”

This manifesto had the desired effect. Everywhere outside of Europe, especially in America, powerful imperialist parties formed, which forced their states to unify, under various conditions, with the European United States under the Supreme Power of the Roman Emperor. There remained still independent tribes and powers here and there in Asia and Africa. Yet with a small but select army of Russian, German, Polish, Hungarian, and Turkish regiments, the Emperor completed a military expedition from East Asia to Morocco and without much spilling of blood brought the recalcitrant under control. In all countries of both hemispheres he placed in charge his deputies from among European-trained indigenous elites devoted to Him. In all the pagan countries the defeated and fascinated population proclaimed him the Supreme God.

In one year a worldwide monarchy, in the precise and strict meaning of the term, had been established, and the sprouting shoots of war had been torn out by their roots. The Universal League of Peace convened for one last time and, having proposed a rapturous panegyric to the Great Peace-Maker, dissolved itself, since it was no longer needed. In the next year of his rule the Roman—and now Global—Emperor published a new manifesto:

“Nations of earth! I promised you peace, and I have given it to you. But peace is beautiful only with prosperity. Peace is no joy for him whom the calamity of destitution threatens in time of peace. Come to Me now all who are hungry and cold, so that I may fill you and warm you.”

And then he announced a simple and comprehensive social reform, which had already been indicated in his writing and had captivated all noble and sober minds. Now, thanks to the concentration in his hands of global finances and colossal real estate holdings, he could realize this reform according to the wants of the poor and without appreciable injury to the rich. Each began to receive according to ability, and each ability—according to works and service.

The new Lord of the Earth was first of all a softhearted philanthropist, and not only a philanthropist but a *lover of animals* as well. He himself was a vege-

tarian and forbade vivisection, instituting a strict control of slaughterhouses; societies for the protection of animals were encouraged in every way possible.⁶ More important than these details, there was established firmly among all humankind the most fundamental equality—*equality of general satiety*. This was accomplished in the second year of his reign. The socioeconomic problem had been resolved definitively. But if satiety is the first interest of the hungry, the satiated want something more. Usually even satiated animals want not only to sleep, but also to play. How much more so humanity, which has always *post panem* demanded *circenses*.⁷

The Emperor-superman understood what his multitudes needed. At this time there came to him in Rome a great miracle worker from the Far East, wrapped in a thick cloud of strange stories and wild fairy-tales. According to rumors spread among neo-Buddhists, he was of divine descent: from the sun god Suriya and some water nymph.

This miracle worker by the name of Apollonius was unquestionably ingenious, a half-Asiatic and half-European Catholic bishop *in partibus infidelium*, combining in himself in a remarkable way the mastery of recent developments and technical applications of western science with a knowledge and understanding of everything truly sound and significant in the traditional mysticism of the East.⁸ The results of this combination were striking. Apollonius arrived at a semiscientific, semimagical art of attracting and directing atmospheric electricity at will, and among the people it was said that he could *call fire down from heaven*.⁹ However, while striking the imagination of the multitudes with various unheard-of marvels, he did not for a time abuse his power for any special ends.

And this man came to the Great Emperor, worshiping him as the true Son of God and declaring that in the secret books of the East he had found direct prophecies about Him, the Emperor, as the final Savior and Judge of the universe and offered to Him in service himself and all of his art. Charmed by the miracle worker, the Emperor accepted him as a gift from above and, having adorned him with magnificent titles, would never again part company with him. And the peoples of the earth, having been done great favors—universal peace, general satiety—by their Lord, now also received the opportunity of unabated entertainment by the most diverse and unexpected wonders and signs. The third year of the Superman's reign came to an end.

After the successful solution of the political and social problem, the religious question arose. The Emperor himself raised it, and first of all regarding Christianity. At this time Christianity found itself in the following situation. In the face of a significant numerical decline in its ranks—not more than forty-five

million Christians remained on the entire earthly globe—it had morally put its house in order and pulled itself together, gaining in quality what it had lost in quantity. People not united to Christianity by any spiritual interest were no longer counted as Christians. The diverse denominations rather uniformly declined in number, so that among them just about the same numerical relation was retained as had formerly existed. Regarding their mutual sentiments—even though hostility was not replaced by complete reconciliation, it had significantly softened, and contrasts lost their previously acute character. The papacy had long since been expelled from Rome and, after much wandering, found a refuge in Petersburg under the condition of refraining from propaganda there and throughout the country. In Russia it had become significantly simplified. Without changing the essentially necessary staff of its colleges and offices, it was able to inspire the character of their activity and also to reduce to a minimum scale its magnificent ritual and ceremony. Many exotic and seductive customs, although not formally abolished, fell out of usage. In all other countries, especially in North America, the Catholic hierarchy still had many representatives. Through strong will, inexhaustible energy, and independence, they even more strongly than before drew the Catholic Church together in unity, preserving its international cosmopolitan significance.

Protestantism, at the head of which continued to stand Germany (especially after the reunion of a significant part of the Anglican church with the Catholic), cleansed itself of its most negative tendencies. Opponents of this cleansing openly crossed over to religious indifference and unbelief. Only the sincerely confessing faithful remained in the Evangelical Church. At its head stood people who combined broad learning with a deep religiosity and with an all-the-more-strengthened desire to revive in themselves the living image of ancient, authentic Christianity.

After political events changed the official position of the Russian Church, orthodoxy experienced the joy of unification with the better part of Old Believers and many other sectarians, although it lost many millions of its pretending, nominal members. This renewed Orthodox Church, while not increasing in number, began to grow in power of spirit. It showed this power of spirit particularly in its internal struggle with extremist sects that had been multiplying among the people and throughout society—sects tinged with demonic and satanic elements.¹⁰

In the first two years of the New Reign, all Christians, frightened and wearied by the series of previous revolutions and wars, related to the New Ruler and his peaceful reforms partially with gracious patience and partially with strong

sympathy and even ardent enthusiasm. But in the third year, with the appearance of the great magician, many Orthodox, Catholics, and Evangelicals began to express serious reservations and antipathies. The Gospel texts and Apostolic letters, which spoke of the Prince of this Age and about the Antichrist, began to be read more attentively and to generate lively commentary. The Emperor was able to sense indications that a storm was brewing, and he resolved quickly to clear up the matter.

At the beginning of the fourth year of his reign, he published a manifesto for all his faithful Christian subjects irrespective of creed, inviting them to elect or appoint plenipotentiary representatives to an Ecumenical Council under His chairmanship.¹¹ His residency by this time had been transferred from Rome to Jerusalem. Palestine at that time was an autonomous land populated and ruled predominantly by Jews. The Free City of Jerusalem now was made the Imperial City. Christian holy places remained untouched, but one huge building was constructed on the entirety of *Haram-esh-Sherif*—from *Birket-Israin* and the present old barracks, on one side, to the Mosque of *EL-Aksa* and “Solomon’s Stables” on the other. It contained, besides two old, small mosques, a huge Imperial Temple for the Union of all Cults and two luxurious imperial palaces with libraries, museums, and special accommodations for the practice of magical experiment. In this demi-temple, demi-palace, the Ecumenical Council was to open on the 14th of September.

Inasmuch as the Evangelical creed, precisely speaking, does not have a priesthood, the Catholic and Orthodox hierarchs, consistent with the Emperor’s wish and also in order to give a certain homogeneity to the representation of all segments of Christianity, resolved to allow a certain number of their laymen, who were well known by their piety and devotion to church interests, participation in the Council. And once laymen were admitted, it was not possible to exclude the lower clergy. In this way, the total number of Council members exceeded three thousand, and nearly a half million Christian pilgrims inundated Jerusalem and the whole of Palestine. Among the members of the Council three distinguished themselves in particular.

First, Pope Peter II stood at the head of the Catholic contingent. His predecessor had died on the way to the Council, and at Damascus a conclave had convened, unanimously electing Cardinal Simone Barionini, who took the name of Peter. He was of humble origin from the region of Naples and had become well known as a preacher of the Carmelite Order. He had also done much good work in combating a certain satanic sect that had gained great influence in Petersburg and its outlying areas; the sect had been leading astray not only Or-

thodox but also Catholics. He had been made Archbishop of Mogilev and afterward a Cardinal and was singled out for the papal crown in good time. This was a man of about fifty, of medium height and solid build, with ruddy complexion, aquiline nose, and bushy eyebrows. Passionate and impetuous, he spoke with intensity and sweeping gestures and carried away rather than convinced listeners. The new Pope expressed distrust and dislike of the world leader, especially after the late Pope, having set out for the Council, had yielded to the Emperor's insistence and appointed as Cardinal the Imperial Chancellor and the great magician, the exotic Bishop Apollonius, whom Peter considered a dubious Catholic and an unquestionable fraud.

The actual, though unofficial, leader of the Orthodox was the venerable Elder John, widely known among the Russian people. Although he officially considered himself a "retired" bishop, he did not live in any monastery but continuously wandered from place to place. Various legends were spread about him. Some people were sure that this was Fyodor Kuzmich, that is, Aleksandr I, born nearly three centuries before, now resurrected from the dead.¹² Others went further and maintained that this was the real John; that is, the Apostle John the Divine, who had never died and now openly appeared at the end times. He himself said nothing about his descendency and his age. Now this was a very ancient but hale and hearty old man with yellowing, even greenish, white curls and beard. He was tall and thin but with full and slightly rosy cheeks, lively sparkling eyes, and an affectionately kind expression on his face and in his voice; he was always dressed in a white cassock and cloak.

At the head of the Evangelical contingent of the Council stood the most learned German theologian, Professor Ernst Pauli. He was a slight, lean old man with a large forehead, sharp nose, and smoothly shaven chin. His distinctive eyes had a grim but good-natured look. He would incessantly rub his hands, shake his head, knit his eyebrows in a manner awful to behold, and pucker his lips. As he did these things, eyes glittering, he would sullenly make abrupt sounds: *So! Nun! Ja! So! Also!*¹³ He was solemnly dressed in white tie and long clerical frock coat displaying certain honorary emblems.

The opening of the Council was inspirational. Two-thirds of the huge Temple which was dedicated to the "unity of all cults" was filled with benches and other seating for the members of the Council, one-third was occupied by a raised platform where, besides the Imperial Throne there was another, smaller one for the great magician—after all, he was Cardinal and Imperial Chancellor. Behind this, there were rows of armchairs for ministers, courtiers, and secretaries of state, and along the sides were longer rows of armchairs, the purpose of which was un-

known. An orchestra occupied the choir loft, and in a nearby square two regiments of honor guards and an artillery battery were stationed for ceremonial salutes. The members of the Council had already been to religious services at various churches, and the opening ceremony was supposed to be entirely secular. When the Emperor made his entrance with the great magician and his retinue, the orchestra played "The March of United Humanity," which served as the Imperial and international hymn. All members of the Council rose and, waving their hats, loudly cried out three times:

"Vivat! Hurrah! Hoch!"

The Emperor, standing near his throne and stretching out his hand with majestic grace, pronounced in a sonorous and pleasant voice:

"Christians of all sects! My beloved subjects and brothers! From the beginning of My Reign, which the Most High has blessed with such marvelous and glorious deeds, not once have I had cause to be unhappy with you; you always have fulfilled your duty according to faith and conscience. But this is not enough for Me. My sincere love for you, beloved brothers, craves reciprocity. I want you, not out of a feeling of duty, but out of a feeling of heartfelt love, to recognize your true Leader in all matters, undertaken for the Good of Humanity. And so, besides that which I do for everybody, I would like to show you some special favor. Christians, what could I do to make you happy? What can I give you not as subjects, but as coreligionists, as My brothers? Christians! Tell Me what is for you most precious in Christianity, so that I can direct My efforts toward this?"

He stopped speaking and waited. A low murmur carried through the Temple; members of the Council whispered among themselves. Passionately gesticulating, Pope Peter was explaining something to those around him. Professor Pauli shook his head and bitterly smacked his lips. The venerable John, bending over to an Eastern bishop and a Capuchin friar, quietly suggested something to them. Having waited a few minutes, the Emperor appealed to the Council in the same tender tone, but in which now sounded a barely perceptible note of irony:

"Dear Christians," said he, "I understand how difficult one straightforward answer is for you. I want to help you in this as well. Unfortunately, since time immemorial you have been split up into various sects and factions so that maybe you no longer have a common reason for existing as one group. But if you cannot come to agreement among yourselves, then I hope to reconcile all your factions by showing them equal love and readiness to satisfy the *true aspiration* of each. Dear Christians! I know that for many, and by no means the least, of you the most precious thing in Christianity is the *spiritual authority* which it gives

to its lawful representatives—not for their own gain, of course, but for the general welfare, since on this authority are based a correct spiritual order and moral discipline, necessary for all. Dear Catholic brethren! Oh, how I understand your view and how I would like to rest My power on the authority of your spiritual leadership! So that you do not think that this is flattery and empty words—We solemnly declare in accordance with Our Autocratic Will: the Supreme Bishop of all Catholics, the Roman Pope, is from this day restored to his altar and See in Rome with all the former rights and privileges of this title that had ever been granted it by Our predecessors beginning with Emperor Constantine the Great.¹⁴ And from you, Catholic brethren, I want in exchange for this only the inner heartfelt recognition of Me as your only Protector and Patron. Whosoever present recognizes Me as such in their conscience and feelings, let him come here to Me.” And he indicated the empty places on the platform.

With jubilant cries of “*Gratias agimus! Domine! Salvum fac magnum imperatorem*” almost all the princes of the Catholic Church, cardinals and bishops, the majority of believing laymen and more than half of the monks mounted the platform and, after bowing deeply in the direction of the Emperor, took their seats. But down below, in the middle of the Council, as straight and unmoving as a marble statue, Pope Peter II sat in his place. All who had surrounded him were now up on the platform. But the thinned multitude of monks and laymen remaining below closed ranks around him in a tight circle, and from there a restrained whisper was heard: “*Non praevalerunt, non portae inferni.*”¹⁵

Having cast a surprised glance at the motionless Pope, the Emperor once again raised his voice:

“Dear brethren! I know that among you there are those for whom the most precious things in Christianity are its *sacred tradition*, ancient symbols, hymns and prayers, icons and ceremonial service. And in fact, what can be more valuable than this for the religious disposition? You know, My beloved, that today I have signed a law directing large sums of money to the World Museum of Christian Archeology in Our glorious Imperial City Constantinople, with the aim of collecting, studying, and preserving all relics of church antiquity, especially of the Eastern Church. And I ask that tomorrow you select from amongst yourselves a commission to discuss with Me those measures which should be taken with the aim of drawing the contemporary way of life, morals, and customs closer to the tradition and ordinances of the Holy Orthodox Church! Orthodox brethren! Whosoever finds My Will in his heart, whosoever can call Me his heartfelt true Leader and Lord, let him come up here.”

And the majority of hierarchs of East and North, half of the former Old Be-

lievers and more than half of the Orthodox priests, monks, and laymen mounted the platform with jubilant shouts, casting a sidelong glance at the proudly seated Catholics there. The venerable John did not budge but only sighed loudly. And when the multitude around him had greatly thinned, he left his bench and moved closer to Pope Peter and his small circle. Other Orthodox who had also not gone up to the platform followed him. Again the Emperor began to speak:

“I know, dear Christians, that there are also those among you who hold more precious than anything in Christianity personal conviction in truth and free inquiry into Scripture. There is no need for Me to expand on My own views on the subject. Perhaps you know that still in early youth I wrote a mature work on biblical criticism, which at the time created a stir and established the beginning of My reputation. And probably in memory of this, Tübingen University just recently sent Me an invitation to receive from them an honorary Doctor of Theology diploma. I have given the order to reply that I accept with pleasure and gratitude. And today together with that museum of Christian archeology, I have signed into law a provision for a World Institute for the Free Investigation of Holy Scripture from every possible angle and leading in every possible direction; it will also allow for the study of all auxiliary subjects, with an annual budget of one and a half billion marks.¹⁶ Whosoever among you shares My spiritual disposition in their heart and can in clear conscience recognize Me as his Sovereign Leader, I ask to come up here to the new Doctor of Theology.”

And the beautiful lips of the Great Man became slightly distorted by a strange grin. More than half the learned theologians moved toward the platform, though with some delay and hesitation. All looked back at Professor Pauli, who seemed rooted to his seat. He hung his head low, bent over and shriveled up. The learned theologians who mounted the platform appeared confused and embarrassed; suddenly one waved his hand and leaped straight down past the steps and, limping slightly, ran back to Professor Pauli and the minority remaining with him. The Professor raised his head and, getting up with an uncertain impulse, went past the empty benches accompanied by his tried and true coreligionists and took seats with them nearer the Elder John, Pope Peter, and their small circles.

A significant majority of the Council, and among that number almost all the hierarchs of East and North, now found themselves on the platform. Below remained only the three clumps of people who had drawn together and closed ranks, crowding around the Elder John, Pope Peter, and Professor Pauli.

In a grieving tone, the Emperor asked them:

“What more can I do for you? Strange people! What do you want from Me?

I do not know. Tell Me yourselves, you Christians who are deserted by a majority of your brothers and leaders and condemned by popular sentiment: what is most precious to you in Christianity?"

Here the Elder John rose like a white candle out of his seat and answered meekly, "Great sovereign! Most precious to us in Christianity is Christ Himself—He Himself and everything that comes from Him. For we know that in Him dwells all the fullness of corporeal Divinity. But from you also, sir, we are ready to receive every blessing if only in your generous hand we recognize the Holy Hand of Christ. And in response to your question, What can you do for us?—here is our straightforward answer: confess here now before us Jesus Christ the Son of God, who came in the flesh, rose from the dead, and will come again—confess Him, and we will receive you with love as the true precursor of His Second Glorious Coming."¹⁷ He fell silent and gazed steadily at the face of the Emperor.

With that, something evil began to happen. Within him arose the same infernal storm he had experienced that fateful night. He completely lost his inner equilibrium; all his thoughts concentrated on not losing outward self-control and not giving himself away before the appointed time. He made a superhuman effort not to hurl himself with a wild shriek at the speaker and begin tearing at him with his teeth. Suddenly he heard the familiar otherworldly voice:

"Keep silent and don't be afraid of anything." He kept quiet. Only his deathly and darkened face became completely contorted, and sparks flew from his eyes. Meanwhile, during Elder John's speech, the great magician, who had been sitting wrapped in an immense tricolored cloak that completely hid his Cardinal purple, seemed to be performing some manual dexterity under it: his eyes sparkled intensely and his lips moved. Through the open windows it was visible in the Temple that a huge black cloud had appeared, and soon everything got dark. The Elder John did not lift his amazed and fearful eyes from the face of the silent Emperor. Suddenly he recoiled in horror and, wheeling around, cried in a choked voice:

"Little Children, the Antichrist!" At that moment, a huge, perfect bolt of lightning accompanied by a deafening peal of thunder flashed down and drowned him out. Everything stood still for an instant, and when the stunned Christians recovered, the Elder John lay dead.

The Emperor, pale but calm, turned to the gathering:

"You have seen Divine Judgment. I did not want anyone's death, but My heavenly father avenges his beloved son. The matter is closed. Who will contest the Most High? Secretaries! Enter into the record: The Ecumenical Council of all

Christians, after heavenly fire struck down the insane opponent of the Divine Majesty, unanimously recognized the Mighty Emperor of Rome and the World as their Sovereign Leader and Lord.”

Suddenly a single loud and clear word resounded through the Temple:

“*Contradicitur.*”¹⁸

Pope Peter II got up and with reddened face, shaking all over with anger, raised his staff in the direction of the Emperor.

“Our only Lord is Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. And who you are—you have heard. Begone from us, you Cain-fratricide! Get out, you vessel of the devil! By the power of Christ, I, the servant of the servants of God, forever cast you out, vile dog, from God’s flock and hand you over to your father. To Satan! Anathema, Anathema, Anathema!”

While he spoke, the great magician nervously twitched under his cloak. Thunder louder than the last “anathema” rolled and the last pope fell lifeless.

“Thus at My father’s hand will perish all My enemies,” said the Emperor.

“*Pereant, pereant!*” cried the trembling princes of the church. He turned and, leaning on the shoulder of the great magician and accompanied by his entire entourage, exited through the door at the back of the platform.¹⁹

In the Temple remained two corpses and a tightly gathered circle of Christians half dead from fear. The only one who did not lose possession of his faculties was Professor Pauli. It was as if the general horror awoke in him all the powers of the Spirit. He also changed outwardly, taking on an inspired and majestic countenance. With determined steps he mounted the platform and sitting down in the place of one of the secretaries of state took a piece of paper and began writing something on it. Having finished, he stood up and read publicly:

“To the Glory of our only Savior Jesus Christ. The Ecumenical Council of God’s Churches gathered in Jerusalem, after our most blessed brother John, the representative of Eastern Christianity, had unmasked the Great Deceiver and Enemy of God as the true Antichrist foretold in the Word of God, and our most blessed Father Peter, the representative of Western Christianity, lawfully and rightly excommunicated him from God’s Church forever—Today, in the presence of the bodies of these two witnesses of Christ killed for the Truth, the Council resolves: To sever relations with the excommunicated and his odious assembly and, withdrawing to the wilderness, to anticipate the inevitable Coming of our True Lord Jesus Christ.”

Animation seized the crowd and loud voices resounded:

“*Adveniat! Adveniat cito! Komm, Herr Jesu, komm!* Come, Lord Jesus!”

Adding the following words, Professor Pauli read aloud:

“Having unanimously adopted this first and last Act of the Last Ecumenical Council, we sign our names.” And he made a gesture of invitation to the assembly. All hastily mounted the platform and signed. At the bottom, signed in large Gothic script was “*duorum defunctorum testium locum tenens Ernst Pauli.*”²⁰

“Now we go with our tabernacle of the Last Testament!” He said, indicating the two deceased. The bodies were lifted onto stretchers. Singing Latin, German, and Church-Slavonic hymns, the Christians slowly walked toward the exit from *Haram-esh-Sherif*. Here the procession was stopped by a secretary of state sent by the Emperor and accompanied by an officer with a platoon of guards. The soldiers stopped at the door, and the secretary read the following:

“The order of his Divine Majesty: For the purpose of instructing the Christian people and protecting them from malevolent men who bring trouble and temptation, We have seen fit to display publicly the corpses of the two seditious ones, killed by heavenly fire, on the street of Christians (*Haret-en-Nasara*), at the entrance to the chief temple of this religion, called the Tomb of the Sepulchre and also of the Resurrection, so that all may satisfy themselves that they are really dead. Their stubborn confederates who have maliciously rejected all Our Benefits and rashly shut their eyes to clear signs of the Deity itself—are spared by Our Mercy and intercession before the heavenly father the death by heavenly fire which they deserve. They are completely free with a single prohibition, for the sake of the Common Good, they are not allowed to dwell in cities and other populated places, lest they disturb and seduce innocent and simpleminded people by their malicious inventions.”

When he had finished, at a sign from the officer eight soldiers approached the stretchers with the bodies.

“Let that which is written be fulfilled!” said Professor Pauli, and the Christians holding the stretchers silently passed them to the soldiers, who then went off in the distance through the northwestern gates, and the Christians, leaving by the northeastern gates, quickly left the city, passing the Mount of Olives for Jericho along a road which mounted police and two cavalry regiments had cleared beforehand of the multitudes of people. On the desert hills by Jericho it was decided to wait for a few days.

The next morning some Christian pilgrims whom they knew arrived from Jerusalem, and they recounted what had transpired in Zion. After a state banquet all the members of the Council had been invited to the huge throne room (near the place where Solomon’s throne is supposed to have stood), and the Em-

peror, addressing the representatives of the Catholic hierarchy, announced to them that the good of the Church obviously required of them to elect immediately a worthy successor of the Apostle Peter; and that under the present circumstances, the election had to be held summarily—the presence of the Emperor as the Leader and representative of the whole Christian world more than made up for any ritualistic omissions; and that He, in the name of all Christians, suggested the College elect His beloved friend and brother Apollonius, so that the close bond between them would make the union between Church and State firm and indissoluble, to the genuine benefit of both. The College of Cardinals withdrew to a special room for its conclave and in an hour and a half returned with the new Pope Apollonius. And while the election was taking place the Emperor gently, wisely, and eloquently persuaded the Orthodox and Evangelical representatives, in view of the New and Great Era in Christian history, to end their old divisions, giving His word that Apollonius would be able to abolish forever all the historical abuses of papal power. Convinced by the speech, the Orthodox and Protestant representatives drew up an Act of Union of the Churches, and when Apollonius appeared in the chamber with the Cardinals amidst joyful acclamation of the entire gathering, a Greek Archbishop and an Evangelical minister presented their paper to him.

“Accipio et approbo et laetificatur cor meum,” said Apollonius, signing the document.²¹ “I am as much a true Orthodox and a true Protestant as I am a true Catholic,” he added and exchanged kisses of friendship with the Greek and the German. Then he walked up to the Emperor, who embraced him and held him in His arms for a long while.

Just about this time, some kind of luminous orbs began to flit about the palace and Temple in all directions. They grew and transformed themselves into shining forms of strange creatures—flowers never before seen on earth showered down from above, filling the air with an unknown aroma. Delightful sounds of hitherto unheard musical instruments and angelic voices of invisible singers rang out also from above, praising the new Lords of Heaven and Earth—sounds that penetrated straight to the soul and tugged at the heart. Meanwhile a frightening underground rumble was heard in the northwest corner of the central palace under *Kubbet-el-Aruakh*, that is, the cupola of souls, where according to Moslem tradition lies the entrance to the underworld. When the gathering moved in that direction at the invitation of the Emperor, everyone clearly heard countless high-pitched and piercing voices—childish, or devilish—calling out:

“The time has arrived, let us out, Saviors, Saviors!”

But Apollonius prostrated himself, thrice shouting something to them down below in an unknown language; the voices were silenced and the underground rumbling stopped. During all this, an immense mob of people completely surrounded *Haram-esh-Sherif*. As night fell, the Emperor, together with the new Pope, came out onto the eastern porch, raising a storm of delight. He bowed affably in all directions, as cardinal-deacons brought to Apollonius large baskets from which the magician continuously took and threw into the air magnificent Roman candles, rockets, and fountains of fire, phosphorescent and pearl-like, and brightly rainbow colored—all set aflame by the touch of his hand. Hitting the ground, all this changed into innumerable multicolored pieces of paper, with full and unconditional indulgences for all sins past, present, and future. The people's exultation surpassed all bounds. True, some maintained that they saw with their own eyes how the indulgences changed into hideous toads and snakes. Nonetheless, the vast majority was in rapture, and the people's festivities continued for several more days, during which time the new miracle worker Pope achieved things so marvelous and unbelievable that to try to relate them would be useless.

At that time in the wilderness on the heights above Jericho the Christians devoted themselves to fasting and prayer. The evening of the fourth day, when it got dark, Professor Pauli with nine comrades on asses made their way to Jerusalem with a cart and passed by *Haram-esh-Sherif* on side streets, coming out at *Haret-en-Nasara*; and they approached the entrance of the Temple of the Resurrection, where the bodies of Pope Peter and Elder John lay on the road. The streets at that hour were deserted, for the whole town had gone to *Haram-esh-Sherif*. The soldiers on duty slept a deep sleep.²² Those who had come for the corpses found that the bodies were untouched by corruption and had not even grown stiff or heavy. Having lifted them onto stretchers and covered them with cloaks they had brought with them, they returned by the very same circuitous route, but as soon as they put the stretchers down, the Spirit of Life entered the dead. They moved, attempting to throw off the cloaks in which they were wrapped. With joyful cries, all began to help them, and soon both the revived men were on their feet, safe and sound. And having come to life, Elder John began to speak:

"So, children, we are not parted after all. And this is what I will tell you now: it is time we fulfill Christ's last prayer about His disciples that they should be One, as He and the Father are One. So for the purpose of this Christian unity, we honor, children, our beloved brother Peter. Let him at last shepherd Christ's sheep. So, brother!"

And he embraced Peter. Then Professor Pauli came up to them:

“Tu est Petrus!” he addressed the Pope, *“jetzt ist es ja grundlich erwiesen und ausser jedem Zweifel gesetzt.”*²³ And he firmly grasped Peter’s hand with his right and gave his left to the Elder John saying,

*“So also, Vaterchen, nun sind wir ja Eins in Christo.”*²⁴ Thus the union of the churches was concluded in the middle of a dark night, in a high and secluded place. But the nocturnal darkness was suddenly illuminated by a bright light, and a great sign appeared in the sky: a woman arrayed with the sun, under her feet the moon, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.²⁵ The phenomenon lingered for a while and then gradually moved in a southward direction. Pope Peter raised his staff and exclaimed,

“Here is our banner! Let us follow it!” And he went in the direction of the vision, accompanied by both the elders and the entire multitude of Christians toward God’s mountain, Sinai. . . .

(Here the reader stopped)

The Lady: Why don’t you go on?

Mr. Z: The manuscript does not continue. Father Pansophius did not succeed in finishing his tale. Already ill, he related to me that he wanted to write further—“as soon as I get well.” But he did not get well, and the end of his tale is buried along with him in the Danilov monastery.

The Lady: But you do remember what he said to you—so tell us.

Mr. Z: I recall only the important details: After the spiritual leaders and representatives of Christianity withdrew to the Arabian desert, where multitudes of faithful devotees of the Truth flocked to them, the new Pope could corrupt with his marvels and wonders all the other superficial Christians, those who had not become disillusioned with the Antichrist. He announced that by the power of his keys he had opened the door between the earthly world and the world beyond the grave. And indeed, contact between the living and the dead—and also people and demons—became a normal occurrence, and new, unheard-of types of mystical fornication and idolatry developed.

At the insistent suggestion of the mysterious “father’s” voice, the Emperor announced Himself to be the Single True Incarnation of the Universal Supreme Divinity. But just as he began to consider himself firmly established on religious footing, a new misfortune befell him, from a source nobody had anticipated: the Jews rose against him. This nation, whose number at that time approached thirty million, was not completely bereft of responsibility in preparing and consolidating the global successes of the “superman.” As soon as he had moved to Jerusalem, he had secretly backed in Jewish circles rumors that his main task was

to establish Israel's global dominion—the Jews then recognized him as Messiah, and their enthusiastic devotion to him knew no bounds. But suddenly they rebelled, breathing anger and revenge.—This about-face, undoubtedly foretold in Scripture and legend, was perhaps presented by Father Pansophius with excessive simplicity and realism.

The fact of the matter was that the Jews, considering the Emperor a full Israelite by blood, accidentally discovered that he was *not even circumcised*. On that very day all of Jerusalem, and on the next day the whole of Palestine, was gripped by insurrection. The boundless and ardent devotion to the Savior of Israel, the promised Messiah, gave way to an equally boundless and equally ardent hatred for the insidious fraud, the insolent imposter. All of Jewry rose as one person, and its enemies saw dumbfoundedly that the soul of Israel in its depths lived not by the calculations of mammon but by the force of heartfelt feeling, by the hope and wrath of its eternal Messianic faith.

The Emperor, not anticipating such a sudden explosion, lost his self-control and issued an edict, sentencing to death all recalcitrant Jews and Christians. Many thousands and tens of thousands who had not succeeded in arming themselves were slaughtered mercilessly. But soon an army of a million Jews controlled Jerusalem and trapped the Antichrist in *Haram-esh-Sherif*. At his disposal there was only a portion of the guard, which could not move the amassed enemy. With the help of the magical art of his Pope, the Emperor succeeded in penetrating the ranks of those who lay siege, and soon he reappeared in Syria with an incalculably large multiracial pagan army. The Jews went out to meet him with little probability of success.

But hardly had the advance guard of the two armies met when an earthquake of unprecedented force occurred under the Dead Sea, near which the Emperor's troops had taken up position. A huge crater of a volcano erupted, and fiery streams merging into one flaming lake swallowed the Emperor himself and all his countless regiments as well as his ever-present escort Pope Apollonius, all of whose magic could not help him. Meanwhile, the Jews fled toward Jerusalem, fearful and trembling, calling for salvation to the God of Israel. As the Holy City came into sight, the heavens were split wide open by majestic lightning from East to West, and they saw Christ descending in royal splendor, the nail-wounds in his outstretched hands. At that same moment a multitude of Christians led by Peter, John, and Paul moved from Sinai to Zion, and still more rapturous multitudes ran from various directions: these were all the Jews and Christians executed by the Antichrist. They came to life and ascended the Throne with Christ for a thousand years.

At this, father Pansophius wanted to end his tale, which had as its subject not the general catastrophe of the universe but only the denouement of our historical process, consisting in the appearance, glorification, and destruction of the Antichrist.

The Politician: And you think that this denouement is so close?

Mr. Z: Well, there will yet be a lot of chatter and fuss on stage, but the drama already has long ago been written and finished to the end, and it is not permitted for either the spectators or the actors to change anything in it.

The Lady: But in what, finally, is the meaning of this drama? And I still don't understand why your Antichrist so hates God, and himself in essence is good and not evil?

Mr. Z: That's just it; *in essence*, he *isn't*. The whole meaning is in that. And I take back my previous words that "you won't explain the Antichrist with proverbs alone." He is explained fully by a proverb, and an exceptionally simple one at that: "All that glitters is not gold." The brilliance, you see, in this counterfeit good—was more than enough, but there was nothing at all of vital power in it.

The General: But note, as well, where the curtain comes down in the historical drama: on a war, on the meeting of two armies! Here the end of our conversation has returned to its beginning. . . .²⁶

Appendix A The Jews in Russia

The movement against the Jews, spread and fostered by the Russian press [after the fashion of Germany], represents an unprecedented violation of the most fundamental principles of justice and humanity.¹ We consider it necessary to remind

Source: “The Jews in Russia,” *Times* (London), December 10, 1890, 3. The article’s dateline was given as Moscow, December 3, and attributed anonymously to “an occasional correspondent.” The *Times* identified it as the “expression of opinion by some 60 or more Russians connected with art and literature” and as a “protest . . . headed by Count Leon Tolstoy.” Nevertheless, the protest and the letter bear Soloviev’s unmistakable intellectual mark. Tolstoy had earlier given Soloviev permission to write in his name: “I am happy with all my heart to participate in this affair, and know in advance that if you, Vladimir Sergeievich, express that which you think of this subject, then you will express my feelings and thoughts as well.” A date of May 18 is appended to a copy of the Russian text, but it is not known if Soloviev forwarded an English or Russian copy to the *Times* (Soloviev had spent time studying in England, and his English was good enough that he was able to earn money for translations). The Russian text is at some variance with the original English, so the latter is reproduced here with one minor alteration. See also *Pis'ma* 3:160–61; and Vladimir S. Soloviev, *Sochineniia v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Pravda, 1989), 2:682–83.

the Russian public of these elementary principles, the candid acceptance of which is the only solution of the so-called Jewish question. The existence, in fact, of such a question is simply the result of these principles having been forgotten. As worthless and pernicious individuals exist among all races without necessarily contaminating and involving the entire race, which, if such were the case, would abolish the individual moral responsibility of its members, every appearance of hostility or action against the Jews as a body or merely because they are Jews represents an absurd infatuation of blind national egoism, of narrow self-interest which cannot for a moment be justified.

It is unjust to hold the Jews responsible for failings induced by a thousand years of persecution and the abnormal conditions in which they have been compelled to live. If for centuries they have been forcibly obliged to engage in money business because debarred from all other occupations, the disagreeable effects of such an exclusive turn given to Jewish energy cannot be removed by further persecution, which only tends to perpetuate the evil.

Membership of the Semitic race and practice of the laws of Moses, implying nothing wrong or blameable per se, cannot afford the slightest ground for special enactments and restrictions applicable exclusively to the Jews, and comparing unfavorably with those in force for Russian subjects of other races and creeds. As the Russian Jews bear the burdens and fulfill the obligations imposed by the State equally with all other members of the particular class to which they may belong, they ought in justice to have the same rights as those enjoyed by their Russian compeers.

The recognition and application of these elementary truths are important and necessary for our own welfare as well as the good of the Jews. This intense suscitation of racial and religious hatred, so opposed to the spirit of Christianity and so destructive of all feelings [*sic*] of justice and humanity, tends to corrupt society at the very core and may lead to complete moral isolation. It appears all the more serious in view of the noticeable decline of humanitarian ideas and enfeeblement of the juridical principle in our present condition of society. The mere feeling, therefore, of national self-preservation demands that this anti-Semitic movement should be emphatically condemned, not only as immoral in itself but as extremely dangerous for the future of Russia.

Appendix B Panmongolism (a poem)

Panmongolism! Though the name is savage
It caresses my ear
As if it is full with portent
Of a great Divine Fate . . .
When in decadent Byzantium
God's altar had grown cold
And the Messiah was disavowed
By nation and Prince, priest and Emperor,
Then from the East arose¹
A nation obscure and alien
And under the heavy blow of fate
The Second Rome bowed in the dust.

We do not want to learn
By the fate of ancient Byzantium
And the flatterers of Russia repeat over and over

Source: Dated by the author October 1, 1894, published posthumously. From a text in *Pis'ma*, 3d ed. (St. Petersburg: 1911), 3:336–37, reprinted in *Sobranie sochinenii* 12:95–96.

You are the Third Rome!
You are the Third Rome!

Well, all right? The supply of God's instruments
Of retribution is not yet exhausted . . .
A swarm of awakened tribes
Is preparing new blows.

Leaders from the Eastern islands
From Malayan waters to Altaia
Rising up in arms at the Wall of China
Have gathered the hosts of their regiments
As innumerable as locusts
And just as insatiable
Maintained not by a power of this place
The tribes go to the north.
O Rus! Forget your bygone glory.
The two-headed eagle is shattered
And scraps of your banners are given
For amusement to the yellow children.

He who could forget the testament of love
Will resign himself in trembling and terror
And the Third Rome lies in the dust
And now there will not be a Fourth.²

Appendix C Letter to Tsar Nikolai II

Your Imperial Majesty

Most Gracious Sovereign!

The matter about which I feel obliged to speak to Your Majesty is important for Russia and for the entire world, and its necessary accomplishment depends, after God, only on Your Majesty.

Shortly after Your accession to the throne of all the Russias, the announcement by Your Majesty of the intention to preserve in all its force the principle of autocracy was faithfully comprehended and happily received by people free of political ambition and prejudices. It was clear that autocracy is precious to its new possessor not out of a love for limitless power, but out of a love for Russia and out of obedience to a higher will,—that it is precious and holy to You, Sire, as the instrument of Divine Providence for the good of the peoples, to which the centuries attest. Russia knows what it is obligated to its historical autocracy for. Without it, our fatherland would not have obtained its external political independence in the fifteenth century, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century it would have lost its internal national identity; we know that only the autocracy of Peter the Great and his successors gave us in the last century the rudiments of culture common to

Source: Ca. 1896–97, from a manuscript among the papers of Baron David Goratsievich Ginzburg, published years after Soloviev's death in *Nachala* (Petrograd: 1921), 186–90. *Sobranie sochinenii* 11:452–56.

all humankind and advanced Russia as a new worldwide historical force; we have not forgotten how, thanks to that very autocracy, Emperor Aleksandr II could quickly and peacefully transform millions of slaves into Russian citizens; we are convinced, finally, that if the Father of Your Majesty, in the first difficult years of his rule had foregone the fullness of his power, Russia would have been thrown into internal discord and involved in dangerous external adventures, and the Russian Tsar could not have presented himself before the entire world as a powerful peacemaker.

That which was autocracy for us in the distant and recent past vouches for the future of Russia. It is not in vain, Sire, that You have received from Your Father a firm, unshakeable, and glorified authority. With one authoritative word, Your Majesty, You can now fill in and bring to completion the historic feat of both Your Grandfather and Father—to appear at the same time both a new Liberator and a new Peacemaker: to liberate not one Estate, but all Your loyal subjects from spiritual serfdom, and to bring inner peace to the soul of Russia.

In order to rise to its ancient presentiments and the confused expectations of the peoples—in order to fulfill its universal purpose, Russia must reveal its internal spiritual powers. The peoples do not long for You as a conqueror with sword and fire; it is not with weapons that we must unite the world, but with spirit and truth. The spiritual essence of Russia is Orthodoxy, that is, the purest and most perfected form of Christianity. But can such a form of Christianity be maintained by force, can it rule through coercion of people's conscience? Christ said: *I am the door*.¹ Is it permissible for Christians to push some through this Door forcibly, while not allowing others to exit? It has been said: *I will not turn away him that comes to Me*, but nothing is said about those who are dragged by force.² Orthodoxy is the ruling church, but prior to that it is a Christian church, and thus it can exercise dominion only by force of inward attraction. And besides, preference and first place evidently, explicitly, and naturally belong to it now by virtue of the simple fact that Orthodoxy is the confessional faith of the Sovereign and of most of the people. Why is there still coercion here? To what end is this internal artificial enclosure, this triple ring of criminal laws, oppressive administrative measures, and censorship prohibitions? But no matter how painful and offensive these fetters are for the side that suffers—for the various schismatics, sectarians, and those who adhere to other faiths—for the ruling Church itself the situation is incomparably more painful and more offensive: it is directly ruinous for her. Serfdom, which enslaved the peasants, corrupted the landowners. Enslavement of people to Orthodoxy deprives the Russian church of moral force and undermines its internal vitality. Can God's Church live on earth without a spiritual struggle for the truth, and is such a spiritual struggle possible for a church which is firmly protected by a material weapon? What success can those who are in error have in convincing others of that truth, in the name of which they have already been put into prison or sent into exile? The weapon of the Church is the word, but can it properly verbally accuse those whom it has grabbed by the throat forcibly? Can it honestly struggle with adversaries whose hands are tightly bound? Your nation, Sire, is now outgrowing infancy, and an unworthy defense of truth creates in its eyes a much greater seduction than a liberated preaching of errors. Even those who are far from the worst among the orthodox people can reason (and already do reason) as follows: of the two religious societies, which one more corresponds to the spirit of Christ and the gospel commandments: the persecutor or the persecuted? If such a phrasing of the question is erroneous, then only partially so, but its seductiveness remains in full force.

For though not all the persecuted suffer for the truth, all persecutors undoubtedly force a higher truth to suffer within themselves. It is not possible for an orthodox Christian to deny the fact that in the gospel Christ repeatedly told His disciples: *You will be persecuted for My sake*.³ But not once did he say: you will persecute others for My sake. Only the secret advocacy of delusion is really seductive and dangerous for the people, and criminal laws, administrative actions, and censorship of thought are completely powerless against it. This secret advocacy is not dangerous and seductive just because it does not fear any prohibitive and punitive measures, but chiefly because from these forceful measures the advocates of delusion extract for it the great privilege of moral heroism, to the detriment of the truth.

But the advocates of religious coercion maintain that it is necessary for the unity and strength of the State. Your Imperial Majesty can easily judge about the soundness of such a view through striking historical examples. In France, Louis XIV, having revoked the law of toleration, forced the Huguenots into exile by systematic persecution.⁴ His goal was achieved, and the unity of confessional faith was completely restored. But soon the French revolution demonstrated how moral and moderate protestants would have proved useful against frenzied Jacobins. They expelled the “heretics” and brought up atheists; they banished those loyal subjects who had lost their way, and instead got regicides. It was not the Huguenots, but the sons of good catholics saved from any heretical contagion, who destroyed the monarchy in France and undermined the church. And what about the example of Spain? This once pre-eminent world power zealously, but not according to reason, destroyed the most energetic part of the population for the sake of confessional unity. It began to exhaust itself, gradually lost internal vitality and external power, and today must fight, with great difficulty and little success, for the last remnants of its possessions in the same New World which its sons once conquered and introduced to civilized history. And afterward, it was still necessary to reject that community of religion and like-mindedness, owing to which so many innocent people suffered.

The greatest danger in religion and politics consists in the knowing retreat from moral law, in allowing evil paths and means in principle, even if for the very best goals. Goals change with the change of generations, but the habituation to evil acts remains and strengthens, like a hereditary disease. In direct linear fashion, the terrible persecutors of the Albigensians and the Huguenots gave birth to the members of the Convention and revolutionary tribunals.⁵ Traditional politics in the Russian Empire from Peter the Great up to our era demonstrates a stable movement toward tolerance. The final step in this direction was the Law of May 3, 1883, which gave both worship and civil rights to Russian schismatics. Emperor Aleksandr III, who now rests peacefully in God, commemorated his coronation with this good law. Here is a sign of parental blessing for Your Majesty to complete the matter of our spiritual liberation begun and previously directed by Your sovereign predecessor, and which has today come to maturation.

The Church's corporeal weapon, both unseemly and pernicious for her, is not of her own making but comes from the State. Therefore, the supreme State power itself is authorized and called to remove from the Church the mundane burden which is overpowering her, and to return spiritual freedom to it. Christianity nowhere condemns armed defense of one's earthly native land, but when a much-too-jealous apostle wanted to defend Truth incarnate by force of arms, he was told: *sheathe your sword*.⁶ Most Honorable Sovereign, heed as well the word

of Christ and authoritatively repeat it to Your servants, in order that they not insult God's truth by unworthy means of its defense and propagation.

The matter does not concern any particular governmental measures pertaining to the investigation of one or another list—the matter concerns the fate of Russia, Sire, which today is instilled by God only in Your conscience. Since the time of the baptism of Rus' there has not been in our entire history such an important matter as that which today lies before Your Majesty. Russia, led out by Your ancestor Peter the Great onto the stage of world history, saved by Your Grandfather from the mark of slavery, and maintained by Your Father in its political order, awaits from Your Majesty that blessing of spiritual freedom without which she cannot manifest her positive intrinsic strengths and fulfill her higher purpose.

Forty years ago, one word from the Tsar was enough to lift from Russia the shame of slavery; one word from You, Sire, is sufficient today to protect your people from a great and pernicious spiritual temptation, and to liberate the truth professed by You from a rightful but lamentable cause of censure. If only You say, Sire, in the earshot of everyone, that none of Your Tsarist will is in the repression of Your loyal subjects in matters of conscience and religion—the mystery which covers the sun of Christ's truth will disappear at once, and the heavy burden will at once fall away from the national soul.

Sire, we are all equal before God, who speaks to our conscience. The lucid consciousness of moral obligation gives me the audacity to remind Your Imperial Majesty that which I see according to conscience as the single need for Russia, and to which all else will be added. In the firm hope that this same voice of God will indicate to Your Majesty a just and wise solution in this matter, for the good of Russia and all the world, I have the good fortune to be

Your Imperial Majesty's loyal subject, Vladimir Soloviev

Supplementary Listing of Soloviev's Relevant Philosophical and Historical Writings (Chronologically arranged)

1. The Mythological Process in Ancient Paganism (1873)
 2. The Crisis of Western Philosophy [Against Positivists] (1874)
 3. Metaphysics and Positive Science (1875)
 4. Critique of Abstract Principles (1877–80)
 5. Lectures on Godmanhood (1877–81)
 6. The Great Schism and Christian Politics (1883)
 7. Jewry and the Christian Question (1883)
 8. The Spiritual Foundations of Life (1882–84)
 9. The National Question in Russia, 2 vols. (1883–91)
 10. Russia and the Universal Church (1889)
 11. China and Europe (1890)
 12. Japan (historical features) (1890)
 13. Primitive Paganism, Its Surviving and Dead Remnants (1890)
 14. The Meaning of Love (1892–94)
 15. Mahomet, His Life and Religious Teaching (1896)
 16. Byzantium and Russia (1896)
 17. Justification of the Good. Moral Philosophy (1896)
- [Soloviev's collected works appear in Russian in *Sobranie sochinenii Vladimira Sergeievicha Solovieva*. Ed. Sergei M. Soloviev and Ernst L. Radlov. 2d ed. 10 vols. Skt. Peterburg: Prosveshchenie, 1911–14. Reprinted with two additional volumes, Brussels: "Zhizn' s Bogom," 1966–70.]

Notes

Introduction

1. Nicholas Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 125, 166–67. Of the myriad ways in which Soloviev's name has been transliterated into Latin script, I have chosen the form which he himself used in his English and French correspondence and also appended to the essay "La Question Sociale en Europe." During the Soviet period, officially sanctioned discussion was for the most part limited to his poetry and his "opposition" to the tsarist regime.
2. Vladimir Wozniuk, "In Search of Ideology: The Politics of Religion and Nationalism in the New Russia (1991–1996)," *Nationalities Papers* 25/2 (1997): 195–210.
3. This appears in an obituary dated July 31 (August 13), 1900, from *Vestnik Evropy*, the journal which first published a number of the essays included in the present volume. *Vestnik Evropy* 9 (September 1900), 401. The Russian Academy of Sciences accepted Soloviev into its ranks in January 1900 in the capacity of "philosopher, social and political writer, and poet." See Aleksei F. Losev, "Tvorcheskii put' Vladimira Solovieva," in *Vladimir S. Soloviev, sochineniia v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Mysl', 1988), 8. In the West, his posthumous influence upon the so-called second generation of Russian Symbolist writers (Andrei Bely, Aleksandr Blok, Vyacheslav Ivanov) is perhaps recognized as foremost among his diverse accomplishments. His primary concerns, however, remained Christianity,

philosophical idealism, and ethics; these subjects served as the source from which all his endeavors flowed. His collected works appear (with some differences from the original printings) in *Sobranie sochinenii Vladimira Sergeievicha Solovieva*, 2d ed., 10 vols., ed. Sergei M. Soloviev and Ernst L. Radlov (St. Petersburg: “Prosveshchenie,” 1911–14 [reprint with two additional volumes, Brussels: “Zhizn’ s Bogom,” 1966–70]).

Soloviev always seemed to be ailing; in 1889 he expressed resignation in the fact that he would suffer with one of his illnesses “from the cradle . . . to the grave.” See *Pis’ma Vladimira Sergeievicha Solovieva*, 4 vols., ed. Ernst Radlov (St. Petersburg: “Obshchestvennaia pol’za,” 1908–23 [reprint Brussels: “Zhizn’ s Bogom,” 1970]) 1:58, 46, 174. A physician recommended a meatless diet to help him with his many ailments, including insomnia. Later, in 1895, he was diagnosed with heart and liver problems. *Pis’ma* 1:228–29; 2:64; 3:157.

4. See, for example, *Pis’ma* 1:36, 41, 229. The most comprehensive sources on various aspects of Vladimir Soloviev’s life and thought are in Russian and include Konstantin Mochul’skii, *Vladimir Soloviev: zhizn’ i uchenie* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1951); Sergei M. Soloviev, *Zhizn’ i tvorcheskaiia evoliutsiia Vladimira Solovieva* (Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chretien, 1977); Evgenii N. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Put’, 1913); and the collection of essays (including those by Nikolai Berdyaev, Vyacheslav Ivanov, and Aleksandr Blok) under the title *Sbornik pervyi o Vladimire Solovieve* (Moscow: Put’, 1911). Others, appearing in English translation, include Dmitri Stremoukhoff, *Vladimir Soloviev and His Messianic Work* [trans. from the French edition] (Belmont, Mass.: Nordland, 1980) and Nicholas Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea* (New York: Macmillan, 1948). For studies in English on specific features of his work, see, among others, Samuel Cioran, *Vladimir Solovev and the Knighthood of the Divine Sophia* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1977); Greg Gaut, “Can a Christian Be a Nationalist? Vladimir Solov’ev’s Critique of Nationalism,” *Slavic Review* (Spring 1998) 57/1: 77–95; Judith Kornblatt, “Vladimir Solov’ev on Spiritual Nationhood, Russia and the Jews,” *Russian Review* (April 1997) 56/2: 157–78; Dmitri S. Mirsky, *Contemporary Russian Literature: 1881–1925* (New York: Knopf, 1926), 72–79; Egbert Munzer, *Solovyov, Prophet of Russian-Western Unity* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1956); Jonathan Sutton, *The Religious Philosophy of Vladimir Solovyov: Towards a Reassessment* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1988); Andrzej Walicki, *Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 165–212; and Vladimir Wozniuk, “Vladimir S. Soloviev and the Politics of Human Rights,” *Journal of Church and State* (Winter 1999) 41/1: 33–50.
5. Mochul’skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 10, 196. Among the many observations he makes in his private correspondence regarding human rights, see especially his comments of 1886 and 1887 to his friend Favel Bentsilovich Gets about the necessity of the state granting full citizen rights to Russian Jews, in *Pis’ma* 2:142–50; his comments of 1895 about the importance of freedom of the press and religion to Vasily L. Velichko in *Pis’ma* 1:216; and his letter (ca. 1896) to Tsar Nikolai II (see Appendix C).
6. After a brief flirtation with materialism and atheism, he forsook a university career in mathematics and science in favor of philosophical studies; one of his biographers refers to him in his early years as a “typical nihilist.” Mochul’skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 22. Soloviev is widely believed to have been Dostoevsky’s model for Alyosha Karamazov.
7. I have appropriated this phrase from Mochul’skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 128, although he uses

- it in a slightly different context. For the substance of Soloviev's protest, see *Pis'ma* 4:243–46. Soloviev made his speech against the death penalty on March 28, 1881. He sent a letter of explanation to the tsar several days later, after he had resigned his university post and was forbidden by tsarist authorities from giving any more public addresses. See *Pis'ma* 3:149–50. For the substance of Soloviev's remarks at Dostoevsky's funeral, see Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 132. I have borrowed the term “cost of discipleship” from the martyred German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–45).
8. See, for example, Nikolai Berdyaev, “Problema Vostoka i Zapada v religioznom soznanii Vl. Solovieva,” in *Sbornik pervyi o Vladimire Solovieve* (Moscow: Put', 1911), 112. Soloviev began early on consciously to conceive of himself as being on a mission of reconciliation as a member of the “Universal Church” in a broader sense than Russian Orthodoxy found acceptable. In 1883 he argued with Aleksandr A. Kireev that the Roman doctrines of “*infallibilitas ex cathedra*” and “*immaculata conceptio*” as well as the *filioque* were not heresy or “new” dogma” and that these ideas did not “remove from Catholicism the character of a True Church.” *Pis'ma* 2:105–06. It was asserted that before Soloviev died he had become Catholic by taking communion from a Graeco-Catholic (Eastern rite Byzantine) priest on February 19, 1896, and this assertion continued to be a point of some dispute for quite a while, despite its flimsy foundations. All Soloviev himself apparently ever wrote about the topic was once when he was accused of “papist teaching,” to which he responded in 1890, “I never changed my faith confession.” *Pis'ma* 3:178, 215–17. For an assertion to the contrary, see Michel d'Herbigny, *Vladimir Soloviev* (Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1934), in which Soloviev is hyperbolically referred to as a “Russian Newman.” Some influence of Dostoevsky in Soloviev's stance against the death penalty has also been suggested. Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 131–32.
 9. The “censorship's terror” comment was made in a December 1887 letter to his friend Nikolai N. Strakhov. *Pis'ma* 1:43. Shortly thereafter he emphasized the point again, remarking that “we all walk beneath the censor.” *Pis'ma* 1:45. His concern about the censorship of parts of his work remained to the last years of his life; he sometimes discussed strategies with his publishers on how to avoid making substantive changes and still have his work be approved for publication. In this regard, see, for example, a letter of 1890 to Nikolai Ya. Grot and a letter of 1895 to Mikhail M. Stasiulovich in *Pis'ma* 1:67–68, 123. See also *Pis'ma* 3:13 for a letter of 1898 to Fyodor D. Batiushkov which refers to “small mollifications” he is still making in his work. Soloviev also complained that “ecclesiastical journals” were waging an unwarranted and “unabated” polemic against him. The two comments on nationalism were made in 1887 and 1888, respectively. *Pis'ma* 1:31, 45, 173–74, 223–24; 3:165.
 10. In June 1887 he expressed deep frustration that the “history of theocracy” project was under “full sequestration” by the censors. This sense of frustration over not being able to publish “La Russie et L'Eglise Universelle,” the “little” work that he had earlier called a “big secret,” appears in *Pis'ma* 1:30, 54; 3:24. For noteworthy observations on Soloviev's theocratic project, see Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 166, 167.
 11. The influence of Dante's *De Monarchia* on Soloviev's thinking about theocracy in 1883 is suggested by Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 188. The “theocratic Leviathan” comment can be found in *Pis'ma* 1:24 and in Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 166. The “best years”

remark appears in Soloviev's preface (1899) to his translation of Plato's works. *Sobranie sochinenii* 12:360. Soloviev also wrote in 1883, "We believe that Russia is called not just to political might, but that she also has a religious task in history." See "O tserkovnom vo-prose po povodu staro-katolikov," in *Sobranie sochinenii* 4:132.

12. "O poddelkakh," in *Sobranie sochinenii* 6:339.
13. Examples of such heresies include Arianism, Apollinarianism, Monophysitism, and Monothelitism, among others. In 1887, Soloviev referred with apparent sarcasm to Tolstoy as "our indispensable Columbus of all the discovered Americas." *Pis'ma* 1:33. This protest against anti-Semitism actually represented an extension of Soloviev's concern about the unconditional guarantee of civil rights to all ethnic and religious minorities, which he saw as one of the key challenges facing Russia. This concern can be found in his earlier historical-theological study "Jewry and the Christian Question" (1884). See also *Pis'ma* 2:146–50 for his correspondence with Favel Bentsilovich Gets (1887) about the "criminal politics" of anti-Semitism in Russia, views which apparently represented an unpopular stand even among many of Soloviev's "Christian" friends. For Tolstoy's granting permission to Soloviev to write in his name, see *Pis'ma* 2:159.
14. Cited by Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 194–95. Emphasis added.
15. Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 171, 204–05, 206–07; Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 255–56. *Three Conversations* carried the extremely unwieldy title *Tri razgovora o voine, progresse, i kontse vsemirnoi istorii, so vklucheniem kratkoi povesti ob Antikhriste i s prilozheniiami* (St. Petersburg: Trud, 1900). The work first appeared in English translation (by Stephen Graham) only later, during the Great War in 1915 under the truncated and misleading title *War and Christianity from the Russian Point of View: Three Conversations*.
16. *Sobranie sochinenii* 10:91. The essays included by Soloviev as addenda to *Three Conversations* are eleven in number and appear in *Tri razgovora*, 199–279. Both Mochul'skii and Berdyaev directly compare the tale's prophetic spirit with Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor legend. Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 131, 248. Soloviev makes reference to "most ancient" traditions and legends in his preface to *Tri razgovora*. Apart from the Bible, among the more significant sources for this work may have been the twelfth-century "Play of Antichrist," in which an anonymous medieval author attempted to draw together then-existing legends with contemporaneously developing political events. See *The Play of Antichrist*, trans. with an introduction by John Wright (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967), especially the preface and introduction. The other artistic piece included in the present volume is the closely related poem "Panmongolism" (see Appendix B).
17. Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 206–07; Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 131, 248.
18. Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 206; Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 248–50.
19. In 1883, Soloviev lambasted Russian nationalists for ignoring the indispensable theological foundation necessary for any understanding of nationality, reminding Aleksandr A. Kireev that in this case "'patriot' rhymes with 'idiot.'" *Pis'ma* 2:103–04. The influence of Immanuel Kant is particularly apparent even in Soloviev's rebuttal to Kant's ideas concerning the origins of the State and human rights (see also "The Significance of the State"). He later warned about the dire consequences of narrow nationalism in the essay "Retribution" (1898). This essay was reprinted as one of the addenda to *Tri razgovora*. See also Mirsky, *Contemporary Russian Literature*, 72–73.

20. Fet and Soloviev had earlier collaborated on a translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*. *Sobranie sochinenii* 12:360–61, 365.
21. *Law and Morality: Essays in Applied Ethics*, 2, 1. Emphasis added. A lengthy addendum on German idealism entitled “Empirical Freedom and Transcendental Necessity” (not reproduced in this book) which appears at the end of *Law and Morality* presents itself as an edited translation of several key sections of Arthur Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. In this comparatively brief but succinct summary of the two German idealist philosophers' main points on free will and responsibility, Soloviev strived to render somewhat more clearly the principles upon which any quest for justice hinges.
22. See “On the Russian Language,” “What is Russia?” and Appendix C. See also his essay “Porfiry Goloviev o svobode i vere” (1894) in *Sobranie sochinenii* 6:429.
23. From *Smysl liubvi* in *Sobranie sochinenii* 7:52–53. Emphasis added. Berdyaev notes the importance of his “liberal journalism.” Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 176–77. The Russian term *publististika*, sometimes too narrowly translated into English as ‘polemics,’ refers more broadly to social and political writing or current affairs commentary and should be understood as applying to much of Soloviev's writing about the Russia of his day. This writing sometimes took on the form of veiled criticisms under titles ostensibly having to do with historical, religious, literary, or philological subjects (e.g., “On the Spanish-American War,” “The Significance of Dogma,” “On the Russian Language”).
24. In the 1990s, laws limiting religious freedom and expression were enacted by a fledgling democratic Russian Duma seeking not only to control “foreign” religious influence, but also to stifle cultic, millenarian manifestations remarkably similar to the bizarre incidents the Orthodox authorities catalogued in Soloviev's day. See Wozniuk, “In Search of Ideology,” 203–06.
25. See Valerii Briusov, “Vladimir Soloviev: smysl ego poezii,” in *Valerii Briusov: Sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1975) 6:220, 230.
26. Soloviev's penchant for wordplay appears here: *peredat'* (‘to convey’) and *predat'* (‘to betray’). These comments are from Soloviev's preface (1899) to his own unfinished translation of Plato's works. *Sobranie sochinenii* 12:361, 364. Much later, another translator, Vladimir Nabokov, also emphasized the important task faced by the “honest translator.” Nabokov disputed the “conventional notion” that a translation should not seem to be a translation and also excoriated “experienced hacks” who try to transform another language into “slick English clichés,” while “toning down everything that might seem unfamiliar to the meek and imbecile reader visualized by his publisher.” See the introduction to Mikhail Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, trans. Vladimir Nabokov in collaboration with Dmitri Nabokov (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1988), xii–xiii. Some of Soloviev's previous translators have taken similar kinds of liberties.

1. Christianity and Revolution

1. See 1 John 5:19.
2. Albigensianism was a brutally suppressed twelfth-century southern French sect named after the town of Albi, where it originated.

2. Morality and Politics

1. John 11:48–49; Matthew 28:19. Soloviev cites an old Slavonic version of the Gospel text; the closest English analogy would be the King James Bible.
2. Compare with Hegel's remarks in *The Philosophy of Right* concerning the fulfillment of national mission in the progress of world history.
3. This seems to be an indirect reference to 1 Corinthians 12:12–30, which develops the theme of many parts comprising the body as “a unit,” explaining the need for a kind of division of labor of the Body of Christ.
4. Matthew 16:25.
5. *Ad impossibilia nemo obligatur*: ‘To the impossible, no one is obliged.’
6. See above, n. 2.
7. The reference appears to be to acts of political terrorism.
8. Soloviev displays his youthful Slavophilism in this somewhat exaggerated assessment of Russian motive at the Congress of Vienna, with which Poles would likely disagree. After the defeat of Napoleon, Aleksandr I did indeed “preserve” Poland in 1815, but perhaps only because the crown of the kingdom of Poland would now be on his head. Napoleon had earlier (in 1806) created a grand duchy of Warsaw and enlisted Poles in his campaign against Russia, constituting a real challenge to Aleksandr. But a more practical reason can be found for the return of Poland to Russian rule than either the magnanimity of the tsar or Russian fears about Poles and Galician Ukrainians in the hands of Prussians: the overwhelming concern of the diplomats at the Congress of Vienna was to restore the status quo ante to the European balance of power system.
9. Soloviev uses forms of the Polish words *pan* (lord) and *chłop* (peasant) here.
10. This seems to imply the infamous Polish *liberum veto* of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which, by allowing a single member of the nobility the power to block policy and dissolve the Polish *Sejm*, or parliament, created a situation of continuous instability that undermined effective government.
11. This reference seems to be to the conquest and plunder of Constantinople by western crusaders in 1204.
12. The indirect reference is to the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453.
13. See the Book of Revelation 14:8.
14. Matthew 26:33–34, 74–75; Mark 14:29–30, 72.
15. John 21:15–17.

3. On the Christian State and Society

1. *Bogochelovechestvo*—Soloviev's term for the incarnational imaging of Christ in humanity. A biblical basis for this term can be found in Psalm 82:6 and John 10:34, “You shall be like gods.” See Vladimir S. Soloviev, *Lectures on Godmanhood* (1877–81).
2. This phrase appears to be from Horace, *Odes* 1, iii, “*audax Iapeti genus*.” Japheth was a son of Noah (Genesis 9:23, 10:1 ff.). A legend arose that Noah made a will in which Japheth received the whole of Europe and some of Asia as an inheritance. Horace's allusion to the progeny of *Iapetus* suggests the origin of Europeans in general and Greeks in particular.

3. Lycurgus of Sparta (ninth century B.C.), whose system of government was outlined by Aristotle and praised by the Roman writer Polybius. Lycurgus devised a constitution which reflected a form of checks and balances in its inclusion of kingship, aristocracy, and democracy. See Polybius, *Histories* (vol. 1, bk. 6, chap. 10), and Aristotle, *Politics* (bk. 2, chaps. 9, 12). Solon (640–558 B.C.), whose constitution Aristotle also discusses in *Politics* (bk. 2, chap. 12), is remembered as the great Athenian lawgiver who emerged at a turbulent time to introduce important reforms. Both Solon and Lycurgus were exemplars, according to Aristotle, of middle-class wisdom in devising good constitutions.
4. Perhaps Soloviev means “civic society.”
5. The basic normative assumptions of German Idealism are echoed here.
6. This appears to be an indirect reference to Tolstoy’s teachings.
7. See 2 Corinthians 1:12.
8. See Romans 8:4–7, 12–14, 27–29; also Colossians 3:5–10.

4. The Social Question in Europe

1. Soloviev seems to be implying the Marxist agenda of social reform, which included abolition of the right of inheritance. See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Samuel Moore (New York: Pelican, 1983), 104.

5. Nationality from a Moral Point of View

1. Compare the line of argument with G. W. F. Hegel’s *The Philosophy of History* on the nature and purposes of the state. Although Soloviev’s use of the term *cosmopolitan* in the sense of *world citizenship* derives from Kant’s in “The Idea of a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View” and *Perpetual Peace*, the article serves as a rebuttal to Kant’s notion of cosmopolitanism. The twentieth-century equivalent of cosmopolitanism is the school of thought usually referred to as political idealism in modern international relations theory. Among the several emphases of this school of thought, peace through positive law plays a significant role. In contrast to this, political realism juxtaposes reliance on national sovereignty and the balance of power principle as absolute guarantors of security and peace in an anarchical international society. Judging from this essay and others, Soloviev would have found both theoretical approaches lacking in moral focus.
2. The intermittent appearance of the phrase *use pozvoleno* (‘everything is permitted’) in Soloviev’s writings echoes Dostoevsky’s character Ivan Karamazov in his evaluation of the moral universe if God does not exist. See *Brothers Karamazov* bk. 11, chap. 9.
3. While the first two represent the greatest that Roman poetry had to offer, Soloviev includes the latter two political leaders here as generous patrons of the arts, all instrumental forces in imparting profound significance to the cultural term *Graeco-Roman*.
4. *Ab urbe ad orbem*: ‘From the city to the world.’
5. Virgil, *Aeneid* 6, 851–53. *Romane, memento [(hae tibi erunt artes) pacique imponere morem], parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*. Soloviev leaves out the bracketed line. I have translated

- Soloviev's Russian, not Virgil's Latin. A well-regarded translation from Latin to English reads, "O Roman, to rule the nations with thy sway—these shall be thine arts—to crown Peace with Law, to spare the humbled, and to tame in war the proud!" See Virgil, *Aeneid*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge: Harvard/Loeb Classical Library, 1916), 566–67.
6. *Si fractus illabatur orbis / impavidum ferient ruinae*. The source of these lines is unknown to me.
 7. See Goethe's *Faust*, pt. I, ll. 1112–13. "Two souls, alas, live in my breast, and thrust for division" (*Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach, in meiner Brust, Die eine will sich von der andern trennen*).
 8. The Greek term *e oikhoumene* refers to the 'civilized world.'
 9. See Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:11.
 10. The reference appears to be to Galatians 4:19, cited by Soloviev in an older Russian form: *Vo ezhe voobrazitsia v vas Khristu*.
 11. Here and elsewhere, Soloviev elaborates on the words of the Apostle Paul, comparing the physical body with the mystical Body of Christ, that is, all believers in Christ. See, for example, 1 Corinthians 12:12.
 12. The Russian titles of the references in Soloviev's note: *Nabliudenie nad istoricheskoiu zhizniu narodov* and *Filosofia bibleiskoi istorii*.
 13. Giovanni Cimabue (1240–1302), one of the Florentine artists with whose work the beginning of the Italian renaissance is usually associated.
 14. This may reflect the same sense of "irritation" that *Reiz* carries for German idealist philosophy, referring to inspiration or stimulus.
 15. "It was . . . for whomever you please"—an indirect reference to the foreign occupation of the Italian peninsula at the time. According to at least some political thinking of that era, this occupation presented an obstacle to the restoration of Italian greatness. See the last chapter of *The Prince* for Machiavelli's exhortation to the Medici to free Italy from "the barbarians."
 16. This section indicates Soloviev's familiarity with medieval west European arguments attempting to justify the position of either Church or State in the long struggle between the two over political power. The medieval debate over the proper relation between ecclesiastic and secular authority can be seen in the work of Marsiglio of Padua, John of Salisbury, and Thomas Aquinas, among others. The fifth-century doctrine of the "two swords," a papal attempt to clarify the relation of secular to ecclesiastic power, was reinterpreted poignantly by John of Salisbury (twelfth century), a student of Abelard. Interestingly, Soloviev may also be making a subtle reference here to John of Salisbury's justification of tyrannicide, which would fit with Soloviev's lifelong project of continually warning Russia's leaders about the price of forsaking Christian principles in favor of power politics. He later makes an analogous, somewhat oblique reference to Oliver Cromwell. See also the essay "Retribution."
 17. Philip II, king of Spain (1556–98), and Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, duke of Alva (1508–82), his chosen military instrument to suppress Protestantism in Holland during the Reformation; the Paris Commune of 1792 and the beginning of the terror.

6. The Significance of the State

1. Compare Soloviev's views in this essay with those of Immanuel Kant in "The Idea of a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View" and with G. W. F. Hegel's *The Philosophy of History*.
2. Although Soloviev here indirectly suggests some general aspects of social contract theory associated with Thomas Hobbes in his work *Leviathan*, he ultimately disagreed with Hobbes in his negative theoretical characterization of a prehistorical "state of nature" outside the framework of divine revelation.
3. Compare to Kant's "On the Common Saying: 'This May be True in Theory, but It Does Not Apply in Practice,'" (II. On the Relationship of Theory to Practice in Political Right, Against Hobbes).
4. The first point on "publicity" appears to be a revision of Kant's observation in his second appendix to *Perpetual Peace* ("On the Agreement between Politics and Morality According to the Transcendental Concept of Public Right").
5. Compare with Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals* (The Theory of Right, Part II: Public Right, Section I: Political Right; 45, 46.)
6. The Latin *civitas* might make this point clearer.
7. I am not familiar with the popular contemporary theatrical work that Soloviev refers to here.
8. See 2 Corinthians 11:23.
9. *Salus reipublicae summa lex*: 'Let the welfare of the republic be the supreme law.'
10. François Pierre Guizot (1787–1874) was a renowned French statesman, historian, and political thinker, who published works on the subjects of the State and representative government which were influential throughout Europe.
11. 'The civilized world.'

7. Sunday Letters

I. A Family of Nations

1. Head of the clan or family; sovereign authority in the country.
2. From "A Monument" by Aleksandr Pushkin (1799–1837), written in August 1836. *Slukh obo mne proidet po vsei Rusi velikoi / I nazovet menia vsiak sushchii v nei iazyk.*

II. An Awakening of Conscience

1. *Russkoe obozrenie*. Soloviev had broken ties with this conservative journal by the early 1890s. In 1892 he complained that its editors were appending his initials "B.C." (in Cyrillic) to material that he had nothing to do with. *Pis'ma* 1:109. Soloviev's optimism in this essay regarding progress in the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities appears somewhat excessive in retrospect and was not quite justified in light of subsequent events. He continued to work diligently against various kinds of ethnic and religious persecution until the end of his life.
2. *Novoe vremya*.
3. Soloviev also cites this verse by A. N. Maikov in 1889 in his personal correspondence with T. I. Filipov. *Pis'ma* 2:329: *Storozhat menia albantsy / Ya v tsepiakh, no u okna / rastsvetaiut [zatsvetaiut in the letter to Filipov] pomerantsy / dobryi znak, — blizka vesna.*

4. Probably Vladimir Petrovich Meshchersky (1839–?), writer on social and political affairs and belletrist-dramatist known for his satires.
5. A reference to one of the pogroms that followed the assassination of Aleksandr II.

III. *On the Russian Language*

1. “Ukrainian”: *Malorusskom*.

IV. *What Is Russia?*

1. See, for example, Romans 5:1 and 2 Timothy 1:9.
2. Avvakum (1620–82), leader of those eventually called “old believers,” whose differences with the reforms of Patriarch Nikon (1652–81) had less to do with doctrine or dogma than with adjustments in liturgical form (how many fingers to cross oneself with, how many “hallelujahs” to repeat, etc.). It might be said that Peter the Great was able to establish State supremacy over the Church because Nikon failed to establish Church supremacy over the State. Metropolitan S. Yavorsky (1658–1722) and Archbishop F. Prokopovich (1681–1736) were selected by Peter the Great to carry out his extensive “Protestant”-oriented reforms.
3. Filipov and Kireev were Slavophiles with whom Soloviev carried on a lively correspondence.

V. *On So-called Problems*

1. Here Soloviev responds to the sarcastic polemic launched in the journal *New Times* against the previous article, “What Is Russia?” and a new, expanded edition of his book *Justification of the Good* (*Opravdanie dobra*) by detailing the intellectually dishonest motives and methods that his opponents used in presenting his views.
2. I. I. Khemnitser (1745–84) was a Russian fabulist who influenced I. A. Krylov.
3. The reference is to St. Augustine’s *De Civitate Dei* (City of God).
4. Eumaeus was the ever-faithful servant of Odysseus who, however, does not recognize his master upon his return to Ithaca from Troy. See Homer’s *Odyssey*, 14.

VI. *On Temptations*

1. See Matthew 18:7.
2. In asserting that any approach to religion and spirituality errs when it does not take into account the full human being, including the intellect, Soloviev also indirectly criticizes Tolstoyan teaching.
3. Matthew 18:5–6 and Mark 9:42.

VII. *Forgotten Lessons*

1. Mark 13:8.
2. Mikhail N. Katkov was a liberal nationalist who supported the government suppression of the Polish rebellion in 1863.
3. Konstantin Aksakov was one of the chief exponents of conservative Slavophilism in nineteenth-century Russia.

VIII. *The Second Congress of Religions*

1. I have not been able to find any other reference to this person.
2. S. M. Volkonsky was probably the Decembrist whose lineage could be traced to thirteenth-century nobility. He wrote on peasant reforms and the *zemstvo* system.
3. I have not been able to find another reference to this person.

IX. *Literature or Truth?*

1. To the Athenians, whom Soloviev mentions from the account of the Book of Acts, the Apostle Paul seemed to be a “charlatan” advocating “foreign gods” (Acts 17:18), an accusation similar to the one which Socrates’ fate was linked with. In his defense at the “Court of Areopagus” (Mars Hill) Paul pointed to an altar with the inscription “to an unknown god,” explaining to his audience the Gospel in this context.
2. See Nikolai Gogol, *Dead Souls*, pt. 2. Chichikov, the main character of Gogol’s book, is the unscrupulous exploiter of the greed of others, and he is sometimes interpreted as being the devil himself, while Tentetnikov is described by Gogol as “a loafer and an idler.”
3. My thanks to Walter Comins-Richmond for reminding me that this is a reference to Poprishchin’s demise in Gogol’s *Notes of a Madman*.
4. Soloviev refers to what is, in Russian, the feminine ending (“a”) of this name.
5. John 14:11.
6. A reference to Antichrist, about whom Soloviev had more to say in “A Brief Tale about the Antichrist,” the last part of *Tri razgovora*.

X. *Heaven or Earth?*

1. Soloviev uses the past tense in quoting from the Nicene Creed.

*Seven Paschal Letters*XI. *Christ is Risen!*

1. *Vse, chto kolebletsia v iavlennii tekuchem, / Vy zakrepliaite pomyslom moguchem*. The source of these lines is unknown to me.

XII. *On Conscientious Unbelief*

1. Both the method of argumentation and the images employed in this essay strongly recall the German idealist philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, whose influence upon Soloviev, especially through *The World as Will and Idea*, was substantial.
2. See *Brothers Karamazov*, bk. II, chap. 9.
3. *Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa*: ‘Let us not talk about them: look and move on.’ See Dante Alighieri, *Inferno* 3: 10, 21. The words are spoken to Dante by Virgil, in reference to those who were blind to the truth in life, mediocre in their realization of evil as well as good. Soloviev’s text contains a slight spelling variation: *non raggionar di lor, ma guarda e passa*.
4. This seems to be an indirect reference to “The first shall be last.” Matthew 19:30, 20:16, 21:31.

XIII. *The Question of Women’s Rights*

1. See Luke 8:2.
2. There are a number of gospel references to the anointment of Jesus with rich fragrances in anticipation of his death and resurrection. Matthew 26:7 and 26:12; Mark 14:3; Luke 23:56–24:1; also John 12:3 and 12:7.

XIV. *The Eastern Question*

1. “Imperial City”—*Tsar’grad*.
2. The source of this quote is unknown to me.
3. Mark 2:9–11; Luke 5:24; and John 5:8.

XV. *Two Streams*

1. *Malo-vishera, Bolshaia-vishera.*
2. The specific subject of the reference is obscure, but the general context appears to be Peter the Great's Table of Ranks, a system whereby every official had an assigned rank.
3. Aleksandr Ostrovsky (1823–86) was one of the most productive of the minor Russian dramatists of the nineteenth century (he wrote fifty-seven plays). His forte was satire of middle-class moral conflicts.
4. Here is another example of Soloviev's penchant for wordplay. He puns on some tragicomic mishap, apparently well known to the Russia of his day, by using a form of the Russian verb 'to drown'—a near homonym for "utopia."
5. John 4:14.

XVI. *Blindness and Becoming Blind*

1. Aleksandr S. Griboedov (1795–1829) was a Russian diplomat and satirist, known especially for his *Woe from Wit* (*Gore ot uma*); he was killed when an angry mob stormed the Russian embassy in Teheran. Soloviev extends the theme of the "mindless mob" in this essay. *Kogda-zh o chestnosti vysokoi govorit, / Kakim-to demonom vnushaem; / V glazakh ogon', litso gorit,— / Sam plachet, a my vse rydaem.*
2. Some of these "people of the forties" came to be referred to as "superfluous," a Russian character type developed more fully by such writers as Goncharov, Dostoevsky, Turgenev and Chekhov.
3. This appears to be an indirect reference to Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, pt. I, sec. 9.
4. John 9:39.

XVII. *The Significance of Dogma*

1. These are sites of two of the most important historical military victories over invaders of the Russian homeland: Kulikovo Field, near the Don River, where in 1380 Prince Dmitri of Moscow (Dmitri Moskovskii, or Dmitri Donskoi) dealt the Mongols their first major defeat; and Poltava in Eastern Ukraine, where on July 8, 1709, Russian forces under Peter the Great defeated those of Sweden's Charles XII.
2. Constantinople had a hippodrome at its center.
3. *Poslaniia temnykh muzhei*—this seems to be a reference to the sixteenth-century comic satire about book-burning appearing under the name Ulrich von Hutten and entitled *Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum*. The putative author, identified as a "scion of a family of imperial knights," was apparently a poet and contemporary of Erasmus as well as an "itinerant scholar" sharing his time between Mainz and Italy. See the introduction to Ulrich von Hutten, *On the Eve of the Reformation: "Letters of Obscure Men,"* trans. Francis Griffith Stokes with introduction by Hajo Holborn (New York: Harper Row Torchbook, 1964).
4. 1 Corinthians 2:16.
5. According to the Gnostics, these were substantial powers of the Divine Essence.
6. Luke 12:42–48, and 16:10–12.

XVIII–XX. *Retribution*

1. *Vse velikoe zemnoe / Razletaetsia, kak dym. / Nyne zhrebii vypal Troe, / Zavtra vpadet drugim.* These lines are adapted from the last stanza of the poem "Das Siegesfest" (The victory celebration) by Friedrich Schiller.

2. Soloviev does so elsewhere; see *Mahomet, His Life and Religious Teaching* (1896).
3. “Historical meaning”—probably in the Hegelian sense.
4. The references are to Matthew 26:52, 5:44; Luke 6:28; and John 6:63. This line of argument criticizes the Tolstoyan teaching.
5. Mamai was the fourteenth-century Mongol ruler of the Golden Horde. Dmitri was grand prince of Moscow (also known as Donskoi), Russian hero at the battle of Kulikovo. Saint Alexis was the fourteenth-century metropolitan of Moscow who acted as mediator between the Mongols and the princes of Rus’ and thereby, it is believed, saved the land from continued depredations by the Mongols.
6. Luke 12:42–48, 16:10–13, 19:17 ff.
7. The assumptions and distinctions that Soloviev makes here about war mirror his era’s general naiveté about progress. The notion of “total war”—including chemical warfare, civilian bombardment, and war driven by ideology, sometimes resulting in genocide—had not yet been experienced by the “civilized” Europeans. His “just war” discussion should also be viewed in light of the condemnations he makes elsewhere about the “cannibalistic” European balance of power and brutal imperial colonization (see “Morality and Politics”). This entire line of reasoning was perhaps influenced culturally and historically by the record of intra-European warfare after Napoleon in the nineteenth century. Wars were waged for the most part with limited political ends in mind (à la Clausewitz) from the Congress of Vienna in 1815 up to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914. Had Soloviev lived longer to witness the totality of war in the twentieth century, he might have adjusted some of these views.
8. Matthew 5:19, 18:5–6, 25:40–45; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2.
9. John 8:44 and Luke 12:5. In the latter, the reference is apparently to Satan.
10. A reference to the same fifteenth-century Spanish Grand Inquisitor immortalized by Dostoevsky in *Brothers Karamazov*.
11. These lines from the third canto of Pushkin’s poem “Poltava” refer to Peter the Great. *V shatre svoem on ugoshchaet / svoikh vozhdei, vozhdei chuzhbykh / [I slavnykh plennikov laskaet,] I za “uchitilei” svoikh / Zazdravnyi kubok podnimaet* (the bracketed line is omitted).
12. In his note, Soloviev uses the word *nemtsy*, normally applied to Germans, in its original and more literal sense: that is, those who seemed to be “dumb” by virtue of the fact that they could not speak Russian.
13. Virgil, *Aeneid* 6, 849–51.
14. The threefold betrayal of Christianity that Soloviev recounts should remind the reader of the Russian Empire’s transgressions as well. See Appendix C: “Letter to Nikolai II.”
15. The “test of faith,” or the practice of torture during the Inquisition.
16. “Orthodox”—although Soloviev uses *pravovernaia* and not *pravoslavnaia* here, this nevertheless strongly suggests to the reader that he is also implying Russian social reality. Spaniards of Moorish heritage were known as Moriscos, those of Jewish heritage as Marranos. Both suffered terribly in the Inquisition and were continuously suspected of being fifth-column forces trying to subvert the fused Catholic–Spanish national identity. In this regard, analogues existed in the Russian Empire.

XXI. *Russia in a Hundred Years*

1. Soloviev plays on the fact that entirely different meanings come from adjectives deriving from the same root: *perenosnyi*, *nesnosnyi*.
2. The exact meaning of this passing comment is unclear, although it may refer to a theme in Maksim Gorky's very popular story "Chelkash" (1894), which implies bureaucratic corruption at a Black Sea port.
3. The verse Soloviev cites is laden with double entendre. The translation I have provided cannot even begin to render the multiple implications and meanings of these lines: *U prikaznykh vorot / Sobiralsia narod / Gusto; / Govoril v prostote, / Chto v ego zhivote / Pusto. / Durach'e!—skazal d'iak: / Iz vas dolzhen byt' vsiak / V tele, — / Eshche v dume vchera / My s trudom osetra / S'eli.*

XXII. *The Spiritual Condition of the Russian People*

1. The passing reference to "sorrows and trials" appears to be from 2 Thessalonians 1:4 and Revelation 7:14; the reference to "persecutors and tormentors" from Revelation 9:10 and 18:20 ff. "Ancient piety" and "mobs . . . self-immolated" refer to seventeenth-century schismatic Old Believers.
2. *Vsepoddanneishyi otchet ober-prokurora sviatago sinoda (V.O.O.P.S.S.)*.
3. "Reciters": *chtetsy*
4. All this appears to be Soloviev still quoting, but the quotation marks have apparently become misplaced at times in the Russian copy.
5. *Volost'*—the smallest administrative subdivision of tsarist Russia.
6. "Acathistus": a series of doxological prayers.
7. "Troparion": an anthem for a festival or saint's day. In Russian, a spruce tree is *el'*. *Vershok* is a unit of measurement equal to 4.45 centimeters.
8. Some of the origins of the Old Believer schism lay in liturgical reforms, including how many hallelujahs were to be sung.
9. There was no continuation printed. All the "Sunday Letters" appeared in 1897 and 1898 in the newspaper *Rus'*, which was published by V. P. Gaideburov. The twenty-second letter was the last.

8. Law and Morality: Essays in Applied Ethics

1. Some of these "preliminary comments" are revised from Soloviev's doctoral dissertation, "Kritika otvlechenykh nachal." See *Sobranie sochinenii* 2:144–55.
2. This may be a reference to Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes from the Underground*, pt. 1, sec. 9.
3. *Neminem laede*: 'Harm no one.' This chapter suggests, in broad terms, the influence of both John Stuart Mill's and John Locke's ideas on freedom and equality.
4. *Liberum arbitrium indifferetiae*: literally, 'difference without distinction.' See Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, trans. R. Haldane and J. Kemp (New York: Doubleday, 1961), 304. Soloviev here and elsewhere in *Law and Morality* draws on Schopenhauer's understanding of the "empirical freedom of the will."
5. *Idem per idem*: 'The same thing through the same thing' (or a tautology).
6. "By prefixes": *pristavkami*.

7. The saying's English equivalent is roughly "a bird in the hand. . . ."
8. There seems to be an implicit criticism of Tolstoy in this line of reasoning.
9. Nikolai S. Tagantsev (1843–1923) was a Russian professor of law, jurist, and author of many studies in law, including a widely used course text on criminal law, *Kurs ugodovnago prava* (1870).
10. Both Kant and Hegel are implied here.
11. See Vladimir S. Soloviev, *Mahomet, His Life and Religious Teachings* (1896).
12. See n. 4 above.
13. Soloviev's note refers to his lengthy appendix (not reproduced here), from Schopenhauer and Kant on free will.
14. Anselm Paul Johann Feuerbach [Ritter von] (1775–1833), whose book about criminal trials, *Merkwürdige criminal-rechtsfalle* (1808), was translated and read throughout Europe.
15. A reference to the exhaustive treatment of the history of the death penalty by H. Hetzel, *Die Todesstrafe in ihrer kulturgeschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Berlin: W. Moeser, 1870).
16. Cesare (Marchese di) Beccaria (1738–94), "On Crime and Punishment," published in 1766.
17. *Billigkeit*: 'fairness,' 'reasonableness.' Aleksandr V. Lokhvitsky (1830–84), a well-known Moscow jurist, author of a course book on criminal law, *Kurs Russkogo ugodovnogo prava* (1868), and on prisoners according to ancient Russian law, *O plennykh po drevnemu russkomu pravu, XV–XVII vv* (1855), among other works; one of the Barshev brothers: either Sergei N. Barshev (1808–82), a Moscow jurist who wrote on criminal punishment, as in *O merie nakazanii* (1840); or his brother, Yakov I. Barshev, who held a doctor of laws degree and approached these questions from a theological perspective.
18. Elizaveta I's reign: 1741–61. Aleksandr II's reign: 1855–81. His assassination led to a reimposition of harsh autocratic rule.
19. François Guizot (1787–1874), French statesman, historian, and prolific writer; Carl J. A. Mittermaier (1787–1867) a German jurist; Albert Friedrich Berner (1818–1907), the German jurist whose book on the death penalty Soloviev cites in Russian translation, *O smertnoi kazni* (1865); and Aleksandr F. Kistiakovsky (1833–85), a famous Russian criminalist whose textbook on criminal law, *Elementarnii uchebnik obshchego ugodovnogo prava* (n.d.), was widely used.
20. *Terminus a quo, terminus ad quem*: 'within the set parameters [or boundaries].'
21. *Sacre nom d'un chien*: a French exclamation equivalent to the English, "By jingo!" or "My word!" but its literal word-for-word translation into English: 'The consecrated name of a dog.' *Auri sacra fames*: 'wicked hunger for gold.' Virgil, *Aeneid* 3, 57. The XII Tables were the first written laws of Rome.
22. *Sacer esto*: 'Let it be forfeit' (the actual meaning of the phrase).
23. Genesis 4:15; Leviticus 24:17; Romans 12:19; Deuteronomy 32:35; Hosea 6:6; Luke 19:10.
24. Joseph Marie Maistre, Comte de (1753–1821) was a French diplomat and also at one time Sardinian envoy to Russia; he wrote prolifically on constitutions (*Essai sur le principe générateur des constitutions politiques et des autres institutions humaines*), social contract theory (*De la souveraineté et du peuple: un anti-contrat social*), and punishment as sacrifice (*Eclaircissements sur les sacrifices*). Soloviev claimed that de Maistre was the intellectual

source of Russian nationalists' cynical egoism and the degeneration of positive Russian national aspirations. See, for example, "Slavophilstvo i ego vyrozhdienie," *Vestnik Evropy* 11 and 12 (1889), also reprinted as a chapter in *Natsional'nyi vopros v Rossii* II, as found in *Sobranie sochinenii* 5:181–244.

25. *Animus interficiendi*: 'intent to kill.'
26. Because *Ritterspruch* is roughly 'a knight's decree,' and *Richterspruch*, 'a judge's decree' [or 'judgment'], the sense is that of the usurpation of *de jure* authority. Aleksei S. Khomiakov (1804–60) was a leading Slavophile who, along with others (e.g., Konstantin Aksakov), while being absolutely opposed to the ideas of Western liberalism for Russia, supported political and social reforms, including the emancipation of the serfs and freedom of speech. The Russian reads as follows: *Ty vikhrem letish' na kone boevom, / S družhinoi tvoiei udaloiu, — / I vrag pobezhdennyy upal pod konem, / I plennyy lezhit pred toboiu. / Soidesh' li s konia ty, podnimesh' li mech? / Sorvesh' li bezsil'nuu golovu s plech? / Pust' bilisia on s dikim neistovstvom brani, / Po gradam i selam pozhary proster, — / Teper' on podemlet moliashchiiia dlani: / Ubesh li? O styd i pozor! A esli vas mnogo, ubete li vy / Togo, kto okhvachen tsepiami, / Kto stoptannyy v prakhe, moliashchei glavy / Ne smee podniat' pered vami? / Pust' dukh ego cheren, kak mrak grobovoi, / Pust' serdtse v nem podlo, kak cherv' gnoievoi, / Pust' krov'u, razboiem on ves' znamenoven; / Teper' on bezsilen, ugas ego vzor, / On vlastiu sviazan, on uzhasom skovan . . . / Ubete l'? O styd i pozor!*
27. Goddess of Babylon and Sumer, variously known also as Mulittu, Belit, and Ninlil, associated with earth, nature, heaven, hell.
28. This may be another indirect reference to Tolstoy.
29. Matthew 5:39.
30. *Volenti non fit injuria*: 'No injury comes to a willing participant.'
31. Aleksandr P. Sumarokov was an eighteenth-century Russian dramatist, best known for his free adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. *Idi dusha vo ad i vechno budi plenna, / O, esliby so mnoi pogibla vsia vseleenna!*
32. Anatolii F. Koni (1844–1927) was a friend of Soloviev and a prolific writer on criminal justice and forensics. His works include *Sudebnye rechi* (1898) and *Dostoevsky Criminaliste*, (Paris, 1898), one of the first analyses of Dostoevsky's work from a forensic perspective.
33. Soloviev refers to the title of one the most famous works of Cesare Lombroso (1836–1909), Italian criminalist and founder of the school of criminal anthropology.
34. Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828) was the founder of the school of phrenology and the author of works translated into many languages. Dmitri A. Dril' was a Russian jurist and legal theorist, the chief Russian follower of Lombroso's school of criminal anthropology. Soloviev cites a work by Dril' appearing in the same legal studies series as his does and to which the essays of *Law and Morality* serve as a rebuttal.
35. Apart from its specific meaning and relevance in context, the reference to "spiritualism" should be understood in light of the broad public interest in such matters throughout Europe at that time. Lombroso himself later published a study entitled "After Death—What? Research into Hypnotism and Spiritual Phenomena" (1909), which explored spiritist phenomena. Soloviev was extremely skeptical of spiritualism and spiritists: note the incorporation of the theme into "A Brief Tale about the Antichrist." On this point, see

- also Konstantin Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Soloviev: zhizn' i uchenie* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1951), esp. 65. In 1892 Soloviev criticized a Western spirituality encompassing these and other fads like “neo-Buddhism, Western Buddhism, esoteric Buddhism—or theosophy, or theosoph-ism,” referring to it all as “antireligious, antiphilosophical, and antiscientific doctrine” and as “a charlatan attempt to suit real Buddhism to the tastes of Europe.” Vladimir S. Soloviev, “Zametka o E. P. Blavatskoi,” *Sobranie sochinenii* 6:394–98.
36. If some of this seems to border on obscurantism, it should be kept in mind that Soloviev was taking issue with specific assumptions and conclusions made by this school that were based on the scientific knowledge available at the time. Some influence of Schopenhauer is possible in all this as well; he too rejected the premises of Gall's phrenology. See Arthur Schopenhauer, “Note on what has been said about Bichat,” in *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. 2.
 37. Besides *L'uomo delinquente*, Lombroso wrote other influential books, including *L'Anthropologie Criminelle et ses recentes progresses* (Paris, 1890).
 38. The passing remark about evangelical and orthodox registration refers to actual problems of administration associated with the fusion of Church and State in tsarist Russia.
 39. Enrico Ferri (1856–1929), a prolific writer on criminal sociology and anthropology, denied the doctrine of free will. His works saw many editions rendered into many different languages. The most widely available of these included *La scuola positiva di diritto criminale* (1883), and *Studi sulla criminalità in Francia dal 1826–1878* (1881).
 40. Two notorious French gang leaders and their accomplices, whom Lombroso classifies as “inborn” thieves and assassins. Cesare Lombroso, *Crime, Its Causes and Remedies* (Boston: Little-Brown, 1906), 149, 206, 222–24, 361.
 41. The Third International Congress of Criminal Anthropology. The second congress was held in Paris in 1889.
 42. *Animus nocendi*: ‘intent to harm.’
 43. The reference is probably to M. N. Galkin (Brasskii) (1834–?), prison official and author of a study on the prison question, *Materialy k izucheniiu tiuremnago voprosu* (1868).
 44. Soloviev's lengthy appendix to this study (not reproduced here) appears under the subtitle “Empirical Necessity and Transcendental Freedom (according to Schopenhauer and Kant).” The addendum is an extensive translation/paraphrase of these philosophers' main points on free will and determinism.

9. Plato's Life-Drama

1. The first volume of Soloviev's unfinished translation of Plato's dialogues was published in 1899, the year before he died.
2. The prolific Friedrich von Schleiermacher (1768–1834) was a major figure in Christian theology and philology. He completed a translation of Plato's works in 1804 as well as *Introduction to the Dialogues of Plato*, trans. Wm. Dobson (Cambridge: J. & J. Deighton, 1836). Eduard von Munk (1803–71), wrote *Die natürliche Ordnung der Platonischen Schriften* (Berlin: Dümmler, 1857).
3. *Theios nomos*—*nomos Basileus*: ‘Divine law—king's law.’ Basileus = a king of gods and

men, the title of the second of the nine archons at Athens, who was in charge of both worship and criminal processes.

4. *Phylakes*: the Guardians in Plato's *Republic*. Plato's Polity represented the mean between Oligarchy and Democracy.
5. The source of this quote is unknown to me.
6. Soloviev contributed many articles to encyclopedias. Prometheus—fire; Demeter—Agriculture; Dionysus—law and civilization.
7. See, for example, Isaiah 40:18–20, 44:15–18.
8. *Ou phusei, alla thesei monon*: 'Not by nature, but only by human arrangement.'
9. Aristophanes lampooned Socrates in his play *The Clouds*.
10. *Phaedo* 46, 118. The Oracle of Aesculapius at Epidaurus was known primarily as a place for the mesmeric treatment of the sick.
11. The Pythia—priestess of the Oracle at Delphi.
12. The Beatitudes, Matthew 5:4–6.
13. The skill of philosophy.
14. Soloviev cites Plato's *Apology* 11, 24.
15. The last line may imply burial of the dead. *Idi moi kniaz' vo khram / Iavy sebia v narode, / A ia poidu otdam, / poslednii dolg prirode!* Aleksandr P. Sumarokov, *Gamlet: Tragediia. Vol'naia pererabotka odnoimennoi tragedii V. Shekspira* (Moscow, 1786).
16. Soloviev cites (in Russian) Plato's *Apology* 17, 29.
17. It is interesting to note that Soloviev himself was twenty-eight when Dostoevsky died.
18. *Propter vitam vitae perdere causas*: A literal translation: 'because of life, to lose the reasons for life.'
19. Cicero, *De Divinatione*, 5, 4.
20. 1 John 5:19.
21. The first line of Sappho's first ode, which may be rendered as "Immortal Aphrodite of the richly worked throne."
22. For this juxtaposition, see Plato, *Symposium* 18a.
23. These are the concluding lines of one of Soloviev's poems, written in 1892. *Svet iz tmy! Nad chernoi glyboi / Voznestisia ne mogli by / Liki roz tvoikh. Esli b v sumrachnoe lono / Ne vpivalsia pogruzhennyi / Temnyi koren' ikh.*
24. All rivers in Hades. Styx is the main river of Hades; Acheron, the river of entry to the netherworld; Phlegethon (also Pyriphlegethon), the river of flames forming one of the boundaries of Hades; Cocytus, the "wailing" river forming another of the boundaries of Hades.
25. The Greek phrase in Soloviev's note can be translated as "Hail, force [or power], daughter of Ares."
26. Plato deems censorship necessary in the *Republic* 3, 401–02.
27. Soloviev developed this line of thought earlier in *The Meaning of Love* (1892–94).
28. Soloviev engages in wordplay here: in Russian, the word *brak* can mean either a marriage or a defective item that is to be scrapped.
29. Revelation 2:24.
30. 1 Corinthians 6:3. St. Francis of Assisi: *pater seraphicus*: 'Father of the seraphim.'

31. Genesis 1:27–28.
32. *The Meaning of Love*, V, 4, 5.
33. The adjective Soloviev uses here is derived from the term that he favors in other places: *bogochelovechestvo*, which has also been rendered in English as ‘godmanhood,’ part of the title of one of Soloviev’s most well received books.
34. *Symposium* 189dff.; *Phaedrus* 259d; *Symposium* 201dff.
35. *Quandoque bonus dormitat et Plato*: ‘Sometimes even good Plato sleeps.’ Soloviev adapts Horace’s reference to Homer: *quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus*. Horace, “Ars Poetica,” 359.

10. The Idea of a Superman

1. Soloviev again engages in wordplay: *spros* (demand); *zapro*s (question).
2. The phrase *use pozvoleno* again appears. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Brothers Karamazov*, bk. II, chap. 9.
3. The reference is apparently to Romans 8:22.
4. From Pushkin’s poem “The Prophet.” *Veshchie zenitsy kak u ispugannoi orlitsy*.
5. *Theoi te Brioi te*: ‘Gods and mortals’(?).
6. “Firstborn of the dead”: Colossians 1:18.
7. Ernst Haeckel, nineteenth-century German zoologist.
8. This echoes what Soloviev had to say about the syllogistic reasoning of Russian nihilists: “Man is descended from a monkey, consequently we shall all love one another,” cited by Nicholas Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 106.

11. A Brief Tale about the Antichrist

1. This appears to be an adaptation of John 1:15.
2. This approaching “man of the future” (*griadushchii chelovek*) mirrors Nietzsche’s unspecified “*Mensch der Zukunft*,” the Redeemer-hero Anti-Christ, “who will deliver us” and “make the earth free once more and restore its purpose to it, and to man his hope.” Friedrich Nietzsche, “Zur Genealogie der Moral,” in *Werke* (Munich: C. Hanser Verlag, 1966) 2:836–37. Compare with 1 John 2:18 and 4:3 as well as 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12, depicting a “lawless man” who will come in the last days.
3. Soloviev here uses peasant dialect and a Polish term to convey a contemptuous tone.
4. The theme of insanity here seems to have its roots in Soloviev’s views of Nietzsche; see the essay “Literature or Truth?” above.
5. Soloviev cites John 5:43. “Received . . . pleasing” is yet another play on words: in Russian, *prinjatym* and *priyatnym*, respectively.
6. Apparently, Soloviev himself did not eat meat. See Konstantin Mochul’skii, *Vladimir Soloviev: zhizn’ i uchenie* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1951), 64. See n. 3 in Introduction.
7. *Post panem . . . circenses*: ‘After bread . . . circuses.’
8. *In partibus infidelium*: ‘On behalf of the infidel.’ This heretical character appears to be based on Apollonius of Tian, whom Soloviev describes elsewhere as “a contemporary of

- Christ and founder of a neo-Pythagorean, religio-mystical school.” See the entry for “Apollonii Tianskii” in *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar’* (St. Petersburg: Brokhaus-Efron, 1890), 904–05.
9. Revelation 13:13. These elements of the story received some of the most severe criticism by some of the attendees at its initial public reading, specifically for being too fantastic. Soloviev made some remarks about this in the newspaper *Rossia*; these comments later appeared as a preface to *Tri razgovora. Sobranie sochinenii* 10:89–91.
 10. Such developments had caught Soloviev’s attention in 1898. See “The Spiritual Condition of the Russian People” (Sunday Letters), above.
 11. An inspiration for this “council” can perhaps be found in a planned religious congress that had interested Soloviev in 1897. See “The Second Congress of Religions” (Sunday Letters) above.
 12. A legend about the popular Tsar Aleksandr I held that he had not died in 1825 but had become a hermit or a wandering monk.
 13. *So! Nun! Ja! So! Also!*: ‘So! Well! Yes! And so!’
 14. By not referring to New Testament Christianity prior to its adoption by Constantine as the official religion of the Roman Empire, Soloviev indirectly suggests something is amiss in the Constantinian and Byzantine union of Church and State.
 15. *Gratias agimus! Domine!*: ‘We thank you! Lord!’ *Salvum fac magnum imperatorem*: ‘Save the Great Emperor!’ *Non praevallebunt, non portae inferni*: ‘And the gates of hell will not prevail.’
 16. I have intentionally inflated the translation here. Soloviev originally had it as “one and a half million marks,” not a particularly impressive figure in contemporary terms.
 17. This is the substance of part of the Nicene Creed. See “The Significance of Dogma” (Sunday Letters) above.
 18. *Contradicitur*: ‘Objection.’
 19. *Pereant*: ‘They will perish.’
 20. *Duorum defunctorum testimonium locum tenens Ernst Pauli*: ‘In place of the two deceased witnesses, Ernst Pauli.’
 21. *Accipio et approbo et laetificatur cor meum*: ‘I accept and approve, and my heart rejoices.’
 22. Compare with Matthew 28:13–14 and Revelation 11:8–11.
 23. *Tu es Petrus! Jetzt ist es ja grundlich erwiesen und ausser jedem Zweifel gesetzt*: ‘You are Peter. Now this is fundamentally proven and most certain.’
 24. *So also, Vaterchen, nun sind wir ja Eins in Christo*: ‘And so, little father, we are united in Christ.’
 25. Revelation 12:1. See also “The Spiritual Condition of the Russian People,” above.
 26. I have edited out the remaining few lines from the body of the text. They are as follows:
 The General: . . . How do you like that Prince? Hey where is the Prince?
 The Politician: You mean you didn’t see? He quietly left at that pathetic place when the Elder John drove the Antichrist into a corner. I didn’t at that time want to interrupt the reading and later forgot.
 The General: He’s vanished, by God, disappeared for a second time. But how he has mastered himself. Well, and he still has not maintained his reputation. O Lord. (END)

Appendix A. The Jews in Russia

1. The bracketed reference to Germany does not appear in the Russian version.

Appendix B. Panmongolism

1. A variant of this line is: “Then He raised from the East.”
2. It is interesting to note that in Sergei Eisenstein’s classic film *Ivan the Terrible* (part 1), a variant of the poem’s last lines is placed on the lips of Ivan at his coronation.

Panmongolizm. Khot’ im’a diko, / no mne laskaet slukh ono, / kak by predvestiem velikoi sud’biny Bozhiei polno . . .

Kogda v rastlennoi Vizantii / Ostyl bozhestvennyi altar’, / I otreklisia ot Messii/Narod i Kniaz’, erei i Tsar’,

Togda podnialsia ot Vostoka [variant: Togda On podnial ot Vostoka] / Narod bezvestnyi i chuzhoi, / I pod udarom tiazhkim roka/ vo prakh sklonilsia Rim vtoroi./

Sud’boiu drevnei Vizantii / My nauchit’sia ne khotim, / I vse tverdiat l’stetsy Rossii:/ Ty tretii Rim! Ty tretii Rim!

Nu, chto zh? Orudii Bozh’ei kary! Zapas esche ne istoshchen . . . / Gotovit novye udary/ Roi probudivshikhsia plemen.

Ot vod Malaitskikh do Altaia / Vozbdi s vostochnykh ostrovov

U sten vozstavshago Kitaia / Sobrali tmy svoikh polkov.

Kak sarancha neischislimy / I nenasytny kak ona, / Ne zdeshnei siloiu khranimy, / Idut na sever plemena.

O Rus! Zabud’ byluiu slavu. / Orel dvuglavnyi sokrushen, / I zheltyim detiam na zabavu / dany klochki tvoikh znamen.

Smiritsia v trepete i strakhe, / Kto mog zavet liubvy zabyt’, / I tretii Rim lezhit vo prakhe, / A uzhe chetvertomy ne byt’.

Appendix C. Letter to Nikolai II

1. John 10:9.
2. John 6:37.
3. Matthew 5:11.
4. The reference appears to be to Louis XIV’s revocation in 1685 of the Edict of Nantes (1598), granting toleration to the Huguenots.
5. The French National Convention of September 20, 1792, which gave birth to the Terror in France.
6. John 18:11; Matthew 26:52.

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