The Orthodox Christian World

Edited by Augustine Casiday

THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WORLD

Orthodox Christianity is the main historical inheritor of the Byzantine tradition of Christianity, and is still practised around the world. The two main strands are Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox, but there are thriving communities in countries as varied as Egypt (the Copts), Armenia, and Romania, with strong diasporic communities in Western Europe, North America, Australia, and elsewhere.

This book offers a compelling overview of the Orthodox World, covering the main regional traditions and the ways in which the tradition has become global; key figures from John Chrysostom to the contemporary Fathers of Mount Athos and a rich selection of key themes, including theology, monasticism, iconography and the arts, pastoral care and Orthodoxy through the eyes of travellers.

The contributors are drawn from the Orthodox community worldwide, providing an innovative and illuminating approach to the subject, ideal for students and scholars alike.

Augustine Casiday is a Lecturer in Theology at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK.

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Augustine Casiday

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CONTRIBUTORS

Mr Adrian Agachi is currently undertaking doctoral research in the University of Winchester. His research interests include Orthodoxy in the twentieth century, and church fathers from the sixth to fourteenth centuries.

Dr Antoine Arjakovsky is Research Director of the department of Society, Freedom, Peace, at the Collège des Bernardins, Paris. He is also the founding director of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv.

Dr Trevor Batrouney is Adjunct Professor in the School of Global Studies, Social Science and at RMIT University, Melbourne. His research interests include the study of immigrant groups in Australia, with a particular focus on Middle Eastern migration and the establishment of Orthodox churches.

Dr Peter C. Bouteneff is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York. In addition to Christology and ecclesiology, his research interests include the connections between theology and popular culture.

Mr Alan Brown is a member of Trinity College, Cambridge. His research is focused on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian, Serbian and Greek dogmatic theology.

The Reverend Dr Bogdan G. Bucur is Assistant Professor of Theology at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His research interests include the history of biblical exegesis and its relation with spirituality and doctrinal developments in Patristic and Byzantine Christianity.

Dr Augustine Casiday, FRHistS, is Lecturer in Historical Theology at the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David. His research interests include the theology, literature and practices of Christian monasticism, especially during the first millennium.

Dr John T. Chirban is Professor of Psychology at Hellenic College and Instructor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard University, where he was named Senior Fellow at the Center for the Study of World Religions. His interests include integrative studies in medicine, psychology and religion.

Dr Mary B. Cunningham is Lecturer in Historical Theology at the University of Nottingham. She is engaged in research on Byzantine homilies, the cult of the Virgin Mary, and early Christian spirituality.

Dr Vladimir Cvetković is Adjunct Lecturer in Orthodox Theology at the Department of Systematic Theology in the University of Aarhus. His research interests are in patristics, especially Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor, and in modern Orthodox theology.

The Right Reverend Basil Essey is the Bishop of Wichita (Kansas) and the Antiochian Orthodox Diocese of Mid-America. He was co-chair of the Glorification Committee for St Raphael and composed his Akolouthia. His research interests include liturgy and hagiography.

Dr Gavin Flood is Professor of Hindu Studies and Comparative Religion at the University of Oxford, where he is also the Academic Director of the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies. His research interests include the religions of Shiva and phenomenology.

Dr Paul Gavrilyuk is Associate Professor of Historical Theology at the University of St Thomas, in Saint Paul, Minnesota. His research interests include patristic theology, philosophy of religion and modern Orthodox theology

Dr Christian Gottlieb is the Librarian of HM the Queen's Reference Library, Amalienborg Castle, Copenhagen. He has also lectured in church history at the Faculty of Theology of Copenhagen University. His research interests include the history of Christian social thought, particularly in the context of Russian Orthodoxy.

Dr Tamara Grdzelidze is a Programme Executive within the Faith and Order Secretariat of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland. Her research interests include patristic and liturgical theology, ecclesiology, ecumenical theology, history of the Church of Georgia, and Georgian hagiography.

Dr Getatchew Haile is Cataloguer Emeritus of Oriental Manuscripts at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, and Regents Professor of Medieval History, at Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. His interest is in the study of Ethiopic (Ge'ez) literature.

Dr Perry T. Hamalis is the Cecelia Schneller Mueller Professor of Religion at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. His research interests center on Eastern Orthodox contributions to the fields of religious ethics and political philosophy.

The Reverend Dr Dellas Oliver Herbel is an Adjunct Instructor at Minnesota State University, Moorhead, and the Priest for Holy Resurrection Orthodox Mission Church in Fargo, North Dakota. His areas of research include American religious history and the history of Christian thought.

The Reverend Dr Robert A. Kitchen is Minister of Knox-Metropolitan United Church in Regina, Saskatchewan. His research interests are in early Syriac asceticism and monasticism, including the *Book of Steps*, Philoxenos of Mabbug and Dadisho Qatraya.

Dr Alexis Klimoff is Professor of Russian Studies at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. His research interests are Russian nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature and intellectual history.

Dr Vassa Kontouma is *Maître de conférences* in the École pratique des hautes études, Paris, and an affiliate with the Catholic Institute of Paris and its School of Advanced Oriental Studies. Her recent research focuses on Byzantine theology and the life and works of St John Damascene.

Reverend Professor Andrew Louth, FBA, is Professor Emeritus of Patristic and Byzantine Studies at the University of Durham and Visiting Professor of Eastern

Orthodox Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam. His research interests include Greek (mostly) patristic and Byzantine theology and church history and modern Orthodox theology.

Dr Wendy Mayer is Honorary Fellow in the Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University. Her research interests include the life and homilies of John Chrysostom and life in the cities of Antioch and Constantinople in late antiquity.

The Very Reverend Dr John A. McGuckin, FRHistS, is Nielsen Professor of Ancient and Byzantine Christian History in Union Theological Seminary, and Professor of Byzantine Christian Studies in Columbia University, New York.

Dr Maged S. A. Mikhail is Associate Professor of History at the California State University at Fullerton. His research and teaching interests focus on late antiquity, Coptic history, and the early Islamic history.

The Reverend Dr Ivan Moody is a Research Fellow at CESEM–Universidade NOVA, Lisbon, and a Priest of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Active as a composer and conductor, his research interests include the aesthetics and theology of Orthodox Church music, contemporary composition in Eastern Europe and church music in Bulgaria and Serbia.

Dr Dan Ioan Mureşan is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes within the École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris. His research interests include the comparative history of the imperial ideal in Eastern Europe, the histories of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Latin Patriarchates of Constantinople, and the Council of Florence.

The Reverend Dr Vrej Nersessian is the Curator in charge of the manuscripts and printed books of the Oriental Orthodox churches in the British Library, and Priest in charge of the Armenian Church of St Yeghishe in London. He has published works on the theology, history, and Christian art of the Armenian Church.

Dr Aristotle Papanikolaou is Associate Professor of Theology and co-founding director of the Orthodox Christian Studies Program at Fordham University. His research interests include contemporary Orthodox theology, Trinitarian theology, religion in public life, and theological anthropology.

Dr Marcus Plested is Vice-principal and Academic Director of the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies (Cambridge Theological Federation) and Affiliated Lecturer in the Faculty of Divinity of the University of Cambridge. His research deals with aspects of patristic, Byzantine and modern Orthodox theology, with a current emphasis on the Orthodox reception of Aquinas.

Monsignor Professor Dr Osvaldo Raineri is Professor of Classical Ethiopic (Ge'ez) at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. He research interests include the history, hagiography, and liturgy of the Ethiopian Church, and he has edited many articles and books especially in *Patrologia Orientalis, Orientalia Christiana Periodica* and *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*.

Dr David Ricks is Professor of Modern Greek and Comparative Literature at King's College London. His books include *The Shade of Homer and Byzantine Heroic Poetry*, and he has written on many modern Greek poets.

Dr Norman Russell is a patrologist who teaches from time to time at Heythrop College, London, and the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, Cambridge.

His research interests are currently focused on the Hesychast movement of the fourteenth century.

Dr Vera Shevzov is Professor of Religion at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. She is author of *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution* (2004) and is currently working on a book on the image of the Mother of God in modern and contemporary Russia.

Dr James Skedros is the Michael G. and Anastasia Cantonis Professor of Byzantine Studies at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Brookline, Massachusetts. His research interests include Byzantine hagiography, popular religious practices in Byzantium, and historical relations between Islam and Eastern Christianity.

Dr T. Allan Smith is a Fellow of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies and Associate Professor of Eastern Christianity at the University of St Michael's College. His research includes the theology, literature and history of the medieval and modern Russian Orthodox Church.

Dr Graham Speake, FSA, was publishing director of Peter Lang until his retirement in 2010. He is founder and Secretary of the Friends of Mount Athos and was awarded the Criticos Prize for his book *Mount Athos: Renewal in Paradise*.

Dr Stefan Stroia recently completed his doctorate at the École pratique des hautes études, Paris. His research interests include the theology of the Romanian Orthodox Church with particular reference to dogmatic developments during the modern and contemporary periods and to the personality of the theologian Fr Dumitru Stăniloae.

Dr Hidemi Takahashi is Associate Professor in the Department of Area Studies at the University of Tokyo. He is a researcher in Syriac studies, with a special interest in the transmission of the classical heritage in Syriac and Arabic.

Dr Torstein Theodor Tollefsen is Professor in Philosophy at the University of Oslo. His research interests are in Greek Christian thought of late antiquity, such as cosmology, Trinitarian theology and icon theology.

Dr Melchisedec Törönen is a Hieromonk in the Patriarchal Stavropegic Monastery of St John the Baptist at Tolleshunt Knights, Essex.

Dr Alexander Treiger is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Dalhousie University, in Halifax. His research focuses on the history of Arab Orthodox Christianity, Arabic philosophy and medieval Islamic theology and mysticism.

Dr David Wagschal is Assistant Professor of Church History and Canon Law at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York. His research interests include the history of late antique and Byzantine canon law, ancient legal theory and legal anthropology.

Dr Jonathan L. Zecher is an Instructor in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages as well as the Honors College at the University of Houston. His research focuses on Christian spirituality and identity formation in the literature of martyrdom and Greek ascetics.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Augustine Casiday

The past century and more witnessed unprecedented numbers of Christians from traditionally Orthodox societies migrating around the world. Bringing with them their icons, their music, their prayer books, though often *not* their clergy, they have in some cases for generations made their homes abroad. In so doing, these people have prompted a growing level of awareness that the familiar division of Christianity into Catholics and Protestants by no means accounts for Christianity as a whole. Indeed, as Orthodox Christians have moved around the globe, it has confounded the idea of Orthodoxy as a distinctly "eastern" or "oriental" phenomenon – an idea attended by hosts of problems for these Christians that are adumbrated (perhaps unwittingly, given its unwavering focus on Islam) by Edward Said's landmark *Orientalism*. In many parts of the modern world, one need not go far to find an Orthodox community at worship.

These communities attest to several, sometimes competing, legacies that are helpful for reminding us of important facts: at least in origin, Christianity is not a European religion no matter how deep its roots in Europe run; in northern regions of East Africa, Christianity has been indigenous since well before we have any evidence of the gospel being preached in any Germanic language; not later than the seventh century, Syrian Christians took their wares and their beliefs as far east as central China, establishing churches there and preaching and teaching theology in Chinese; there still exist in predominately Islamic areas many Christian populations that for centuries have lived alongside Muslims, the histories of which can serve as a valuable corrective to the highly visible but often myopic discussions about a "clash of cultures" in the modern West.[1] These facts are perhaps not widely known, and the cultures (not to mention theologies) of these hundreds of millions of Christians are probably unfamiliar. This book attempts to redress that lack of familiarity by presenting Orthodox Christianity from multiple perspectives.

FAMILIES

Some readers will have noticed that I have already used the word "Orthodox" to describe Christian communities in Europe, Africa and the Near East, though some

of these communities do not recognize the orthodoxy of other communities. This calls for a word of explanation. Orthodox Christianity embraces several churches. One of the major dividing points in the early history of Christianity – the Council of Chalcedon (451) and debates concerning the reception of St Cyril of Alexandria's theology – has resulted in an ongoing estrangement among Orthodox Christians. It is possible to identify two major families within Christianity following those debates. Very broadly speaking, they consist of (on the one hand) the Greek-speaking Christians of Byzantium and the churches influenced by Byzantine traditions – such as the churches of Greece and Russia – and (on the other hand) the Syriac-speaking Christians of Persia and the churches influenced by Syriac traditions, such as the churches of Eritrea and Ethiopia, most notably through the work of the "Righteous Ones" or "Nine Saints."[2]

But refinements are needed at once: the Armenian Church and the Coptic Church are not readily identified with either of those cultural traditions, though they can be classified within those two groups. Furthermore, neither group includes the Assyrian Church of the East or the Maronite Church. Neither of those communities self-describe as "orthodox" but both of them are so linguistically, historically and culturally continuous with Orthodox communities that they are included in this volume. Indeed, any attempt to exclude them from consideration here would have to be based on principles that attempt (wrongly, in my view) to define Orthodox Christianity in strictly ecclesiological terms. Because Orthodox Christianity is fluid and exists in constant conversation with multiple historical and local cultures, it is notoriously difficult to advance a satisfactory categorization with reference to any single factor (whether theological, ecclesiological, liturgical, ethnic or linguistic). To speak of "families" is itself not free of problems, but family language does have to recommend it that it captures a wide range of particulars and that it can be refined.[3]

The terms used to designate those "families" are often polemic in their origins.[4] One group has been called "Melkite" (from the Syriac ܡܠܟܝܐ/*malkayâ*, meaning "royal" or "imperial"; cf. the Arabic ملكي/*malakî*) because it adhered to the Orthodoxy of the emperor in Constantinople. The other group has been called "Monophysite" (from the Greek, μονοφυσίτες, referring to a doctrine that Christ was "one nature") because it rejected the Dyophysite ("two-nature") Christology of the Council of Chalcedon. Both of those terms are pejorative and as such will be avoided in this volume. Instead, and with an eye to the cautious successes of recent ecumenical engagement across the Chalcedonian divide, the former family will be called "Eastern Orthodox" and the latter family will be called "Oriental Orthodox."

Chapters on both families have been included here without discriminating on the basis of Chalcedon. This means that Orthodox Christianity as practiced and promoted in Egypt, Ethiopia, India and elsewhere will be presented without apology alongside Orthodox Christianity as practiced and promoted in Russia, Romania, Greece and elsewhere. Since this book has been published in English and since Orthodox Christianity in its Byzantine traditions is more widely represented (and so, presumably, more familiar) throughout the English-speaking world, it seems prudent to treat Eastern Orthodoxy as the default – without prejudice to any other Orthodox tradition.

VARIANTS

The Christian East and Orient developed in very different ways to the Christian West and, consequently, Orthodox Christianity often startles Western observers. For instance, theology as expressed in the Orthodox traditions is usually heavily imbued with liturgical and poetic features that are culturally distinct from the forms of liturgy and poetry familiar in western Christian traditions. Quite apart from the profound connection of liturgy and prayer to theology in Orthodox Christianity, the very forms of Orthodox worship tend to differ markedly from Christian worship elsewhere. For over a millennium, visitors to Orthodox churches have reported the profound impression that the stately beauty and dignity of Orthodox worship had made upon them. Having been sent to explore the faiths of the Bulgar Muslims, the German Catholics, the Khazar Jews and the Greek Orthodox, Prince Vladimir's envoys returned to him in 987, with this memorable report:

> . . . the Greeks led us to the edifices where they worship their God, and we knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendour or such beauty, and we are at a loss how to describe it. We only know that God dwells there among men, and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations. For we cannot forget that beauty.[5]

Their perception that heaven and earth joined while the Orthodox worshipped hinges on another perception: beauty has long been central to Orthodox Christianity. Another factor that sets Orthodox Christianity apart from many other Christian professions is the fact that monasticism impacts upon all aspects of Orthodox life. Furthermore, culture – whether Eastern European, African, Middle Eastern or Asian – has for centuries existed in a symbiotic relationship with Orthodox practice and thinking. Since Justinian's legislation began to harmonize canon law and civil law in the early sixth century,[6] the ideal has been a social "symphony" between civil life and Christian life.[7]

The ideal of a society so theologically integrated is perhaps foreign, possibly even repellent, to many readers. Yeats' lines on the "holy city of Byzantium" and especially his wish to be gathered "into the edifice of eternity" neatly illustrate the *otherness* that the symphony of Orthodox Christian belief and Orthodox Christian society presents to many. There are powerful habits of thinking that Orthodoxy approximates to profound, even timeless, harmony. No doubt, the prevalence of ancient and stable patterns of worship – which Vladimir's envoys had already associated with heaven and with God dwelling among the Orthodox, as we have seen – and the persistent tendency for Westerners to regard the East "as a locale suitable for incarnating the infinite in a finite shape" (Said 2003: 62) both contribute to that deceptive appearance. And even this is to say nothing about the persistent appeal for Orthodox themselves of seeking refuge in the sublime recapitulation of the past, a temptation toward romanticism so severe that it overflows into atavism. This temptation has been depicted nowhere as vividly as by the visionary V. S. Soloviev in his "Short Tale of the Anti-Christ," where the great apostasy of Orthodox Christians is precipitated by this offer from the Antichrist (1915: 211):

> Know, then, my beloved ones, that to-day I have signed the decree and have set aside vast sums of money for the establishment in our glorious Empire city, Constantinople, of a world's museum of Christian archæology, with the object of collecting, studying, and saving all the monuments of church antiquity, more particularly of the Eastern one; and I ask you to select from your midst a committee for working out with me the measures which are to be carried out, so that the modern life, morals, and customs may be organised as nearly as possible in accordance with the traditions and institutions of the Holy Orthodox Church.[8]

Finally, the practice of regarding theology as sublimely detached from grubby work-aday considerations – a practice that, happily, scholars have for some time been increasingly abandoning – has not helped at all. All of these factors have tended to portray Orthodoxy as an other-worldly, mysterious and remote phenomenon. But such an approach is as inimical to understanding as is the attempt to fit Orthodoxy onto the Procrustean bed of Western Christian doctrine.

In this book, every effort has been made to allow for Orthodox Christianity in its various forms to be presented in terms that are meaningful with respect to Orthodoxy, but that are also comprehensible for readers from a range of backgrounds. Taking variations seriously is a first step toward understanding Orthodox Christianity without imposing artificial barriers. Because Orthodox Christianity is profoundly integrated within its traditional societies, the pursuit of any Orthodox topic may take turns unpredictable from external perspectives. Within and among Orthodox societies, we find lively arguments and heartfelt dissent no less than deep consensus and self-sacrificing loyalty. Orthodoxy is not monolithic. It would be dishonest, and a disservice to history and to posterity, to pretend otherwise. To provide an account of Orthodox Christianity that approximates to its polyvalence and complexity, the chapters within this book will not be restricted to treatments of Orthodox Christian theology. Nor, indeed, will the chapters be restricted to Orthodox Christianity as though it existed in splendid isolation from larger society, from the vagaries of historical trends, or from other forms of Christianity.

Moreover, this book recognizes Orthodoxy as a "going concern." As a result, any attempt at accounting for Orthodoxy as a simple object for disengaged commentary is regarded here as inadequate. Essays included in this volume respond to the complexity of Orthodoxy by drawing from multiple perspectives. Thus, contributors include specialists who study phenomena associated with Orthodox Christianity; Orthodox practitioners who are directly involved in various fields of professional endeavor; and indeed Orthodox scholars whose engagements with their studies are enriched by their personal involvements in Orthodox life. Furthermore, some of the publications in this volume contribute to broad-based movements from Orthodox perspectives and could with reason be seen as "position papers."

STRUCTURE

The book is organized into three major parts: "Orthodox Christianity around the World," "Important Figures in Orthodox Christianity" and "Major Themes in Orthodox Christianity." This thematic organization has been conceived so as to enable the contributors to treat their themes as those themes are understood within

Orthodox Christianity. The contributors were allowed this scope to enable them to pursue their respective topics without imposing foreign categories upon the subject matter. On a related note, the chapters here both illustrate Orthodox perspectives or contributions to particular conversations (e.g. on mental health, on the relationship of Second Temple Judaism to Christian mysticism) and also shed fresh light on aspects of Orthodox Christianity (e.g. on Greek literature, on women in Orthodoxy). It is perhaps worth mentioning that, in keeping with my earlier remarks on the pervasiveness of Orthodoxy and the need to consider it therefore under several aspects, the contributors to this book are involved in multiple disciplines and professions – including a bishop, a composer, a librarian and a psychiatrist.

To all the contributors, the editor is enormously grateful.

NOTES

1 Cf. Griffith 2004: 22: "Surely then we have much usefully to learn from the study of the works of the Jews and Christians who first seriously engaged with Muslims in their own world so long ago, and in their own language of faith, long before the intervening times of colonialism and imperialism, with their accompanying mutual invective and recrimination, the rhetoric of which to this day characterizes and distorts many western views of the challenge of Islam."

2 In addition to discussing Syriac influence on the Ethiopic Bible, Knibb also provides a valuable summary of the "Nine Saints" (1999: 13–17, and frequently thereafter). See also Tamrat 1972: 23–25.

3 Use of this term is inspired by Wittgenstein's discussion of family resemblances in *Philosophical Investigations* §§67–77 (2009: 36e–41e).

4 For an extensive account of the divisions of Christianity in the Middle East, see Alexander Treiger's appendix to this introduction, "Divisions of Middle Eastern Christianity."

5 *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, *s.a.* 987 (Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1953: 111).

6 Justinian, *Novella* 131.1: "Sancimus igitur vicem legum obtinere sanctas ecclesiasticas regulas . . ." (1895: 654).

7 The ideal and questions regarding its implementation remain, as can be seen from a recent discussion in the Russian media following comments made by Patriarch Kirill of Moscow immediately after his accession to the patriarchal throne; see "Священнослужители О 'Симфонии' Государства И Церкви" (Kirill 2009).

8 Soloviev 1915: 211.

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DIVISIONS OF MIDDLE EASTERN CHRISTIANITY

Alexander Treiger

Middle Eastern Christians are divided into the following ecclesiastical communities.[1]

1 **Chalcedonians**

- a Arabic-, Greek-, and Aramaic-speaking Christians of the Eastern Orthodox communion, called in Arabic "Rum Orthodox" ("Roman," i.e. Byzantine rite, Orthodox) and traditionally "Melkites" (today, however, the latter term is reserved for the Eastern Catholic group (5a) below)
- b *Georgians (formerly active in the areas of Antioch and Jerusalem)[2]

2 **Chalcedonian Monothelites** (from the late seventh century on)

- a Maronites (followers of the seventh-century monk John Maron and, originally, opponents of the Dyothelite Christology of Maximus the Confessor; formally entered in communion with Rome in 1182, abandoning Monothelitism)[3]

3 **Non-Chalcedonians** (Miaphysites)

- a Syrian Orthodox, traditionally called "Jacobites" (after Jacob Baradaeus, the sixth-century founder of the Miaphysite hierarchy, separate from the Byzantine imperial church)
- b Copts (the dominant Christian group in Egypt)
- c *Armenians (maintain significant presence outside the modern state of Armenia, throughout eastern Mediterranean as well as Iran)
- d *Ethiopians (influential in pre-Islamic southern Arabia)

4 **Non-Ephesians**

- a the Church of the East (formerly the semi-official church of the Sasanian Empire, often somewhat inaccurately[4] termed "Nestorian" after the Archbishop of Constantinople, Nestorius, deposed at the Council of Ephesus in 431 for his Christological views; today often called "Assyrian")

5 **Eastern Catholic** ("Uniate") churches (founded in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries)

   a Arabic-speaking Byzantine-rite Catholics (in Arabic "Rum Katholik"), also called "Melkites"[5] (from 1724)
   b Syrian Catholics (from 1656)
   c Coptic Catholics (from 1741)
   d Armenian Catholics (from 1740)
   e Chaldeans (the Eastern Catholic counterpart of the "Assyrian" Church of the East) (from 1553)

Though in theory all Middle Eastern Christians who speak Arabic as their first language could be considered Christian Arabs, in practice many Middle Eastern Christians today reject this appellation, and claim, with varying degrees of plausibility, an ancient, pre-Arab ancestry (e.g. ancient Egyptian for the Copts, Phoenician for the Maronites, and Assyrian for the Church of the East). Still, most of these groups used and continue to use Arabic as an important means of theological and cultural expression and often also as a liturgical language, alongside Aramaic (Syriac), Greek, or Coptic.

NOTES

1 Griffith 2008: 129–40; 2001; 2006.
2 An asterisk marks those groups that, though active at different time periods in the Middle East, did not typically use Arabic.
3 Though later Maronite historians contest the Maronites' Monothelite origin, it is confirmed by trustworthy early authorities, both Muslim and Christian. See Salibi 1965; Moosa 2005.
4 Brock 1996, but cf. Seleznyov 2010.
5 Historically, all Byzantine-rite Christians of the patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria were called "Melkites" by their opponents. This, originally derogatory term comes from the Syriac word *malka*, "king," and refers to the fact that the Melkites were "royalists," i.e. followers of the Byzantine caesar in matters of religion. Today, however, the term Melkites is used exclusively for members of the Arabic-speaking Eastern Catholic Byzantine-rite church.

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PART I

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AROUND THE WORLD

CHAPTER ONE

THE GREEK TRADITION

Andrew Louth

INTRODUCTION: CLASSICAL BACKGROUND

"Theology – study of the highest problems in the universe by means of philosophical reason – is a specifically Greek creation. It is the loftiest and most daring venture of the intellect" (Jaeger 1944: 298). Plato was the first great theologian, and he appears to be the first to use the term *theologia* – though the speculations of the Presocratic philosophers about the origin of everything were regarded as "theologizing" by Aristotle, who ranks their speculations with the cosmogonic notions of poets such as Hesiod and Homer, whom he called *theologoi* ("theologians"). For Plato, theology was the study of eternal realities, that is, the realm of the Forms or Ideas. For his pupil Aristotle, theology was the study of the highest form of reality, the "first substance," which he seems to have regarded at different times as being the "unmoved mover" or as "being *qua* being." He spoke of three theoretical, or speculative, ways of knowing: the mathematical, the physical, and the theological, theology being the "most honorable." Such a notion of theology as the study, or contemplation (*theoria*), of the highest form of reality was a commonplace in the Hellenistic philosophy of the Roman world in which Christianity first emerged. But that was a world in which the quest for God had for many, besides Christians, a certain urgency: the realization of the highest contemplative exercise of the mind acquired a religious coloring. The "lower" studies of logic, ethics, and the understanding of the natural order became a sequence of preparatory training for communion with the divine, seen as fulfillment. These ideas very quickly found acceptance among Christian thinkers, so that in the third century Origen saw three stages in the Christian's advance to communion with God, the ethical, the physical, and the "enoptic" (possibly "epoptic") or visionary, a triad that found its classical form in the fourth century with Evagrius, the theorist of the monastic asceticism of the Egyptian desert: *praktike* (ascetic struggle), *physike* (contemplation of the natural order), and *theologia* (theology as contemplation of God). Such an understanding of theology as essentially prayer or contemplation, the highest exercise of the human mind or heart, the fruit of sustained ascetic struggle, quickly established itself in Geek Christianity, and is still fundamental in Orthodox theology. It is expressed

succinctly in Evagrius' oft-quoted assertion: "If you are a theologian, you will pray truly; if you pray truly, you will be a theologian" (*On Prayer* 60).

EARLY CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Alongside such an understanding of theology as a state to be attained, theology is also spoken of by Christian thinkers to mean the study of the nature of the divine, in a way very similar to the classical Greek usage. The God of the Jews and the Christians is not, however, some remote principle, but one who has revealed himself, not only through the works of nature, but also in his dealings with his chosen people, Israel, and, for Christians, pre-eminently in the incarnation of the Son or Word of God: in those events to which the writings of the Old and New Testaments bear record. As early as the Jewish philosopher, Philo (first century), we can detect a different accent in his discussion of theology from his pagan contemporaries, to whom he owed a great deal. For many of the philosophers of the period from the first century BC to the second century AD (often loosely called "Middle" Platonists), although there is interest in some single ultimate first principle (the Good or the One), and a strengthened sense of his (or its) difference from the world of change and decay, so that we may speak in connection with them of "monotheism," the ultimate remains a principle, distinct from the multiplicity manifest in the world of everyday reality. The notion of the *Logos* or *Nous*, or some principle bridging the gulf between the realm of multiplicity and the One, becomes, first of all with Philo, a being, even a person, that communicates between the ultimate principle, God, also called the Father. (For Philo, *logos* means not simply reason, but is derived from God as "the one who speaks" – *ho legon* – as his word or communication.) Whatever its background, the Evangelist John's ascription to Christ of the title *Logos* underlines the personal dimension of the intermediary of God the Father, by whom he created the universe and through whom he communicates with human kind.

There were other factors that made Platonism an attractive intellectual partner for early Christian thinkers. Not only did this late form of Platonism adopt a monotheistic stance, but it maintained a firm belief in the notion of divine providence, the notion that God (or the gods) cared for the cosmos, and also held that after this life human beings would be held responsible for their actions in this life, and be rewarded or punished. It is not surprising that many Christians found intellectual allies among thinkers who held to the notion of a moral universe, governed by a single ultimate first principle.

THE FIRST FLOWERING OF GREEK THEOLOGY

In the fourth century, with the peace of the church, we can begin to detect the main contours that came to mark our patristic and Byzantine theology. For the most part this clearer definition of theology came about as a result of controversy; indeed, the whole of the fourth century is often regarded as the period of the Arian controversy, or crisis. This way of putting it probably exaggerates the importance of Arius, but there can be no doubt that Arius sparked off a controversy that lasted throughout the century in different forms and made a lasting mark on Byzantine theology.

The emerging shape of Byzantine theology can be clearly seen in St Athanasius' two-part work, *Against the Pagans* (i.e. the Greeks) and *On the Incarnation*, which is probably early, and bears no particular mark of the Arian controversy. Athanasius casts his presentation of Christianity in the context of creation and fall. Human beings were created in the image of God and thus able to contemplate God. Athanasius is clear that creation means creation out of nothing, with the result that there is a fundamental ontological gulf between God and the cosmos, which is now thought of as the created order. As a result of the fall, which he sees as the failure of human beings to continue in such contemplation of God, they turned to an inward-looking contemplation of themselves, which, as beings created out of nothing, amounts to a return to nothingness, manifest in subjection of corruption and death. From this state they cannot extricate themselves, but are dependent on God's intervention in the event of the incarnation, and especially his overthrow on the cross of death, symbolic of the diminishment and corruption unleashed on the created order by the human failure to continue in contemplation of God. The incarnation and the overthrow of death introduces into human history a new possibility, not just attainment of likeness to God, as envisaged by God in his original creation of humanity in his image, but participation in the life of God himself – deification. The Word of God, as Athanasius says, "became human that we might become divine" (*Incarn.* 54). This understanding of God's engagement with the cosmos, and within that of humanity, as constituting an arc stretching from creation to deification, beneath which is a lesser arc stretching from fall to redemption, remained a fundamental characteristic of Byzantine and Orthodox theology. Other fundamental elements of Byzantine theology can also be traced back to Athanasius, even though they received further development at the hands of his successors. The doctrine of creation out of nothing, with its consequent sense of a fundamental gulf between the uncreated being of God and the created order, is seen to imply that created knowledge of God is ultimately impossible, or only possible as a result of a gift made by God for created humanity. The doctrine of the *homoousios* – that the Trinity consists of three persons of equal being – underlines the incomprehensibility of God's being; there are no lesser, more comprehensible divine beings than God the Father (as Arius seemed to suggest). Athanasius is clear that the Son's being *homoousios* with God the Father entails his incomprehensibility, and later theologians draw an understanding of God in his essence as being fundamentally infinite, and so beyond comprehension.

THEOLOGY AS "APOPHATIC"

As these notions are worked out in patristic and Byzantine thought, a distinction is often made between *theologia* and *oikonomia: theologia* refers to the doctrine of God Himself, and *oikonomia* to God's dealings with the created order, especially in the incarnation. *Theologia*, in this restricted sense, means the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the names (or properties) of God. Within theology in this sense a distinction is further made between kataphatic and apophatic theology, that is between theology that makes affirmation (*kataphasis*) of what is revealed of God through the created order and scripture, and theology that points to the transcendent nature of God by denial (*apophasis*) of any of the concepts or images by which we seek to express an understanding of God. The idea that God is most surely approached by

denial of our concepts and images of him can be traced back to the roots of both the classical tradition (e.g. Plato's assertion that the Idea of the Good is "beyond being and knowledge") and the Hebrew tradition (e.g. God's riddling revelation of himself to Moses as "I am that I am"), and is strongly asserted in the fourth century by the Cappadocian fathers and St John Chrysostom. The terminology of apophatic and kataphatic, in a theological context, is first found in the Neoplatonist Proclus, and was introduced into Christian theology by Dionysius the Areopagite in the sixth century. It quickly became popular in Byzantine theology. Of the two, apophatic theology is understood to be the more fundamental, as undergirding the theology of affirmation, while appearing to undermine it. In the idea that God is most truly known, not in concepts or images that the human mind can grasp, but in a movement beyond them in which God is acknowledged in silent wonder as transcendent, theology as doctrine is united with the notion, more fundamental to the Orthodox mind, of theology as prayer.

The consequences of the conviction of the more fundamental nature of apophatic theology are profound. A realization of the ultimate inadequacy of the human intellect paves the way for a recognition of the place of poetry and imagery of the most diverse kinds in any attempt to express human understanding of the reality of God. It is no coincidence that the great theologian of apophatic theology, Dionysius the Areopagite, speaks not of predicating terms of God, but of praising him by ascribing names to him; nor is it a coincidence that the same theologian devotes much space to exploring the nature of the liturgical action in which the sacraments of the church are celebrated, seeing in this liturgical action a reflection of the heavenly liturgy of the angelic beings. Orthodox tradition grants the title *theologos* to only three people: John the Evangelist, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Simeon the New Theologian. John's Gospel is the one that most aspires to the form of poetry, and the other two "theologians" were both poets. The liturgical poetry of the Orthodox Church is a vast repository of theological reflection: theology presented in the form of song. A further synchronism worth noting is that probably contemporary with the writer who composed the Areopagitical works was the greatest of Byzantine poets, Romanos the Melodist, who expressed his theology in verse sermons, called *kontakia*, and that, in general, the sixth century sees the beginning of various attempts to turn the theology (and often the very language) of theologians such as St Gregory into liturgical song.

THEOLOGICAL DEFINITION

The theology of the Orthodox Church, in the broader sense, including both *theologia* and *oikonomia*, is an attempt to express in terms of Greek intellectual culture the revelation of God that found its fullest form in the incarnation and to which the canonical scriptures bear witness. At its most fundamental level, theology is a sustained meditation on the scriptures, read in a "sophianic" way, that is, read as a confirmation of the witness to God found in the cosmos, created through his wisdom (*sophia*), and especially in the human person created in God's image and likeness. Such an approach finds different levels of meaning in scripture, and sees in the advance through these levels to deeper forms of understanding an adumbration of the Christian life. Christian thinkers departed from such a pondering on scripture only in order to meet challenges from outside, in defending Christianity from attacks

by pagan and Jewish critics, and from within, from heretics. In due course this process led to dogmatic definitions, intended not so much to define what ultimately lies beyond human understanding (in dogmatic theology, too, the apophatic principle applies) as to prevent human misunderstanding of the nature of God and his ways with humanity and the cosmos. The most important of these definitions were endorsed by church councils, or synods, especially "ecumenical" councils (that is, councils concerned with the *oikoumene*, the "inhabited world," that is – with typical Byzantine hubris – the Empire), convoked in Byzantine times by the emperor. The Orthodox Church recognizes seven such ecumenical councils. The decisions of these councils represent for the Orthodox Church a further level of authority, irrefragable, though open to interpretation, beyond that of scripture, on which it reposes. The decisions of the councils themselves make it clear that they represent a crystallization of the authority of the fathers (conciliar definitions are commonly prefaced by the phrase: "following the holy fathers").

The first two ecumenical councils (held at Nicaea in 325 and Constantinople in 381) defined the doctrine of the Trinity, which holds the three persons to be co-equal, the Son and the Spirit each *homoousios* ("consubstantial," i.e. "having the same essence or being") with the Father. The next four councils (Ephesus 431, Chalcedon 451, Constantinople II and III, 553 and 680–81) were principally concerned with defining Orthodox belief in the incarnation, affirming that the Son of God, being the perfect God, assumed a perfect human nature, "*homoousios* with us" and like us in all respects save sin: these two natures (*physeis*) being united in the person (*hypostasis*) of the Son. It is a consequence of this definition that the Virgin Mary is truly *Theotokos* ("one who gave birth to God") and furthermore, as Constantinople III affirmed, that the natures, being perfect, both possess their natural activity (*energeia*) and will (*thelema*). The Seventh Ecumenical Council (Nicaea II, 787) defended the veneration of icons or images of Christ, the Mother of God, and the saints, as entailed by God's assumption of a material human form in the incarnation. The witness of the ecumenical councils is, then, to the fundamental doctrines of *theologia*, the Trinity, and of *oikonomia*, the incarnation, the veneration of icons being regarded as a matter of Christology.

GENRES OF BYZANTINE THEOLOGY

Theological controversy, leading to definition at ecumenical councils, had a lasting effect of the genres of Byzantine theology. Hitherto, theology had taken two fundamental forms: scriptural exposition and polemic, either apologetic (defending the faith against pagans and Jews, initially in the context of persecution) or antiheretical (especially in the fourth and fifth centuries, many theological treatises were directed against heretics: Arians, Eunomians, Apollinarians, Nestorians, and Monophysites). Scriptural exposition took the form of commentaries (both continuous commentaries, working through the books of the bible verse by verse, and commentaries on individual difficult verses – *quaestiones* or *zetemata*, "questions" or "inquiries") and of homilies (sometimes in series, on particular books of the bible, or sermons on individual liturgical feasts, or other occasions, but still in the form of exposition of scripture). Apologetical treatises were originally legal defenses of the right of Christians to exist in an empire that persecuted Christianity, but as such

defenses took the form of presenting Christianity as an acceptable philosophical "school," they soon became repositories for learned discussions of the philosophical doctrines advanced by Christians, with illustrations drawn from classical and Hellenistic philosophers. In this latter form, they continued into the period of the peace of the church and became ways of displaying the classical learning of such Christian thinkers as Eusebius (the church historian) and Theodoret, not to mention Nemesius of Emesa, whose work, *On Human Nature*, transforms the genre of apology into an anthropological treatise (Gregory of Nyssa's closely related *On the Creation of Man* is, by contrast, presented as an exegetical treatise).

The theological controversies that led to conciliar definitions rapidly produced a different genre of theology. As the councils represented their decisions as based on the authority of the fathers, by the end of the fourth century theological controversy takes the form of an appeal to the assertions of the fathers, and by the fifth century collections of extracts from the fathers are being drawn up in defense of the positions being advanced. These collections of extracts are called *florilegia*, and such *florilegia* become an increasingly popular form of theological argument, first in relation to the Christological controversies discussed at the councils from Ephesus to Constantinople II, and later more systematically, producing *florilegia* of patristic texts in relation to Trinitarian theology as well as Christology, and later still in relation to further controversies, such as iconoclasm and the disputes over the procession of the Holy Spirit (the *Filioque* controversy). Collections of quotations needed interpretation, and some of the *florilegia* are accompanied by commentary on the texts cited. As the notion of patristic authority developed, certain of the fathers, particularly Gregory of Nazianzus (the Theologian), attracted extensive commentary in their own right. Gregory's early enthusiasm for Origen, which left its mark on the theology of his homilies, or orations, led to problems in the second Origenist controversy in the fifth century, when Origenists appealed to the Theologian in support of their opinions. We begin to find discussions of particular passages in Gregory's homilies that presented difficulties, and such discussions – ranging from scholia to virtual treatises – come to constitute a genre of theology in themselves, the most famous of which were the *Ambigua*, or "Difficulties," of St Maximus the Confessor in the seventh century. Other theologians received similar treatment, notably Dionysius the Areopagite, whose writings were generally accompanied by scholia, the original group of which was composed by his first editor, the learned sixth-century bishop, John of Scythopolis. Discussions of difficulties in Gregory the Theologian, both brief scholia and substantial treatises, become one of the commonest genres of Byzantine theology, with examples surviving from every century from the seventh to the fourteenth, notable among which are some of the *Amphilochia* of the ninth-century patriarch of Constantinople, Photius, and many of the treatises of the eleventh-century *savant*, Michael Psellos.

TRADITIONS OF BYZANTINE THEOLOGY: THE HUMANIST TRADITION

It is possible to discern several theological traditions in the Byzantine world. First, following on from what we have just mentioned, there is a learned tradition, sometimes called a humanist or lay tradition. This tradition was conscious of the classical

inheritance into which Christian theology entered, and was generally quite positive in its attitude to what came to be called the "outer wisdom," *thyrathen sophia*, in contrast to the "inner wisdom," *eso philosophia*, based on the scriptures. This tradition readily drew on classical philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, as well as the Neoplatonists, especially Plotinus and Proclus. Notable representatives of this tradition include Nemesius of Emesa (fourth century), Photius (ninth century), Michael Psellos (eleventh century), and later figures such as Theodore Metochites, Bessarion, Gemistos Plethon (fourteenth–fifteenth centuries). In the eleventh century, John Italos, a pupil of Psellos and his successor as "consul of the philosophers," was condemned for his dependence on the outer wisdom, and that condemnation was added to the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*, the affirmation of Orthodoxy and condemnation of heresies that is proclaimed on the first Sunday of Lent each year. In the clauses condemning Italos, there are condemned "those who pursue Hellenic learning and are formed by it not simply as an educational discipline, but follow their empty opinions, and believe them to be true, and thus become involved in them, as possessing certainty." Thereafter followers of the outer wisdom could be regarded as outside the bounds of Orthodoxy, though this did not mean that they ceased to exist.

TRADITIONS OF BYZANTINE THEOLOGY: THE MONASTIC TRADITION

Another theological tradition regarded itself as guardian of the inner wisdom: the tradition of monastic wisdom. This tradition evolved its own literary genres, notably the catechesis and the "century." Catecheses were homilies, generally delivered by the abbot to his community, that contained instruction in the monastic life. Very many of these survive. The century was a genre probably invented by Evagrius (d.399) which presented monastic counsel in the form of a series of short paragraphs (generally called "chapters"), a hundred in number. The paragraphs are not generally arranged in any very structured way, though occasionally there is a sequence of a dozen or so paragraphs. Variants on the century include sets of 150 chapters (the number of the Psalms) and one of the most famous compositions of Evagrius himself, *On Prayer*, has 153 chapters, the number of the fish caught by the apostles in the account given in John 21, to which Evagrius in his preface gives an elaborate numerological significance. Centuries are usually concerned with ascetical or mystical questions; how to pray, the stages of prayer, and how to deal with distractions and temptations that prevent prayer. But Maximus uses the century as a way of presenting questions of theological dogma (though in Maximus, as with many Byzantines, it is difficult to separate dogma from prayer), and John of Damascus casts his *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* in the form of a century. Another monastic genre is concerned with solving difficulties, in the scriptures or the fathers, that we have already encountered. Often these discussions of difficulties take the form of letters; sometimes we find the genre of "Question and Answer" (*erotapokriseis*). Another related genre, popular among the monks, was a kind of encyclopedic collection of extracts from scripture and the fathers, mostly covering matters of the ascetic life (e.g. vices and virtues), but sometimes introducing dogmatic theology as well; examples of such works are the *Pandects* of Antiochos, a monk of the Great Lavra at the beginning of the seventh century, and the *Hiera* or *Sacra Parallela* of John Damascene.

This monastic tradition focused on matters directly affecting the spiritual life. These concerned the reality of the experience of God in prayer, and how such experience of the presence of God himself could be reconciled with the apophatic assertion of God's transcendent ineffability. Controversy broke out in the fourteenth century in which solitary monks known as "Hesychasts" (from *hesychia*, meaning stillness), who claimed in prayer to experience transfiguration in the uncreated light of the Godhead, were defended from charges of hallucination by St Gregory Palamas, archbishop of Thessaloníki from 1347 to 1359. Central to Palamas' defense of Hesychasm was his distinction (based on earlier fathers) between God's essence and his activities (or "energies," *energeiai*): both essence and energies are God, and therefore uncreated, but in his essence God is unknowable, whereas in his activities God makes himself known. Palamite doctrine was endorsed by synods held in Constantinople between 1341 and 1351. This controversy is often presented as a struggle between the humanist and the monastic tradition. Recent research, however, shows that the situation cannot be regarded so simplistically.

TRADITIONS OF BYZANTINE THEOLOGY: POLEMICAL THEOLOGY

We have already encountered traditions of polemical theology: apologetic treatises and treatises directed against heretics. From the fourth century onwards, we find systematic treatises dealing with the whole gamut of heresy, the earliest and most influential of which is the *Panarion* (or "Medicine Chest," as it contained antidotes to the various heresies, as well as classifying them) of Epiphanius of Salamis (*c.*315–403). Later examples are *On Heresies* by John of Damascus (the first eighty chapters of which are from an epitome of the *Panarion*), and the *Dogmatic Panoply* of Euthymios Zigabenos (twelfth century) that was later supplemented by the *Treasury of Orthodoxy* of Nicetas Kominatos (d. *c.*1217).

In the course of time, various theological controversies led to the production of polemical treatises. The iconoclast controversy itself (726–842) produced many treatises, on the Orthodox side by John Damascene, patriarchs Germanos and Nikiphoros of Constantinople, and Theodore of Stoudios, which were presumably met by treatises from the iconoclasts themselves, all of which are lost (though Emperor Constantine V's *Inquiries* survives in quotations in refutations of it). The iconoclast controversy also caused controversy over the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, for the iconoclast claim that the true icon of Christ was the Eucharist was met on the Orthodox side by the claim that the Eucharist is not just an image of Christ, but that Christ himself is present in the consecrated bread and wine. This controversy, along with dispute about the nature of the Eucharistic sacrifice, emerged again in the twelfth century. Another controversy we can trace through the centuries concerned the doctrine of the Trinity and the meaning of the words of the Lord in John's Gospel, "The Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). This controversy was probably sparked off by Gregory the Theologian's discussion of this text in *Oratio* 29; its progress can be traced through Photius, Simeon the New Theologian, Michael Psellos, into the twelfth century, when it became the subject of synodal decisions and incorporated into the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*.

As the centuries progressed, however, the main topic of polemical theology became the issues associated with the growing estrangement between Eastern and

Western Christendom. The most fundamental theological issue was the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit: whether he proceeded from the Father "alone," as Photius defined it in the ninth century, or from the Son also (*filioque*), as the West came to affirm. Other issues that became contentious between East and West were the question of whether the bread used in the Eucharist was to be leavened (the Eastern practice) or unleavened (the Western practice) – the issue of *azyma* – and later on the question of the existence of purgatory.

Another aspect of the engagement that took place between Eastern and Western theology as a result of attempts to restore union between the churches was the late availability of Latin texts in Greek translation. At the end of the thirteenth century, Augustine's *On the Trinity* was made available in Greek in a translation by Maximos Planoudis. In the next century, some of the works of Thomas Aquinas were translated into Greek, beginning with a translation of the *Summa contra Gentiles* by Demetrios Kydones. The results of the availability of such works in the Byzantine Empire have not yet been thoroughly studied, but older ideas that these Latin treatises provoked a crisis in Byzantine theology in which the "Byzantine Thomists" found supporters among the representatives of the "humanist" tradition, while such Western influence was opposed by the monastic party, seems at least simplistic, if not simply false. Scholastic methods were greeted with both mistrust and enthusiasm, both by those who supported Palamas and those who rejected him. Palamite theology could be defended by those who embraced Aquinas and Aristotle, and mistrust of scholastic methods could be found among those who opposed him. It is probably fair to say, however, that the reading of Latin theology in the Byzantine Empire contributed to the Palaeologan renaissance in theology.

TRADITIONS OF BYZANTINE THEOLOGY: LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

Another significant tradition in Byzantine theology concerns the interpretation of the Eucharistic liturgy. The earliest examples of such interpretation can be found in the mystagogical treatises of the fourth century, for the Greek East, especially those by Cyril of Jerusalem and John Chrysostom. The liturgy permeates the theology of Dionysius the Areopagite, and one of his treatises, the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, takes the form of commentary on various liturgical rites. In the next century, Maximus the Confessor's *Mystagogia* gives an elaborate interpretation of the divine liturgy, relating it to the individual life of prayer, as well as to the deification of the cosmos. In the eighth century, Germanos' *Ecclesiastical History and Mystical Contemplation* (probably better rendered into English as "What Happens in Church and Its Hidden Significance") became an authoritative exposition of the significance of the divine liturgy, and was later supplemented with passages from Maximus' *Mystagogia*; in this expanded form it was sometimes reproduced as a preface to the *Hieratikon*, the priest's book for the liturgy.

More broadly, however, the way in which theological homilies were pillaged for material that would be used as liturgical poetry points to another genre of liturgical theology: the liturgical texts themselves. These texts are often very precise and detailed in the way they set out theology and were clearly intended, as theology in song, to make accessible the riches of the Byzantine theological tradition to many

who could not read, but could learn to sing the texts used in the church services. It is significant that the great epitomizer of the tradition of Byzantine dogmatic theology, John of Damascus, is also regarded as the most important of the liturgical poets. The Easter canon, and many other canons, are probably rightly ascribed to him, and the (unlikely) ascription to him of the basic liturgical text, the *Paraklitiki*, is evidence of the regard in which he was held by the Byzantine tradition.

AFTER THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1453)

After the fall of Constantinople to the Turks, the humanist tradition crumbled, having no institutional basis in the Ottoman Empire. Many of the humanists migrated to the West, where they found a mixed welcome. The Orthodox tradition was preserved by the monks, though even among them there was much discouragement. Orthodox theology fared badly. The Slavs, and ultimately the Grand Princedom of Moscow, began to take the lead in the Orthodox world, but among the Slavs, because of the "linguistic filter," the high theological culture of the Byzantines was largely inaccessible. After the Reformation in the West, the Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire found themselves drawn into the theological controversies of the West. Cyril Loukaris, several times patriarch of Constantinople, found the theology of Calvin in many ways congenial and opened up relationships with the Protestant churches in the West. In 1629 there was published a *Confessio fidei*, to which Cyril appended his signature. This interpreted the Orthodox faith in thoroughly Calvinist terms, and led to a reaction led by Peter Mohyla, Metropolitan of Kiev, and later Dositheos, patriarch of Jerusalem. At a synod held in Iaşi (1642), the *Orthodox Confession* of Peter Mohyla was ratified, which presented Orthodox theology in terms much closer to post-Tridentine Catholicism; at the Synod of Jerusalem (1672), this position was again ratified. It is the general opinion among modern Orthodox theologians that these attempts to present Orthodox theology in the context of the Reformation debates led to an entanglement in the concepts and terminology of Western theology.

The history of Greek theology after the "Symbolic Books" (as the treatises associated with the synods of Iaşi and Jerusalem are called) is largely concerned with the recovery of Greek identity under the Ottomans, which culminated in the independence of the Greek nation in the nineteenth century. Early figures associated with this recovery are Eugenios Voulgaris (1716–1806) and Nikiphoros Theotokis (1731–1800), but probably more influential in the long run for the renewal of Orthodox theology in modern times, was the publication of the *Philokalia* in 1782 by St Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain and St Macarius of Corinth. This anthology of largely ascetic writings from the fathers, notably St Maximus the Confessor and St Gregory Palamas, soon translated in Slavonic and Russian, was to have a profound effect on the future of Orthodox theology. Initially its influence was mainly felt in the Slav world, but in the twentieth century it became emblematic of the return to the fathers, that has marked much Orthodox theology in the twentieth century.

The concern for the nature of Greek identity remained important for the development of Greek theology in the newly independent Greece. Initially, the sense of Greek identity was modeled on Western patterns; in overturning dependence on the Ottomans, it was very natural to seek for models of Greek identity in the new Western world to which Greece sought to belong. It was in accordance with such a

notion of Greek identity, that Greek theology was revived in the universities established in Greece, along with independence: the University of Athens founded in 1837 and the University of Thessaloníki in 1925 (though not operational until 1941–42). Both these universities had theological faculties, conceived on the German model. Not surprisingly this led to the production of tomes of dogmatic theology, very much on the German model, systematic in arrangement, the system being borrowed from the German equivalents and so ultimately tracing their lineage back to the *summae* of medieval scholasticism. The most famous and influential of these dogmatic theologies was that written by Christos Androutsos (1869–1935), and the most recent that by Panayiotis Trembelas (1886–1977). Such theology was rather different in conception from the attempts at refashioning Orthodox theology among the Russian diaspora in the West, for many of the Russians had had a strong sense that the challenge of the diaspora required more than an attempt to preserve the models of the past (which had been heavily indebted to the West since the reforms of Peter the Great). The most influential movement in the Russian diaspora was what Fr Georges Florovsky (1893–1979) called the "Neopatristic synthesis," the best exponent of which was Vladimir Lossky (1903–58). This approach to Orthodox theology found favor among theologians in Romania and Serbia, notable among whom were the Romanian archpriest Dumitru Stăniloae (1903–93) and the Serbian archimandrite Justin Popović (1897–1979).

From about the 1960s onwards, this approach makes itself felt in Greece. Theologians such as John Romanides, John Zizioulas, Christos Yannaras, Panayiotis Nellas, George Mantzaridis, and the Athonite monk, Archimandrite Vasileios, abbot of Stavronikita, can be seen as representatives of the neopatristic synthesis. In some cases one can see the influence of the theologians of the Russian diaspora: Zizioulas wrote a doctoral thesis under Fr Georges Florovsky, while Yannaras spent time in Paris, also writing a doctoral thesis. It is possible, too, to trace this theological revival back to the recovery of a sense of Greek identity, as Greece became liberated from the Turkish yoke. Only this time the sense of Greek identity was not one modeled on the West; on the contrary, this model of Greek identity looks back to how Orthodox Christianity had been preserved under the Ottomans, and had a distinctly anti-Western agenda. Yannaras, in his survey of the history of Greek theology in the modern period from the Middle Ages onwards, *Orthodoxy and the West* (2006), traces a line of descent from the Greek short-story writer, Alexandros Papadiamantis, through other writers and artists such as Kontoglou, Pikionis, Pentzikis, and others, who sought to recover the authentic Greek tradition that had been preserved in the villages during the Ottoman period, through their way of life impregnated by the rhythms of the liturgy and the church year, far better than among the intellectuals. Central to this theology is a sense of the person, as opposed to the individual, formed in the communion that exists in the church, and expressed in freedom and love. This entailed an ecclesiology very different from what had been customary in the Orthodox world under the Byzantines, who had thought of a kind of harmony, *symphonia*, between church and state. Greek theologians like John Romanides, John Zizioulas, Christos Yannaras, looked back behind the conversion of Constantine to the way the church had fashioned itself under persecution, to the church as a community gathered under a bishop, marked by its celebration of the divine liturgy of the Eucharist. There developed what has come to be called a "eucharistic ecclesiology."

Similar developments had taken place in the Russian diaspora (associated particularly with the name of Fr Nikolai Afanasiev), though it is not clear how far this common ecclesiology was a matter of parallel development or of dependence. On another level, there can be discerned different attempts to bypass the theology of being that had captured the thought of the West from the time of scholasticism, if not earlier, and return to a theology of existence (this was hardly uninfluenced by the popularity of "existentialism" in the West in the mid-twentieth century). In this way the twin errors of intellectualism and pietism that are held to characterize the West, and cast their shadow over much Orthodox theology in the past, can be overcome.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE RUSSIAN TRADITION

Vera Shevzov

Historical and theological in its dimensions, the notion of tradition in Eastern Orthodoxy encompasses a broad range of topics, including scripture, patristic literature, the ecumenical councils, and canon law. Insofar as it is lived and understood to involve personal encounter with "the holy," tradition also incorporates liturgy and sacraments, hymnody and prayer, and the veneration of icons and saints. In this sense, the Russian tradition historically has been as dynamic and changing as it has been preoccupied with preservation and continuity. Although for all practical purposes tradition is an insider's project, not all insiders to the Russian tradition have historically been unanimous with regard to that tradition's definition, meaning, and function. While in any given period Orthodox believers in Russia might have agreed upon the main components of tradition, they did not always agree on the principles of interpretation or on the essential features of its authentic expression. Consequently, while to outsiders the Russian tradition has often appeared conservative, unchanging, and even backward, on closer investigation, that tradition as lived and practiced, experienced and contemplated, has often proven creative, variable, and semantically nuanced.

Orthodox Christians in Russia historically have identified their faith – *Pravoslavie* – with "truth," both with respect to the content of that faith and with respect to the way in which that faith has been expressed in written, visual, and symbolic forms. The history of *pravoslavie* or "right worship" in Russia is a history of the attempt to interpret, preserve, and live that faith as "rightly" as possible. As the church historian and professor at the St Petersburg Theological Academy, A. P. Lopukhin (d.1904), noted, "highly valuing tradition, the Russian people received Orthodoxy not in order to develop it, but to preserve it from the intrusion of foreign elements" (1885: 677). Indeed, Russia's Orthodox faithful – clergy and laity alike – historically have exerted enormous energy on preserving "right worship" and "right faith," though often not agreeing on what constitutes or best guarantees the "rightness" of that faith.

Traced to its beginnings in the ninth century, the history of Orthodox Christianity in Russia does not follow the typical periodization of the history of Christianity in the West – namely, the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment.

Instead, historians have usually organized the history of Orthodoxy in Russia around the political centers to which Orthodox Christianity in that nation has been closely tied. Because of this, scholars have never reached a definitive consensus on the periodization in the history of Russian Orthodoxy (*Pravoslavnaia entsiklopediia*, Orthodox Russian Church 2000: 26–31). The Orthodox Church in contemporary Russia tends to trace its past through six periods: (1) 988–1448; (2) 1448–1589; (3) 1589–1700; (4) 1700–1917; (5) 1917–88; (6) 1988 to the present. In this chapter, we will follow this chronological order.

988–1448: BYZANTINE FOUNDATIONS

From the time of its introduction in the ninth and tenth centuries until the mid-fifteenth century, Orthodox Christianity in Russia was institutionally reliant on Constantinople. Prior to 1448, the patriarch of Constantinople appointed the metropolitans of Rus', the majority of whom were Greeks – an arrangement that underscores the formative role that Byzantine Orthodoxy played in the history of Russian Orthodoxy.

The history of Orthodoxy in Russia is associated with two foundational narratives. The first relates to its apostolic roots. According to one of the most important sources for Orthodoxy in early Russian history, the twelfth-century *Primary Chronicle*, the Apostle Andrew, the brother of the Apostle Peter, visited the port city of Kherson and from there proceeded to Kyiv and Novgorod before traveling to Rome (Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1953: 53–54). Despite the lack of historical evidence supporting this story, church historians in modern Russia nevertheless often incorporated it into their studies, thereby perpetuating belief in the apostolic foundations of the Russian Church (Bulgakov 1913/1993: 482).

The second narrative relates the baptism of the Grand Prince of Kyiv, Vladimir, in 988 – a conversion that according to the *Primary Chronicle* was motivated primarily by military and political considerations. Although Rus' adopted Orthodox Christianity on a wide scale only after the conversion of the Grand Prince Vladimir, Byzantine missionaries had been active in the territories around the Black Sea more than a century earlier (Obolensky 1971: 238–58; Birnbaum 1993: 57; van den Bercken 1999: 7–41; Majeska 2005). In 955–56, the grandmother of Grand Prince Vladimir, Princess Olga of Kyiv, "who always sought wisdom" and "who was wiser than all other men," traveled to Constantinople and was baptized by Patriarch Polyeuctus in the presence of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus (Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1953: 82–83; Butler 2008).

Russia inherited Byzantine Orthodoxy primarily in the vernacular, in the Slavonic script associated with the missionary work of the brothers Cyril and Methodius of Thessalonica. Byzantine missionaries did not equate Christianization with Hellenization; the classics of the Hellenic world and Roman antiquity, therefore, remained outside of Russia's cultural domain. Yet the ecclesiastical use of the vernacular meant that Russia's Orthodox inheritance was accessible to a broader range of the population and more easily assimilated than it would have been had the primary liturgical and biblical language remained Greek. Since Russia's inheritance of Orthodox Christianity came by means of translators, who were for the most part Bulgarians, scholars have suggested it might be more accurate to speak of Russia's Bulgaro-Byzantine inheritance than simply a Byzantine one (Majeska 1990: 27).

Russia's reception of foundational Christian texts, including scripture and patristic writings, was also significant for the history of Orthodoxy in Russia. Although all four Gospel texts circulated in Russia by the twelfth century, if not earlier, they were not received as a single book. Rather, they circulated as parts of miscellanies that included different types of works, including monastic rules, homilies, patristic texts, hagiographic literature, and apocryphal writings. In their arrangement, these compilations made little distinction between authoritative and non-authoritative texts. Consequently, Russia's Byzantine literary inheritance was not only fragmentary – including select writings from major authors such as Athanasius of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Ephrem the Syrian, John Chrysostom, John of Damascus – but also largely authoritatively leveled (Thomson 1978; Mil'kov 1999: 19).

Liturgy also figured prominently in Russia's assimilation of Orthodox Christianity. Sources say little about the earliest liturgical celebrations in Rus', though scholars presume that until the eleventh century, when new translations appeared in Kyiv, liturgical services were conducted primarily with south Slavic translations of Greek texts, and in some instances even in Greek. Until the fifteenth century, the Russian Church followed the order of services prescribed by the Studite Typikon. Divine Liturgies followed the rite of St John Chrysostom and, on prescribed days, that of St Basil the Great or the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. Russia also inherited a full calendar of feast days. The earliest native feasts introduced into the liturgical calendar in the eleventh century included one honoring the earliest saints canonized in Russia, the so-called passion-bearers Boris and Gleb, sons of the Grand Prince Vladimir. Liturgically, the second half of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries also witnessed the end of a unified calendar. The gradual evolution of more local calendars began to appear as Orthodoxy spread to Russia's northern regions (Bosley 1997: 32).

During these formative centuries, several events influenced the future character of the Orthodox tradition in Russia. First, less than a century after Rus' officially entered into the fold of the Byzantine commonwealth, the historical paths of Christianity in the West and East began to diverge at an accelerated rate. By virtue of its identification with the Christian East, Russia would remain on the periphery of European civilization. Second, the problem of the cultural distance between Russia and Europe was compounded in the early thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth century (1237–1448), when Russia found itself under Mongol rule. Finally, Mongol rule prompted the metropolitans of Rus' to move their primary residence north, first to Vladimir then to Moscow (Pelenski 1993). This shift in the metropolitan's residence marked "a bifurcation" between Muscovy in the north and Ukrainian and Belarusian regions in the south-west (Lur'e 2009: 17–20). Since the history of the western principalities became intertwined with Poland and Lithuania, which from the late fourteenth century became a single commonwealth with Roman Catholic leaders, the history of the relationship between Moscow and this territory inherently involved the West, particularly Rome.

Despite the cultural and political pressures confronting Russia from the East and West, the mid-fourteenth through mid-fifteenth centuries marked a period of significant development in the history of Orthodox spirituality, especially with regard to monasticism and iconography. As with other expressions of Orthodoxy, monasticism came to Russia by means of texts – such as the *Spiritual Meadow* by John Moschus (d.619) and the *Sinai Patericon* (eleventh century) – and through personal encounters.

Monks routinely traveled to Russia from the Christian East and believers from Russia traveled to Mount Athos, Constantinople, and Palestine. Though sources are scarce, scholars speculate that Russia's first monastic communities were either houses established by grand princes primarily for members of princely families or individual cells established near a parish church.[1] The Monastery of the Kyiv Caves, associated with the names of Antony (d.1073) and Theodosius (d.1091), was the first major monastic community in Rus'. According to the *Primary Chronicle*, Antony was a layman who was tonsured a monk during his pilgrimage to Mount Athos and who was directed to return to live a monastic life in Kyiv. Initially following the eremitic way, like his namesake St Anthony of Egypt, he soon attracted followers. The monastery's co-founder, Theodosius, a close disciple of Antony's, preferred the coenobitic model of monasticism and subsequently introduced the Studite rule into their community.[2]

Beginning in the second half of the fourteenth century, monasticism in Russia began to flourish. Russia's monastic population grew to include 150 new communities by the mid-fifteenth century. Among the most famous were the monasteries of St Cyril-Belozersk, Valaam on Lake Ladoga, and Solovkii. The founders of these and other communities were indebted to the efforts of Sergius of Radonezh (d.1392) and the community of the Holy Trinity he established outside of Moscow.

The flourishing of monasticism during this period accompanied a golden age in Russian iconography. Along with textual sources, Russia's Byzantine inheritance included the icon, which served as a source of knowledge and revelation, and a means of communication and transmission of faith. Icons were simultaneously testimonies to the faith of the past and witnesses to a living faith in the present. Accordingly, the culture of icon veneration in Russia included "lives" (*skazaniia*) of icons – accounts of their involvement in the lives of individuals, families, communities, and even the Russian nation as a whole. Icons became perhaps the most characteristic feature of Russia's Orthodox culture. The depth of Russia's native assimilation of the Byzantine iconographic heritage over the first three centuries was especially evident in the late fourteenth century and early fifteenth century in the work of Andrei Rublev (1360–1430). A little more than a century later, a Russian Church Council in 1551 declared Rublev's work as the standard to emulate.

The monastic and iconographic revivals from the mid-fourteenth to mid-fifteenth centuries can be traced to broader trends in the Orthodox world. Scholars have looked to the Hesychast movement taking place on Mount Athos and to the south Slavic monasteries that had close ties with Mount Athos as sources of inspiration for both renewals. The number of Byzantine literary texts available in translation in Russia doubled during this period, and included those by such renowned spiritual masters as Gregory of Sinai, Simeon the New Theologian, and Isaac the Syrian (Meyendorff 1989: 129). Moreover, the Athonite influence spread to the liturgical realms as well. Following the lead of Constantinople, Serbia, and Bulgaria, Russia in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century gradually and without any resistance also adopted the Jerusalem Typicon, which eventually eclipsed its Studite predecessor.

1448–1589: AUTONOMY AND CONSOLIDATION

The years 1448–1589 mark the establishment of autocephaly of the Russian Church and its growing self-perception as the center of Orthodoxy in the Christian East.

Until 1448, despite Russia's sporadic attempts to pressure the patriarch of Constantinople into appointing a metropolitan from among Russia's own native ranks, most appointees remained Greek. The occasion for a shift in this practice was the Council of Ferrara-Florence, held in 1438–39. In hopes of gaining western aid in stemming the relentless pressure of the Turks, both the patriarch and the emperor of Constantinople supported the union between the Eastern and Western churches that this council endorsed. Once the Byzantine-appointed Greek metropolitan to Rus', Isidore, brought the news of the Union to Moscow in 1441, Moscow's reaction was swift. According to Russian sources, in attempts to protect the purity of the faith, Grand Prince Vasily II, along with a council of bishops, condemned the Union; Isidore barely escaped alive. Having received no metropolitan as a replacement from Constantinople and pressed by complications of a civil war on the home front, Grand Prince Vasily II convened a council in 1448, which elected Jonah, the bishop of Riazan, to the metropolitan see in Moscow (Alef 1961). While not all Russian clergymen supported this decision, the move was subsequently justified in Russian eyes by the fall of Constantinople in 1453, an event which they interpreted as divine punishment for "having yielded to the seductions of the Latin heresies" (van den Bercken 1999: 135–37). Faced with a new geopolitical reality, the patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremias II, acquiesced to the new arrangement only in 1589. During a visit to Moscow in search of financial support, he presided over the installation of Metropolitan Job as patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'. A subsequent council in Constantinople recognized the patriarchate of Moscow as fifth in ranking after the sees of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem in the Orthodox world – the so called "five senses" of the church (Uspenskii 1998: 87–88).

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 and Russia's concurrent move toward autocephaly contributed to political consolidation and to the development of a collective Orthodox identity based on the awareness that Moscow was the only remaining politically independent metropolitanate in the Orthodox *oikoumene*. The formulation of the idea of Moscow as the "Third Rome" was part of a broader trend in Russian historical thought which, since the eleventh century, had sought to incorporate Russia into a narrative of world history.[3] Associated primarily with the monk Filofei from the Eleazarov Monastery in Pskov in the early sixteenth century, this idea was inseparable from understandings of history and tradition, loyalty, and purity of faith. "Rome," in this context, embodied primarily a religious ideal, a symbol of the center of a Christian world. The first Rome, according to Filofei, fell with the reign of Charlemagne, who, from the Byzantine perspective, compromised the unity of the Christian world through his papal crowning as emperor of the Romans; the second Rome, Constantinople, fell in 1453 as a consequence of betrayal of faith at the Council of Ferrara-Florence. According to Filofei, now "Moscow alone shines over all the earth more radiantly than the sun" because of its fidelity to the faith (Sinitsyna 1998: 336–46). The marriage of Grand Prince Ivan III to Sophia Palaiologina, niece of the last Byzantine emperor, as well as Muscovy's defeat of the Tatars, reinforced this self image. The notion of Moscow as a new Rome – as the universal center of Christianity and a center of uncompromised faith – was intrinsically tied with the notion of a new Jerusalem (Uspenskii 1996; Raba 1995; Rowland 1996; Averintsev 1989: 40, 43). While Russian thinkers might have considered

Moscow as a new Rome and a new Jerusalem, their patriarch nevertheless remained fifth in rank among the eastern patriarchs.

The church's newly acquired autonomous position vis-à-vis Constantinople following 1453 signaled a reversal in its relations with respect to the state. No longer appointed by distant patriarchs who had their own missionary and political agendas, Moscow's metropolitan (and later, patriarch) faced a more complex relationship with the ruling Grand Prince (and later, tsar). Tensions in ecclesial vision with regard to the state emerged in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries between the so-called Possessors and Non-possessors. The former was linked primarily to the monk Joseph of Volotsk (1439–1515), who identified ecclesiastical landholdings and splendor with ecclesial health and supported the church's strong involvement in the state. The latter identified primarily with the monk Nil of Sora (1433–1508), who associated monasticism with simplicity, opposed monastic landholding (except for charity purposes), and was much more guarded against the church's involvement in state affairs (Goldfrank 2000; Ostrowski 1986). With both men having shared many of the same spiritual ideals, and with both men eventually becoming canonized, the ecclesial sensibilities attributed to both Joseph and Nil – reminiscent of those associated with the notions of empire and desert in Christianity during late antiquity – continue to persist in Orthodoxy in Russia to this day (Florovsky 1974; Fefelov et al. 2009).

Consolidation and standardization of Orthodoxy in Russia continued during this period, with the Archbishop of Novgorod Gennadii's compilation of the first full Church Slavonic Bible in 1499, termed "the single most influential manuscript for the entire medieval Slavic world" (Cooper 2003: 134). A half century later, the work of the Council of 1551, the "Stoglav" or Council of "One Hundred Chapters," addressed the lack of uniformity and often disorder in existing ecclesial practices (Emchenko 2000; Kollmann 1978). Overseen by Tsar Ivan IV and Metropolitan Makarii of Moscow (1482–1563), the council made decisions concerning a wide array of issues ranging from liturgical practices, icons, and translations of sacred texts to church organization, monastic discipline, and clerical and lay behavior. Liturgical developments at this time also reflect this broader movement to gather and consolidate. On the one hand, the end of Tatar rule, the autonomy of the metropolitan see, and the emergence of the primacy of Muscovy among Russia's vying principalities lent the stabilization that allowed for the proliferation of local feasts. On the other hand, the Orthodox Church in Russia at this time made its first attempts to incorporate these local feasts into a single standardized liturgical calendar. The culmination of this effort came in the monumental, twelve-volume work by Metropolitan Makarii, the *Velikii Minei-Chetii* (Great monthly readings or menology), in which he collected "all holy books . . . available in the Russian land" – a compendium of lives of saints and other devotional and pedagogical writings that were influential in shaping the narrative tradition of Russian Orthodoxy (Miller 1979).

1589–1700: DIVISION AND SCHISM

Commencing with the consecration of the first patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' and ending with the death of Patriarch Adrian (1627–1700), the tenth and last patriarch of Russia until the early twentieth century, the late sixteenth and seventeenth

centuries are noteworthy for two related divisions within the Russian tradition. The first took place in the western borderland regions, and the second in Muscovy. Both divisions had long-lasting consequences.

While the see in Moscow maintained its independence from Constantinople after 1448, the metropolitanate in Kyiv, which oversaw the Ukrainian and Belarussian territories, remained a part of the patriarchate of Constantinople. Orthodoxy in these south-western regions, consequently, followed its own historical trajectory. Orthodox Christians who were incorporated into a united Polish and Lithuanian state following 1569 lived in a religiously diverse environment shaped by strong Roman Catholic influences. Intermarriage was not uncommon between Orthodox Christians and Roman Catholics and Protestants, as well as Orthodox conversions to both. In order to retain their identities, Orthodox Christians in this region developed two strategies. Laity generally led the first strategy, which involved the development of local brotherhoods who sought to revitalize Orthodox parish life and strengthen Orthodox identity by means of education. The most notable example of such activity was that of Prince Konstantin Konstantinovich of Ostrog (1527–1608), who established an academy on his estate, and who eventually produced the first printed version of the Church Slavonic Bible, based on the work of Archbishop Gennadii from Novgorod almost a century earlier. With the support of the patriarch of Constantinople, lay activists such as the Prince of Ostrog often found themselves at odds with their local bishops, who, they sometimes felt, were more preoccupied with securing the political status of their Latin counterparts than with maintaining the integrity of the Orthodox faith (Skinner 2009: 18–41).

The hierarchy largely pursued the second strategy, which involved the empowerment of Orthodox bishops. In order to help secure their political rights with respect to their Roman Catholic counterparts and their authority amid a strong flock, many Orthodox hierarchs turned to Rome for support. By anchoring themselves with Rome, Orthodox bishops in this region hoped to gain a political and social voice as well as to re-establish their authority. A union with Rome was ratified at a council held in the city of Brest in 1596. The resulting Uniate or Eastern Rite Church retained the liturgical and sacramental practices of the Eastern Orthodox Church (including the custom of married clergy), yet institutionally aligned itself with Rome. Deep divisions followed between those Orthodox who supported the Union and those who did not. Tensions between Orthodox and Uniate communities have continued in Russia's western border regions to this day.

The legacy of Peter Mohyla (1596–1647), an archimandrite from the Monastery of the Kyiv Caves who in 1632 filled the re-established Orthodox metropolitan see in Kyiv, reflected the complexities of Orthodox life in the western borderland regions (Meyendorff 1985; Ševčenko 1984). Raised in Poland and having studied abroad, Mohyla was deeply impressed by the rigors of the Roman Catholic Church's educational system. Convinced that Orthodoxy's relevance and integrity in the diverse religious culture in which he lived depended on the ability of its members to be conversant in the cultural language and thought forms of their western counterparts, Mohyla became committed to far-reaching educational reforms. The Kyivan center of learning (eventually called the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy) established a curriculum that included Greek, Slavonic, and Latin learning. Well versed in Roman Catholic theology, both Mohyla and his graduates elicited criticism, not only from some of

their contemporaries, but also later from some Orthodox church historians, for having "tainted" Orthodoxy with pro-Catholic or pro-Uniate leanings. Nevertheless, the highly educated graduates of the Kyiv Academy were sought after as translators, scholars, and hierarchs, not only in Kyiv but in Muscovy. Indeed, Mohyla's academy was the first academic institution among the Orthodox Slavs (Thomson 1993).

On the heels of the establishment of the Kyiv Academy, Muscovy became embroiled in the so-called Old Believers schism which continues to this day (Kapterev 1909–12; Meyendorff 1991; Michels 1999; Zenkovsky 1970). Ostensibly, the issues at stake concerned the correction of sacred texts and liturgical reforms. Mistranslations, variations, and scribal errors had been a perennial concern among Orthodox churchmen in Russia. Moreover, differences between Russian, Ukrainian, and Greek practices in the seventeenth century begged questions regarding authenticity with respect to forms of faith, at least in the eyes of two major figures at this time, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich (d.1676) and patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Nikon (Minin). The fact that Orthodox Christians living in the south-western regions, including those affiliated with the Kyiv Academy, followed contemporary Greek practices made Muscovy's texts and certain rituals appear anomalous. Although Patriarch Nikon looked to the Greeks as exemplars of "right worship," Greeks had ceased to command the trust they once enjoyed in Russia as guardians of the ancient faith.

Consequently, Patriarch Nikon's mid-seventeenth-century efforts to correct translations and institute liturgical reforms that would coordinate Russia's practices with those of its Greek counterparts were not unanimously accepted. Patriarch Nikon's detractors, such as the Archpriest Avvakum, accused him of "defiling the faith" and "pouring wrathful fury upon the Russian land" (Bronstrom 1979: 39). Reluctance to accept the reforms had to do largely with Patriarch Nikon's own administrative style. Initially trusted by the young Tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich, Nikon wielded his authority in such a way as to alienate fellow churchmen and state officials. Moreover, the Greek texts to which Nikon and his supporters turned as a basis for textual correction and liturgical standardization were revised ones printed in Venice and in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. As a result, many Orthodox churchmen opposed the reforms, maintaining that Nikon's initiatives were based on compromised texts to begin with. The ensuing changes thus challenged notions of authority, definitions of authenticity and tradition, and the meaning of ritual. The result was a long-lasting schism, which, according to Russian thinkers such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn, weakened the Orthodox Church in Russia from within and paved the way for the fateful revolutions of 1917.

Although linked, Patriarch Nikon and the reforms he implemented suffered separate fates. With the participation of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich and the patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria, a church council in 1666–67 deposed and condemned Nikon for his "papal" theocratic tendencies. The same council upheld the liturgical reforms, despite the fact that countless Orthodox Christians – clergy and laity – opposed them. Those who resisted the new practices – the so-called Old Believers or Old Ritualists – were initially persecuted; many fled to live in remote areas. Never entirely unified, the dissenters split into various groups, with the main lines of division falling between those who maintained an episcopal hierarchy and ordained priests (*popovtsy*) and those who did not (*bezpopovtsy*). Generally seen as potentially subversive by the state and as hopelessly obscurantist by many church officials,

the Old Believers often enjoyed more respect among the population at large (Crummey 1993).

The fall of Constantinople and subsequent intensification of Russia's engagement with the West from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries has led many scholars to speak of a major reorientation in Russia's Orthodox tradition during this period. Writing from the perspective of the history of iconography, Leonid Ouspensky (1992: 288) dates this "reorientation of Russia toward the sphere of western culture" to the fifteenth century. In the realm of theology, Florovsky points to "pseudomorphosis" – a "fissure in the soul of the East" – which he traces to the seventeenth century.[4] In many ways, such interpretations suggest more about a scholar's personal attitudes towards the notions of Byzantine East and Christian West than about the Russian tradition as such.[5] The post-Byzantine period in the history of Orthodoxy in Russia, whether in the sphere of thought or practice, was characterized less by a dramatic turn away from its Byzantine patristic roots than by a more complex and often nuanced blend of both Western and Byzantine religious and philosophical influences that made the Russian Orthodox tradition uniquely its own.

1700–1917: LOOKING WEST – THE SYNODAL PERIOD

If prior to the fifteenth century Russia was religiously oriented primarily toward Byzantium, by the eighteenth century, its cultural orientation became more varied. On the one hand, Russia's official culture was poised westward, toward Europe. As Vasilii Zenkovsky (1881–1962), a professor of psychology and philosophy and subsequently a priest, wrote in 1923 regarding the imperial period, "We not only nourished ourselves on European culture . . . but became not the least of participants in its creativity."[6] On the other hand, as Dmitrii Likhachev (1906–99), a renowned scholar of Old Russian literature, argued, it is more accurate to view Peter I as having divided Russia into two potent streams – the official, western stream and the Orthodox-oriented old Russian stream – both of which were equally influential in shaping Russia's Orthodox spiritual, liturgical, theological, and institutional heritage (Likhachev 2006).

Although shifts in Russia's cultural orientation can be traced to the late fifteenth century, very often scholars give credit for that shift to the Emperor Peter the Great (1682–1725), in part because of the all-consuming nature of his project and the broad secularizing trends he introduced. Some scholars have considered the reign of Peter the Great pivotal to the point of presenting the history of the Russian tradition in terms of "before Peter" and "after Peter" (Zernov 1952).

Following the death of Patriarch Adrian in 1700, the young emperor Peter chose not to allow the election of a new patriarch and instead, drawing on educated clergy from the Ukraine, appointed Stefan Iavorskii from the Kyiv Academy as locum tenens. Motivated by a desire to establish a modern European state and to harness Russia's resources – including the church – to the success of that project, the young emperor approached the church not as a believer, but as a secular statesman. For him, an authentic Orthodoxy was one that served the "common good" as he defined it and that was presentable among westerners. Moreover, informed by the experiences of his father, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, with Patriarch Nikon, and by his own experiences with Patriarch Adrian, Peter sought to make sure that the authority of

the monarch could never become compromised by a prelate. Consequently, inspired by models of church–state relations to which he had been introduced in the West, he brought the institutional structure of the Orthodox Church in Russia in line with other ministries within the state. Penned by the Ukrainian Feofan Prokopovich (1681–1736), a revered teacher of the Kyiv Academy and eventual archbishop of Novgorod, Peter the Great's *Spiritual Regulation* (*Dukhovnyi reglament*) effectively did away with a legal recognition of the church's separation from the state (Cracraft 1971; Muller 1972; Verkhovskoi 1916/1972; Zhivov 2004).[7] In lieu of a patriarch, the church was now overseen by an ober-procurator, an appointed lay bureaucrat who reported directly to the emperor, as well as by a permanent council, the "Most Holy Governing Synod," consisting of appointed bishops, monks, and priests. These church reforms inaugurated the so-called Synodal period in the history of Orthodoxy in Russia, which spanned from 1721 to the end of the *ancien régime* in 1917.

The church reforms of Peter the Great were significant on several levels. Notably, Russia remained alone among the modern Eastern Orthodox churches without a patriarch. The reforms also affected monastic life. Desiring to make monasticism socially more useful and to tap monastic resources for the good of the state, Peter set into motion the processes that eventually led to the large-scale secularization of monastic landholdings in 1764 during the reign of Catherine the Great. In return for state appropriation of church landholdings, monastic communities became highly regulated and received state funds for support. From 1701 to 1850, some 822 monasteries were closed.[8]

Peter similarly desired to bring order to the external expressions of the Orthodox faith, with the intimation of making it appear respectable in a modern world. The religious sensibilities informing the *Regulation* stood in contrast with those Orthodox sensibilities that consider "enlightenment" not merely in terms of textual and theological knowledge, but in experiential terms.[9] Although noble in its intent, especially with respect to preventing fraud and profiteering, Peter's efforts to eliminate from Orthodoxy all "that is superfluous, not essential to salvation" often targeted prayers, rituals, and beliefs that traditionally had been part of Orthodox life.

Finally, Peter's reforms had a lasting impact on the development of theological education. The staffing of newly established seminaries and theological academies with graduates of the Kyiv Academy facilitated the further integration of Ukrainian Orthodoxy into Muscovite culture. The education these teachers provided drew heavily on Catholic and Protestant models and was often impractical given the realities of Russian parish life. Until the early nineteenth century, seminarians often graduated knowing Latin better than their own liturgical language of Church Slavonic. Nevertheless, the development of academic theology in Russia began in earnest during this period. In addition to Kyiv as a center of theological learning, theological academies were established in Moscow (beginning as the Greco-Latin Academy in 1687 and moving to the St Trinity Sergius Lavra in 1814), St Petersburg (1797), and Kazan (1842).

Alongside the strong currents of secularization taking place in the eighteenth century, signs of a developing spiritual counterculture were also visible. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the metropolitan of Corinth, Macarius, and his aid, Nikodemus of the Holy Mountain, compiled the *Philokalia*, an anthology of

Hesychast-inspired spiritual writings from Mount Athos dating from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries. During this same period, Paisii Velichkovskii (1722–94), a Ukrainian monk born in Poltava who spent some fifteen years on Mount Athos, oversaw the translation of these same texts into Slavonic. His version of the *Philokalia* appeared in Moscow in 1793. Meaning "love of the beautiful and exalted," the *Philokalia* provided modern Orthodox Christians with a collection of ancient Orthodox wisdom regarding prayer, contemplative knowledge, and a sense of love of beauty that led to a life in communion with God (Florensky 1997: 72).

Following the Napoleonic wars in the early nineteenth century, the renewal of ancient forms of spirituality combined with a broader cultural reorientation among Russia's elite to things "native" and eventually led to a large-scale monastic and theological revival. The development of a culture of spiritual elders that included such luminaries as Ambrose (A. M. Grenkov, 1812–91) and Theophan the Recluse (G. V. Govorov, 1815–94), the popularity of such spiritual centers as Optina Pustyn', and the growth in the number of monastic communities testified to this renewal. While in 1825 there were only 476 monasteries in Russia (377 male and 99 female), by 1914, there were 1,025 (550 male and 475 female).[10] In the second half of the nineteenth century, the spiritual heritage of the *Philokalia* was further popularized in fictional form in the classic *Intimate Conversations of a Pilgrim with His Spiritual Father* or *The Way of the Pilgrim,* as well as in Fyodor Dostoevsky's portrayal of the elder Zosima in his novel *The Brothers Karamazov.*

The monastic renewal was even more pronounced among women, whose communities tended to be more socially active than those of their male counterparts. In pre-Petrine Russia, many of Russia's monasteries followed an arrangement in which monks and nuns generally had to support themselves within monasteries, thereby making it difficult for women from the lower classes to take official vows. Consequently, poorer women often lived a self-imposed monastic life alone or joined smaller groups of like-minded women without formal vows. By the nineteenth century, women of means began forming such self-supporting communities on their estates. Often no less than their institutionally recognized counterparts who resided in convents, women in such communities, despite their social origins, held positions of spiritual authority within their local rural communities and often served as local eldresses for those seeking spiritual direction (Kirichenko 2010; Tul'tseva 2006; Wagner 2003; Meehan-Waters 1993).

The renewal of monastic spirituality also influenced the theological schools. The mid-nineteenth century was pivotal in the history of modern Orthodox thought, a time when Orthodox academic theologians began considering the fate of Orthodoxy vis-à-vis the Christian West. Because of strong Western influences, the church's academics could not help but become caught up in a parallel set of questions plaguing educated society. If secular society at this time was preoccupied with questions concerning Russia's identity and future with respect to the West, Orthodox academics were discussing the nature of Orthodoxy, its originality (*samobytnost'*) and its relationship to Western Christianity (Linitskii 1884; Glubokovskii 1914).

This desire to define the uniqueness of Orthodoxy with respect to the Western confessions of faith led in part to a rediscovery of the Orthodox Byzantine heritage which resulted in a formidable translation project of patristic texts into Russian that continued until the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The center of Orthodox monastic

spirituality, Optina Pustyn', along with all four major theological academies were involved in these efforts. The theological academies also participated in the translation of Russia's Slavonic Bible – the final authorized version of which had appeared in 1751 during the reign of Empress Elizabeth – into Russian. Though the Russian Bible Society oversaw the translation of the New Testament, the Psalter, and the Pentateuch into Russian in the early nineteenth century, a complete church-authorized version of the Russian Bible appeared only in 1876 (Batalden 1990).

Significantly, those academic theologians involved in the patristic revival in the nineteenth century were also committed to a conscious mission to make Orthodoxy relevant in the modern world. Until this time, by their own admission, the theological academies had tended to be isolationist – "deaf to all practical demands of life" – and, hence, relatively removed from society (Smirnov 1877). Orthodox thought, be it theology, ethics, history, philosophy, was carried out within the academies and for fellow academics.[11] In order to sustain Orthodoxy's relevance in a rapidly changing society, many of these academics advocated taking theology "into the streets" and proactively engaging modernity – a metonym for "the West" – on Orthodox terms.

The nineteenth century also saw the genesis of a tradition of Russian religious thought and philosophy outside of the walls of the theological academies. Often traced to the work of early slavophiles Alexei Khomiakov (1804–60) and Ivan Kireevskii (1806–56), Russia's religious philosophical tradition developed at an increased pace at the end of the nineteenth century. Indebted in particular to the work of Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900), Russian religious philosophy eventually surpassed the academic theological tradition in terms of broader historical acclaim and recognition abroad. Deeply ontological and incarnational in its inspiration, Russian religious philosophy at this time focused on such themes as history and culture, the sacrality of matter and creation, freedom, creativity, unity, and divine love (Arseniev 1975: 18–20; Losev 1991: 509–12). The development of such concepts as *bogochelovechestvo* (divine humanity), divine Wisdom (Sophia), ecclesiality (*tserkovnost'*), pan-humanity (*vsechelovechestvo*), conciliarity (*sobornost'*), pan-unity (*vseedinstvo*), and "mystical sobriety" were just some of the fruits of these intellectual and spiritual endeavors.

It would be inaccurate, however, to consider Russia's religious philosophers and academic theologians as comprising two separate schools of thought in Russia's Orthodox tradition. Insofar as the Russian religious philosophical school grew out of the need to relate the Orthodox faith to modernity, it included academic theologians as much as intellectuals trained in Russia's secular universities (Valliere 2000: 2, 8).[12] The work of Russia's academic theologians and religious philosophers often dovetailed and proved mutually influential. The theological journals testify to the interaction, as do the various circles of religious thinkers and academic theologians that regularly gathered in order to discuss the burning philosophical and religious issues of the day.

At the end of nineteenth century, given the scope of the challenges that modernity posed, it is not surprising that clergy and laity alike began to doubt whether the church in its current institutional form could meet these challenges. The very meaning of "church," the internal principles by which its life should be institutionally ordered, and the forms this ordering should take – these were some of the fundamental issues

Orthodox Christians examined on the eve of the cataclysmic Bolshevik Revolution in hopes of broad reforms that would make the church viable in the modern age. The notion of *sobornost'* in particular played a central role in these discussions.

Arguably one of the most acute issues that emerged in the critical decades leading up to the Bolshevik Revolution concerned the laity – their identity and role in the church. On the one hand, there were those who identified common laity with "the people" broadly speaking, and thought of them mostly in terms of an "ignorant mass" who knew little about the content of their faith.[13] Within such a view, it was not uncommon to find references to the notion of *dvoeverie* – a term some of the educated elite used to signify paganism clad in Orthodox attire. In contrast stood those clergy and educated believers who saw genuine Orthodoxy preserved primarily among peasant believers, and who did not consider authentic faith dependent on formal religious education.[14]

Orthodox life at the grass-roots level was in fact more complex than either of these views suggest. First, the divide between common believers (peasantry, townspeople, and merchants) and elites with respect to Orthodox behavior and devotional life was not as pronounced as stereotypic binary models might suggest. Second, the problem of assessing the character of lived Orthodoxy is complicated by the fact that the majority of Russians were by law baptized at birth and officially considered Orthodox, despite personal commitment. Consequently, a murky boundary existed between "the people" (*narod*) who might be little more than nominally Orthodox, and committed Orthodox laity (*miriane*). The complexity and potential tragedy of the situation was dramatically expressed in 1918 in the midst of revolutionary turmoil by the Bishop of Ufa Simon (Shleev): "115 million Orthodox Christians supposedly stand behind us. . . . yet we ourselves don't know who is with us and behind us" (Kravetskii and Shul'ts 2000: 244). Despite contemporaries' varied perceptions of the Orthodox laity, Orthodox believers from all backgrounds played a formative role in shaping and sustaining Russia's living tradition, which included the veneration of saints and icons, liturgical celebration, construction and maintenance of churches and chapels, pilgrimage, and alms giving.[15]

Additionally, Orthodox believers in the early twentieth century were preoccupied with prospects of reforms that included a wide array of issues: church–state relations, higher church administration and the restoration of the patriarchate, diocesan church administration, parish organization, liturgical life of the church, elementary and higher education, mission, and relations with Old Believers. The Preconciliar Commission that met in 1906 and the All Russia Church Council that met during the fateful years of 1917–18 were both a response to the internal and external pressures to address church reforms and the beginning of a new era in the history of modern Russian Orthodoxy.

The Council of 1917–18 was the first church council in Russia to convene in more than 200 years. It managed to institute a series of reforms, including the restoration of the patriarchate abolished some 200 years earlier. On 5 November 1917, the metropolitan of Moscow, Tikhon (Belavin), was chosen as the eleventh patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. The council also had a historic composition of 299 laymen and 264 clergy. The richly diverse and fertile theological and practical insights regarding the church and all aspects of its life contained in its proceedings constitute part of the council's legacy.

1917–88: THE SOVIET EXPERIMENT

The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution marked a violent turnaround in the history of Orthodox Christianity in Russia. In a relatively short time, the home of the largest Christian culture of modern times became an officially atheistic state (Barrett 1982: 9). The All Russia Council scheduled for 1921 to continue business left unfinished by the Council of 1917–18 never met. Instead of reform, the church faced the violence and trauma of revolution and civil war that rent Russia in two. As historian Marc Raeff (1990: 3) noted, "One lost the very name of Russia and [eventually] . . . became the USSR; the other . . . constituted itself into a Russia beyond the borders, Russia Abroad." During this period, accordingly, Russian Orthodox Christians attempted to preserve their tradition in dramatically different geographical, political, and cultural environments.

Beginning with the nationalization of church land in November 1917, the Bolshevik government embarked on a relentless campaign to neutralize the Orthodox Church as a political and ideological threat. First, the government attempted to weaken the church from within by fomenting schism. Taking advantage of differing ecclesial visions within the church, the Soviet government supported the efforts of progressive, reform-minded priests and bishops to gain ascendancy, thereby splitting the Russian Church from within. By collaborating with the Soviet government, however, the "Renovationists" or "Living Church" compromised, in the eyes of many Orthodox believers, the integrity of the progressive ideals they represented.

Second, the Soviet government sought to neutralize the church through raw persecution. Despite fierce opposition from hierarchs, clergy, monks, nuns, and laymen and -women, Orthodox Christianity in Russia experienced a level of destruction between the years 1917 and 1939 that exceeded the periodic state-sponsored Roman campaigns against Christians during the first three centuries. The institutional church was all but decimated. Between 1918 and 1921, six hundred and seventy-three monasteries were closed. By 1937, one third of the regions in the Russian Federated Republic had no churches, while in another third, fewer than five churches remained (Davis 2003: 11–12). No active monasteries remained. If not destroyed, closed churches and monasteries were often transformed into warehouses, factories, clubs, and psychiatric institutions.

Common efforts to sustain church life on the local level resulted in laymen and -women being branded as "counter-revolutionary groups of church folk." Over the next decades, more than 80,000 clergymen, monks, and nuns were either executed or died more slowly in labor camps. The number of faithful laymen and -women who perished will never be known. On the eve of the Second World War, the fact that only four bishops remained in their sees testified to the grim reality of the institutional church.

Under such extreme circumstances, survival and witness became the modes of expression of Orthodoxy and the foundations upon which a future cult of twentieth-century "new martyrs" developed. The survival of faith during these decades depended largely on the cultivation of what might be termed an "institution-less Orthodoxy." In a letter from prison, one priest related to his former parishioners that the loss of the visible, external forms of Christianity – namely open celebration of divine services – was "the greatest of all miseries." In the new reality, the task was

to build an "inner church" – the temple of one's heart that "no one has the power to destroy except [oneself]" (Goricheva 1989: 66, 84, 86, 123, 133–34). Believers sustained their "inner church" in part through the help of spiritual guides – parish-less priests and monastery-less monks and nuns who often went undetected in society; believers also embarked on clandestine pilgrimages to one-time revered holy sites and gathered covertly for prayer in private homes. Periodically, dramatic public displays of solidarity, such as the more than 300,000 people who gathered to mark the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925, signaled the resilience of faith (Alov and Vladimirov 1995: 115).

In an attempt to preserve the institutional church from complete annihilation, in July 1927 Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodskii), acting patriarchal locum tenens, signed a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet government. The declaration raised complex moral and theological questions reminiscent of those raised during the Donatist controversy in North Africa during the fourth and fifth centuries; it also precipitated divisions among Orthodox Christians in Russia and among émigrés living abroad. The declaration, however, won no lasting reprieve. By 1937, out of the 600 churches that had once dotted Moscow's landscape, only 23 remained.

In 1939, on the eve of the Second World War, the tide unexpectedly turned. Numerically, the Orthodox Church added thousands of functioning parish churches to its roster after the Soviet Union had annexed territories in the Ukraine. The church increased its public moral authority by actively participating in the war effort. In return, Joseph Stalin, recognizing the power of the church to rally the population and foreseeing the need for the church's support in matters of foreign policy, granted the church permission to elect a patriarch, open new churches, and ordain more priests. Stalin's meeting with Sergius, metropolitan of Moscow, Alexi (Simanskii), metropolitan of Leningrad, and Nikolai (Iarushevich), metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia, on 4 September 1943 officially marked the shift in church–state relations. As a result, in 1945, the Russian Orthodox Church numbered some 10,500 active parishes, 6,000 of which were located in territories of the Ukraine and only 2,800 in the Russian Federation. More than 100 active monasteries, 2 theological academies, and 8 active seminaries testified to the resiliency of the Orthodox tradition despite the horrors of the first decades of Bolshevik rule (Alov and Vladimirov 1995: 122–23).

Ironically, the ascendancy to power of Nikita Khrushchev following the death of Joseph Stalin – a period usually associated with the idea of a cultural thaw – signaled a centrally organized campaign against the church as part of a broader plan to build "communism in this generation" (Anderson 1994; Peris 1998; Stone 2008). While not resorting to mass violence and terror, the renewed anti-religious offensive included a vehement campaign of anti-religious propaganda, a fresh wave of church closings, and various financial and institutional restrictions meant to choke church life and divide hierarchs, parish clergy, and laity. By closing five of the eight seminaries and by controlling the acceptance of students at those seminaries and theological academies that remained open, the state for the most part regulated the cadres of ordained clergy. Students with university educations during these years, for instance, were often denied enrollment. By 1962, only 2 active monasteries remained on the territory of the Russian Federation. In 1966, there were 7,500 active churches in the USSR, with only approximately 2,000 of those in the Russian Federation

(Alov and Vladimirov 1995: 124). With Orthodoxy in the Russian Federation hit hardest, the survival of its Orthodox tradition depended in part on Orthodox life and activity in Ukraine and the Baltics.

Fueled by a general cultural awakening that began during the Khrushchev years (1958–64), the Soviet dissident movement contributed to sustaining Orthodoxy as a living tradition in the late Soviet period. The private gatherings associated with the dissident phenomenon provided many members of the intelligentsia throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s with a venue in which to study Orthodoxy, to assess the life of the contemporary church, and to provide a public moral voice with respect to the exercise of faith in an officially atheistic society. In 1978, the religious dissident and civil-rights activist Zoya Krakhmal'nikova eloquently described the challenge the Soviet experience posed to Russia's Orthodox tradition. While God's promises might be immutable, she wrote, peoples' "sense of God and sense of the church can absorb the tragic nuances of temporary . . . circumstances, the lethal blows of social movements and cultural influences, all cultivated in the soil of history" (Krakhmal'nikova 1978: 7). In other words, Orthodox consciousness was not immune to broader cultural, social, and political trends. Members of the Orthodox intelligentsia warned that the Soviet political system could very well produce a New Orthodox Believer alongside a New Soviet Person (see e.g. Meerson-Aksenov and Shragin 1977: 505–68; Solzhenitsyn *et al.* 1982). Fr Dmitrii Dudko, Fr Alexander Men', Fr Gleb Yakunin, Anatolii Krasnov-Levitan, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Igor Ogurtsov, along with Zoya Khrakhmal'nikova and Tatiana Goricheva, were among the most widely known alternative Orthodox voices during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years. In addition to dissident voices, well-known scholars from within Russia's academic spheres – Dmtrii Likhachev, Sergei Averintsev, and Marina Gromyko – helped to sustain the integrity of Orthodoxy among the educated circles through their scholarly efforts.

Alongside Orthodoxy as it was lived and practiced in the Soviet Union, Russia's Orthodox tradition traveled with the hundreds of thousands who emigrated from Russia between 1917 and 1922 and again as a result of the Second World War. Finding themselves scattered throughout Western Europe, Asia, Africa, and North and South America, Orthodox émigrés encountered their own set of challenges in maintaining their Orthodox heritage and collective identities. In part, internal cultural, political, and theological disagreements impeded a unified Russian Orthodox identity abroad. Differing approaches to ethnic and religious identities, for instance, led to diverging missionary goals and senses of purpose. For those Orthodox émigrés for whom ethnic and religious identities were inseparably intertwined, "the homeland" remained prominent in their sense of mission. Gathering under the auspices of what eventually came to be known as the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (or Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia), such believers took on the self-appointed mission of fashioning themselves as the "free voice of the Russian Church" in the firm conviction that with the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius in 1927 the Orthodox Church in Russia lost its ability to function freely as an ecclesial body. Émigrés who identified with this group generally held conservative, anti-modernist views of tradition. Basing their legitimacy upon a 1920 decree issued by Patriarch Tikhon regarding institutional procedures in the event that a diocese was unable to communicate with the central church administration, the Russian

Orthodox Church Abroad traced its roots to a council held in Sremski Karlovci, Yugoslavia, in 1922. By 1950, the church's institutional headquarters and seminary were established in New York City and Jordanville, New York, respectively.

Other émigrés distinguished between their religious and ethnic identities and interpreted their mission without looking to Russia as a religious referent. For them, the perceived dichotomy between "Russia" and "the West" lost much of its meaning with respect to their self-definition. Finding haven under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Constantinople, remaining affiliated with the Moscow patriarchate, or gaining autocephaly (as in the case of the Orthodox Church in America), these émigrés embraced the West as home and engaged modernity with "creative fidelity." Among these émigrés, who by 1924 established an academic center at the St Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris, two distinct trends eventually emerged: the so-called Russian and neopatristic schools of thought (Valliere 2000: 4–8). Representatives of both trends were committed to articulating the Orthodox faith as a living faith, existentially pertinent not only for Orthodox Christians of the Russian tradition, but for modern society as a whole. Accordingly, they both actively participated in the ecumenical movement. They diverged, however, in their approaches to the Byzantine patristic heritage. One trend, associated with Fr Sergii Bulgakov, hearkened back to Russia's religious thinkers, such as Vladimir Soloviev, who sought to rethink Orthodoxy primarily in terms of the conceptual tools supplied by western philosophical tradition. The second trend, usually associated with Vladimir Lossky and Fr Georges Florovsky, was in many ways reminiscent of Russia's liberal Orthodox academic theologians of the 1860s who advocated a "return to the fathers" and a re-assimilation of the patristic heritage as a basis for engagement with the modern world (Arjakovskii 1999; Stoeckl 2006; Schmemann 1972). Students and teachers of the St Sergius Institute in Paris, such as Nicholas Arseniev (1893–1966), Sergei Verkhovskoy (1907–86), Fr Alexander Schmemann (1921–83), and Fr John Meyendorff (1926–92), perpetuated the rich intellectual and spiritual heritage cultivated in Western Europe through their work at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in the United States.

Despite various philosophical and political divisions, Russia's Orthodox émigrés collectively left their legacy on two fronts. First, they contributed to globalizing Eastern Orthodoxy. Second, be it through academic endeavors, publication activity, radio broadcasts, material aid, preaching, liturgical prayer, iconography, or witness through parish or monastic life, Russia's Orthodox émigrés and their descendants contributed to sustaining Orthodoxy in Soviet Russia.

1988–PRESENT: POST-SOVIET RECOVERY AND CHALLENGES

The celebration of the millennium anniversary of the baptism of Rus' in 1988 marked a new era in the history of the Russian tradition (see Kirill of Moscow 2010). Occurring during the period of *glasnost'* under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the event signaled an official shift in the state's relationship toward the church. The subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted in an unprecedented role for the Orthodox Church in Russian society. While initially ill-prepared for its newfound freedom, the Moscow patriarchate has since emerged as a powerful and

influential force in an officially secular, multinational, and multi-religious state. Led at first by the patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexei II (Ridiger) and subsequently, since his death in 2008, by the patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill (Gundiaev), the Orthodox Church, according to opinion polls, continues to remain one of the most trusted institutions in Russian society.

The path to its current privileged position, however, has had its political costs and has not been without controversy. Internally weakened after seventy years of hostile and manipulative atheist rule, the Moscow patriarchate initially viewed unchecked religious pluralism in Russia as a threat, despite the voices of democratically minded Orthodox Christians within its ranks who welcomed such diversity. Consequently, especially in the 1990s, the patriarchate exhibited an institutional posture that was often unwelcoming toward many western Christian missionaries who saw Russia as an open missionary field. The Russian Church faced international and domestic criticism for its call for a "moratorium on religious propaganda from outside" and for its campaign against the new laws on religious freedom passed in 1990, which gave unprecedented freedom to all religious groups in Russia (Knox 2004: 76–77, 84–90). The Moscow patriarchate's desire to reclaim the "sphere of influence" in Russian society it believed was historically its due resulted in the highly controversial 1997 "Law on Freedom of Conscience and on Religious Associations" which gave Orthodoxy a place of precedence among Russia's traditional religions.[16]

Since its successful lobbying to institute the 1997 law, the Moscow patriarchate continues to demonstrate wide-ranging influence as a political and religious actor, domestically and internationally. In 2000, the church in Russia issued for the first time in its history an outline of a social doctrine. The "Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church" addresses a wide variety of issues including church–state relations, private property, crime and punishment, war and peace, family life, bioethics, environmental issues, globalization, and secularization (*Basis of the Social Concept*, Russian Orthodox Church n.d.-b [adopted in 2000]; Kirill of Smolensk 2000; Chaplin 2002). More recently, in 2011, the Moscow patriarchate began working on a formulation of core "eternal values" that would form the foundation of contemporary Russian identity.[17]

In addition, the Moscow patriarchate has been active in orchestrating civic unity. In 2005, for instance, it spearheaded the introduction of a new annual national holiday – the Day of National Unity, celebrated on 4 November. Replacing 7 November – the celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution – the Day of National Unity commemorates Russia's victorious emergence from the Time of Troubles at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries (1598–1613) and the solidarity of Russia's citizens, "regardless of their origin, faith, or social status," that enabled that victory.[18] Conveniently, from the perspective of the Moscow patriarchate, the date also corresponds to the Orthodox celebration of one of Russia's best-known icons of the Virgin Mary – the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God – liturgically commemorated in Russia as a church feast since the seventeenth century.[19]

Finally, the Moscow patriarchate has also promoted Orthodox education as part of its broader missionary efforts of "churching the people" (*votserkovlenie naroda*). Maintaining that the Soviet years virtually destroyed Russia's native historical Christian traditions, it has embarked on what it views as a "second Christianization of Russia." While the majority of Russia's population might identify with the

Orthodox faith, the precise nature of that identity is often ill-defined. As a result, the Moscow patriarchate has actively pursued the teaching of "basic principles of Orthodox culture" in Russia's public school system. Meeting public resistance from within the government and among the population at large, however, the patriarchate has been forced to modify its goals. While in the end such a subject has been phased in as only one in a series of options open to grade schools in nineteen regions of Russia (due to become universally offered in the year 2012), the debates surrounding this topic over the past several years highlight the wide variety of views and lack of consensus among Orthodox Christians over the defining features of the Orthodox tradition, the public presentation of that tradition, its formative role in the history of Russia, and it current place in Russian society.

The Moscow patriarchate has been no less active in drawing upon and grappling with its tradition on the international front. On the one hand, it has attempted to reincorporate into its fold its diaspora heritage by means of liturgical reunification with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and by recognizing émigré theological pursuits, including the Parisian school, as an "organic part of [Russia's] native theological heritage" (*Act of Canonical Communion*, Russian Orthodox Church n.d.-a [adopted in 2007]; *Orthodox Encyclopedia*, Orthodox Russian Church 2000: 421). By doing so, it has embraced the broad range of émigré approaches to defining and sustaining tradition in a modern age (*Zhivoe predanie*, YMCA 1937; *Zhivoe predanie*, St Philaret's Orthodox Christian Institute 1999). On the other hand, the patriarchate has also taken a critical stance toward some of the fundamental principles of modern western society. The prospects of Russia's integration into the European Union and processes of globalization, for instance, compelled the Moscow patriarch to issue a statement in 2008 on the subject of human rights and on some of the philosophical presuppositions underlying modern liberal democracy (Russian Orthodox Church 2008).

Testimony to the patriarchate's prominent role in shaping public life in post-Soviet Russia – and evidence of resistance to that role – can be seen in the protest issued by ten members of the Russian Academy of Sciences on 22 July 2007. In a letter addressed to President Vladimir Putin, the ten academics issued a formal complaint against what they perceived as a "growing clericalization of Russian society and the active penetration of the church into all spheres of social life," primarily in the military and in education (Alexandrov et al. 2007). The Moscow patriarchate, in turn, has argued that the modern democratic standards which western societies have set do not necessarily correlate with essential Orthodox values. According to the archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, chairman of the Moscow patriarchate's Department for Church and Society, "societal, political, and religious pluralism as well as competition stand in stark contrast to the goal of the Orthodox ideal of . . . 'gathering the scattered,' " meaning to unite people regardless of their ethnic, political, and social differences (Chaplin 2004: 34).

Despite the tensions over the role and function of the institutional Orthodox Church, Orthodoxy as a lived tradition has flourished in post-Soviet society. In the some two decades since the fall of communism, more than 20,000 churches and 700 monasteries have opened – numbers that are all the more striking given Russia's economic instability during these years. In 2010, the Orthodox Church in Russia consisted of 160 dioceses with 207 hierarchs, 30,142 parish churches, and

788 monasteries, more than 400 of which are women's communities (see Kirill of Moscow 2010). While such rapid mobilization has not been without its institutional strains and what Patriarch Alexei II referred to as periodic "distortions of church tradition" in everyday Orthodox life, Orthodox Christianity promises to remain a prominent force shaping public and private lives in Russia in the twenty-first century (Dobrosotskikh 2003).

NOTES

1 Belkhova 2005: 32.
2 Shchapov 2005: 13–24.
3 For an examination of these trends in the second half of the fifteenth century and the early sixteenth, see Sinitsyna 1998 and Shebatinskii 1908.
4 Florovsky 2001: 459.
5 For a critique of Florovsky's use of the term "pseudomorphosis" and his now classic evaluation of the history of Russian theology, see Thomson 1993.
6 Zenkovskii 2001: 259.
7 For Prokopovich's relationship to the Kiev Academy, see Cracraft 1978.
8 Lisovoi 2005: 199.
9 Elchaninov and Florenskii 2001: 147.
10 Zyrianov 2005: 305.
11 Also see observation by Pevnitskii 1869; Osinin 1872; Sergievskii 1870.
12 It is noteworthy that Valliere begins his study of the "Russian school" with the thought of Archimandrite Feodor Bukharev, an academic theologian trained in Orthodox theological schools.
13 Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii, fond 3431, opis'. 273, list. 65 (10 September 1917).
14 Elchaninov and Florenskii 2001: 151.
15 For literature on the recognition and canonization of saints, Greene 2010; Thyrêt 2008; Levin 2003; Bushkovitch 1992: 74–127. For miracle-working icons and their veneration, see Shevzov 2004: 171–213.
16 In addition to Orthodox Christianity, the state recognizes Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism among Russia's traditional religions.
17 *Razrabotan Svod vechnykh rossiiskikh tsennostei*, Synodal Department for Church and Society 2011.
18 "Statement from the Religious Council in Russia," Russian Orthodox Church (n.d.-c).
19 For the celebration of the Kazan icon in pre-Revolutionary Russia, see Shevzov 2007b.

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