

Aesthetics and National Identity in Russian Sacred Choral Music:

A Past in Tradition and Present in Ruins

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While you were seizing the power, you asked the people to trust you, and made promises to them. But have those promises been fulfilled? You gave a stone instead of a loaf, and a serpent instead of a fish (Mt.7:9-10). You have substituted a soulless international concept for our Motherland. You have divided the people into enemy camps and plunged them into a fratricidal war of an unprecedented cruelty. You have openly replaced Christ's love by hatred; you have not brought peace, you have incited class hatred. There seems to be no end in sight to the war instigated by you, because with the hands of Russian workers and peasants you are trying to bring about the triumph of a phantom world revolution. No one feels safe under your regime, where there reigns a constant fear of search, robbery, arrests and exile or execution. You promise freedom, but there can hardly be anything more painful and cruel than violation of religious freedom. The press is blasphemous and full of a malicious ridiculing of sacred things. You have barred the entrance to the Moscow Kremlin- the sacred inheritance of all pious Russians. We know that our accusations will anger you and cause severe reprisals, that you will use our words as a pretext to accuse us of resisting your government. But the greater your anger and punitive acts, the more the truth of our accusations will be confirmed. Mark the anniversary of your rule by liberating those imprisoned by you; by ceasing bloodshed, violence, destruction and oppression of religion. Otherwise all righteous blood shed by you, shall be required of you (Lk.11:51), and 'you that take the sword shall perish by the sword' (Mt.26:52).¹

Metr. [Patriarch] Tikhon's Epistle to the Soviet of the People's Commissars, 26 October, 1918:

¹Archpriest Michael Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*. Montreal: 1972, p. 45. Russian version in *Nash sovremennik*, no. 4 (1990), pp. 160-162.

National identity is measured by a multitude of elements that, over the centuries, help shape a country's disposition. The dignity and lyricism that emanated from the znamenny chant, Russia's pillar of chants, inspired not only composers but conductors and singers to infuse their singing with the spiritual countenance that was to be hailed worldwide by the early 1900s as a model for sacred expression. Since Lenin's revolution of 1917, Russia has been undergoing an almost complete destruction of its sacred expression as well as of its national identity. The aesthetic loss caused by internationalism, in the name of permanent world revolution at the expense of millions of lives, is one of today's greatest and most silenced tragedies. The brutal enforcement of communism was not an economic war, but a war against Russia's religion, Orthodoxy, and against its national identity. Together with secularization and materialism, an almost complete "de-russification" of the country has taken place. Russia's population, which due to a healthy growth rate during tsarist times, was predicted to reach about 600 million by the end of the twentieth century, is now about 145 million and it is said that Russia is running out of Russians. Here is a nation on its knees, a nation that spiritually, mentally and physically, is in ruins. It lies as a vast concentration camp, crippled in every way, devoid of its spiritual and national identity, as well as of its singing, which once stunned the world.

And now, having lived through these 70 lethal years inside Communism's iron shell, we are crawling out, though barely alive. A new age has clearly begun, both for Russia and the whole world. Russia lies utterly ravaged and poisoned; its people are in a state of unprecedented humiliation and on the brink of perishing physically, perhaps even biologically.²

Having experienced Russia prior to the revolution, an Englishman wrote:

The Russian Nation has been frequently described as the most religious in Christendom. In some respects, I believe this is true, and there is no doubt that in no other country do the people give a more whole-hearted allegiance to the Christian Church in its local embodiment. The orthodox Church in Russia is not merely National in the technical sense, it is National because it enshrines the deepest convictions of an overwhelming majority of the Russian people. Preaching has no place at all compared with what it has in our English Church. What they have is worship, and it is here I feel, and indeed, many feel, we have a great deal to learn from the Russian. It is this quality of reverence and

² A. Solzhenitsyn, «The Relentless Cult of Novelty and How It Wrecked the Century». *The New York Times Book Review*, February 7, 1993, p. 3.

worship which has entered into the Music of the Russian Church, giving it in its best forms, a wonderful quality of elevation, nobility and beauty, which at once lift the hearer above all material things. Above and beyond all this, there is the spiritual beauty of the music, for it has a nobility, a dignity and a quality of elevation quite its own.³

For centuries, Russia's church-related arts, including architecture, iconography, bellringing and singing, were always held in high esteem.

Фрески, иконы, миниатюры поучали. Созерцание икон, слушание близких к ним по содержанию песнопений вызывало высокие мысли и чувства. Икона и звучащее перед нею песнопение, молитва составляли пульс духовной культуры Древней Руси, поэтому иконописное и гимнографическое творчество всегда были на большой высоте. Все искусства, одновременно соединяясь в храме, с огромной силой воздействовали сразу на чувства человека, переносили его в возвышенный мир через созерцание икон, слушание песнопений.⁴ (Frescoes, icons and miniatures edified. The contemplation of icons, the hearing of singing closely related to them in context, stimulated profound thoughts and emotions. The icon and the sung prayers which resounded in its presence, established the pulse of ancient spiritual culture of Old Russia, thus iconography and hymnography were always on a high level of creativity. All the arts were simultaneously synthesized in a church, and with extraordinary might instantly affected the emotions of man, carried him into the elevated world through contemplation of icons and the hearing of singing).

Singing functioned not only as the enhancer but the transmitter of the holy text and was considered an intrinsic part of worship. Music existed in synthesis with all the arts incorporated in the beautification of a church. Not to beautify the church was to contribute to its denigration.

Будучи само по себе художественною отраслю музыкального искусства, церковное пение, вместе с последним, служит одним из высоких проявлений истинного (вдохновенного) искусства на земле и как таковое обладает силою нравственно-обновляющим образом воздействовать на духовную природу человека. А так как музыка со своею художественною отраслю- церковным пением- есть только одно из проявлений истинного искусства на земле и далеко не исчерпывает всего его содержания, то Церковь Христова привлекла на служение себе и иныя проявления истинного искусства, как напр. духовную поэзию (псалмы, молитвословия и песнопения), ораторское искусство (проповедническое слово), живопись (иконопись) и архитектуру (церковное зодчество). Церковное пение, вместе с музыкою, коею оно отрасль, есть проявление художественного гения в человечестве и как таковое не может и не должно быть нехудожественным. Художественный элемент в богослужбном пении существовал в православной Церкви со времен апостолов и, развиваясь от зачаточных форм, дошел постепенно до высокохудожественной формы осьмогласия в VIII веке при Дамаскине. Затем Провидением Божественным церковно-певческое дело православной Церкви

³ A.M. Henderson, «Russian Church Music», in *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*. London, 1919-1920, pp. 2-3, 10.

⁴ T. Vladyshevskaja, «Музыка в синтезе храмового действия» (Music in Synthesis with the Church Service), in *Muzyka drevnei rusi*. Moscow: 1993, p. 173. In English, see: T. Vladyshevskaja, «The Synthesis of the Arts in Russia», in M. Velimirovic and W. Brumfield, eds. *Christianity and the Arts in Russia*. Cambridge: 1991.

перешло в распоряжение гения русского народа. Постепенно развивая и совершенствуя основные начала византийской церковной музыки, русский художественный гений- сначала в лице неизвестных нам по именам талантливых клиросных певцов, а позже- чрез посредство особенно выдающихся духовных композиторов, как Бортнянский, Турчанинов и Львов, наполнил церковно-музыкальную сокровищницу православной русской Церкви отдельными художественными песнопениями.⁵ (Being in itself an artistic branch of the art of music, church music, together with it, serves as one of the highest manifestations of the true spiritual art on earth and thus contains the power of being able to exert an influence on the moral renewal of the spiritual nature of man. And since music, with its creative branch- church singing- is only one of the true genuine arts on earth and by far not all-exhaustive, Christ's Church has attracted to its Services many other manifestations of genuine artistic expression, as for instance, devotional poetry (psalms, prayers and songs), the orator art (sermons), painting (iconography) and architecture (the art of church building). Church singing, together with music, of which it is a branch, is the manifestation of the artistic genius in man and as such it cannot and must not be non-artistic. The artistic element in liturgical singing existed in the Orthodox Church from the times of the Apostles and developed gradually from its rudimentary form, to the highly artistic Byzantine eight-tone system in the 8th century under Damascene. Then the creative design of Liturgical singing of the Orthodox Church was transferred to the genius of the Russian people. Gradually developing and perfecting the basic traditions of Byzantine church music, the Russian artistic genius- first in the realm of anonymous talented composers and singers, then, through the creativity of famous composers of sacred music, such as Bortniansky, Turchaninov and Lvov, filled the musical treasure-house of the Russian Orthodox Church with individual artistic compositions).

With regards to the interrelationship of the church-related arts and aesthetics, the pre-revolutionary musicologist, Stepan Smolensky, noted:

Прояснение взаимоотношений частей в каждом искусстве ведет к сознательному усвоению чудесной красоты в нашей старине-ведет не только к более точному соблюдению внешности, равно и к исполнению подробностей,- но еще и к оживотворению в нас этой красоты с помощью подъема духа,- к подъему творчества. Все наши храмы, колокольни, главы, иконостасы, иконы всякого содержания, хоругви, церковные ризы, подсвечники, лампадки, и т.д. несомненно подчинены, каждый в своем роде, самой строгой уставной дисциплине в общем их плане, но вполне свободны в устройстве подробностей. Оттого у нас нет двух сходных храмов, двух одинаковых колоколенъ, двух похожих иконостасов и пр. Художник этот- народ русский, строгий, консервативно-постоянный в глубине почитания и хранения основных положений своих искусств и неудержимо, величайше свободный, неистощимый в творчестве подробностей,- живучий этой неутолимой потребностью к непрерывному и вполне свободному творчеству.⁶ (The interrelationship of all elements within each art leads to the conscious assimilation of the wondrous beauty of our past-and it leads not only to a more detailed observance of its

⁵ Protopopov, S. *O khudozhestvennom elemente v Pravoslavnom Tserkovnom penii* (On the Artistic Element in Orthodox Singing). St. Petersburg: 1910, pp. 6, 93.

⁶ S. Smolensky, «Ob ukazaniikh ottenkov ispolneniia i ob ukazaniikh muzykal'no-pevcheskikh form tserkovnykh pesnopenii v kriukovom pis'me» (On Nuances During Performance and on the Musical Form of Sacred Compositions in Neumatic Notation), in *Tserkovnoe penie*, no. 3, March 1909, pp. 67-68.

outer appearance- as well as performance of those details- but also to awaken in us that certain beautiful elevation of the spirit- and artistic creativity. All our churches, belltowers, domes, ikonostases, icons with their variety of meanings, religious banners, church vestments, candlesticks, lampadas, etc. are obviously subjected, each in its own way, to the strictest canonic discipline in the general plan, yet they are completely free in terms of detail. That is why we do not have two identical churches, belltowers, ikonostases, etc. The artists- are the Russian people- stern, conservative and consistent in their profound respect for preserving their creative traditions- but irrepressibly and infinitely inventive in their careful attention to detail- as these people live with a constant desire for an everlasting freedom of artistic creativity).

Over the centuries, Russia developed a style of a cappella singing about which an Englishman wrote:

In its devotion to pure song without instrumental interference, the Orthodox Church has never allowed its singing to be crippled or debased by organ «support». However noble an instrument the organ may be in itself, when it is relied upon habitually to lead the singing, it inevitably emasculates it, becoming a sort of a glorified prop, like a golden crutch for a man too lazy to walk. Hence the thin, soulless, spectral character of most English church choir singing. So low has our sense of appreciation fallen in this matter that even musical people sometimes do not notice how bad it is; they take it for granted that church music, for some unexplained reason, must remain on the same inartistic level to which our worship has sunk.⁷

And an American traveling to Russia around 1900 observed:

The music of the Russian ecclesiastical composers sounds as genuine religious, and here in America, we have a special need for the bracing effects of this unaccustomed idiom. Not only do we have to combat the dry-rot of academic formalism, we have, to offset the vitiating effects of secular music of inferior quality set to ‘sacred’ words, and the puerile claptrap of the gospel hymn school which still represents church music in an astonishingly large number of communities. It has not been so many years since adaptations of the sextet from “Lucia,” the quartet from “Rigoletto,” were put forth by supposedly respectable publishing houses as ‘anthems’ and eagerly consumed by the church public.ers. It is to be hoped that we can so digest the spirit and intensity which characterize the best Russian choral compositions that we may adapt the message and manner to our own needs.⁸

As far back as in the seventeenth century, after attending a service, a foreigner exclaimed: “I felt as if I stood in Jerusalem in the early days of Christianity: Russia glorifies the Lord in a much more heavenly and grand manner than the Romans.”⁹ That grandeur that the author was referring to is a trademark of the Russian countenance and is often referred to in Russian as *velichestvennost’* or

⁷ Sir Paul Dukas, *The Unending Quest*. London: 1950, p. 110.

⁸ “Russian Music for our Churches,” in *The Liturgy Digest* (May 21, 1921).

⁹ Johannes Herbinus, *Religiosae Kyoviensis cryptae sive Kyovia subterranea* (Jena, 1675), pp. 153-154. Quoted in Russian translation in Johann von Gardner, *Bogosluzhebnoe penie Russkoi pravoslavnoi tserkvi* (Liturgical Singing of the Russian Orthodox Church). Jordanville: New York, 1982, vol. 2, p. 60

torzhestvennost', those untranslatable terms that in English roughly amount to an uplifting, dignified, solemn and intense spiritual elevation of the text through singing. That intensity, that torzhestvennost' so rightly felt by foreigners, is an attribute of Russian national identity. Its roots lie in the holy text and in the aesthetic eloquence of the stately long-windedness of the znamenny chant. To that end, Russia developed seamless singing with an amazing capacity to sustain pitch.

No foreigner can fail to be struck by the church music of Russia and be impressed by the excellent unaccompanied singing of the choirs not only in the large cathedrals and monasteries, but also in the ordinary parish churches. He will be loud in his praise of the marvelous richness and compass of the voices and more especially of the deep notes sung by some of the basses, going down to the A,G and F of the 16-ft octave of the organ, voices of the like of which are to be heard in no other country. Although there is no organ or instrumental accompaniment of any kind to sustain the voices, yet the singing is never out of tune. Even the clergy seem to be possessed of musical ears. In the long ectenae, which recur so frequently, neither the deacon who sings the suffrages nor the choir which responds ever seem to lose the right pitch, and get flatter and flatter as we so often hear in this country. In fact, I don't think that anyone who has had the opportunity of comparing the ecclesiastical music of the various nations of Europe will refuse Russia the credit of surpassing all other countries in the general excellence of her church singing.¹⁰

The sustaining power characteristic of the Russian style was noticed by Hector Berlioz: «They perform with an angelic calmness of expression which requires an excellent vocal technique and art of sustaining power, resulting in a sound that surpasses everything that exists in Europe. By their intensity, they suspend one's breathing».¹¹ Good voice technique and breath control are crucial to the art of sustaining power. They also contribute to the gradual intensification of sound for important sections of the text (to be accomplished without excess mannerism or forcing of the voice), to the attenuated cadential progressions with phrase elisions, a seamless sound, and to an altogether text-driven rather than metric approach to singing. Traditionally, chant-based compositions are to be transmitted with a smooth, insightful declamation of text:

Нигде декламация не разрывает музыкальной линии. Красивое legato остается высшим законом. На таком певческом базисе, на основе подобной мастерской

¹⁰ W. Birbeck, "Some Notes Upon Russian Ecclesiastical Music, Ancient and Modern." *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*. London: 1890-91, April 14, 1891, p. 137.

¹¹ Hector Berlioz, *Les Soirees de l'Orchestre*. Paris: 1853, pp. 268-270.

дисциплины дыхания, естественно достижимы красоты прелестного piano, искуснейших (*meistertichen*) *Diminuendo* и *Crescendo*.¹² (Nowhere does the declamation [of the text] break the musical line. A beautiful legato remains the highest law. On such vocal basis, on the principle of such masterful breath discipline, naturally are attainable the wonders of the superb *piano*, and the most masterful *diminuendo* and *crescendo*).

The use of nuances was not meant to be obvious, in any way overbearing or sentimental, but rather a continuous strive towards a full-bodied homogeneity of sound.

Строгость и полнозвучие 'хоральности' сдержанность чувств, диктующих голосу исполнителя ваяющую объективность в передаче текста и музыки, ровность и малая подвижность ритмики, зависимость всех форм музыкального изложения от языка обрядового текста, побуждает исполнителя церковного пения считать своим идеалом то, что можно было бы определить, как 'органность' звучания... требует сугубой стройности и тщательной выдержанности голосов, до степени 'резинной тягучности'.¹³ (Austerity and a fullness of choral sound, together with a restraint of emotions which dictate to the voice of the singer a greater objectivity in the transmission of the text and music, a straightforwardness and slight flexibility, a dependence of all musical forms on the language of the ritual text, and it impels the performer to consider his ideal to be what one can call an «organ-like» sonority... it demands the strictest togetherness of voices and their meticulous containment, to the point of “malleable elasticity”)

Such malleable elasticity, achieved through the use of staggered breathing, is known to have been practiced in Russia as far back at least as the sixteenth century and fast tempi were foreign to the dignified nature of the *znamenny* chant.

Надо полагать, что прием так называемого 'цепного' дыхания во времена Федора Крестьянина уже был известен. Сама музыкальная форма мелодического распева с его спокойным развитием попевок требует мерного и величавого исполнения. Быстрые и суетливые темпы чужды самой природе знаменного распева. Скорость исполнения должна быть достаточно спокойной и торжественной, для того чтобы даже краткие длительности напева (то есть восьмые, четверти и их группы) могли быть отчетливо услышаны и не производили бы впечатление малозначительных 'пассажей'¹⁴ (We surmise that the process of 'staggered breathing' was already known in the times of Fedor Khrestianin [16th century]. The musical form of the melodious chant, with its peaceful variation of *popievki* [melodic formulae] requires a steady and solemn type of performance. Fast and fussy *tempi* are foreign to the very nature of the *znamenny* chant. The pace of the performance should be calm and *torzhestvenno*, in order that even the smallest note values (eighths and quarter notes), could be clearly heard and would not give the impression of being ornamental passages of little importance)

¹² Dresden Review of Concert by the Synodal Choir, quoted in *Russkaia muzykal'naia gazeta*, nos. 30-31 (1910), p. 614.

¹³ A. Nikolsky, «O stiliakh khorovogo peniia: 'tserkovnom' i 'svetском'» (On the Styles of Choral Singing: “Sacred” and “Secular”), *Muzyka i revoliutsiia*, no. 9 (1926), p. 14.

¹⁴ Brazhnikov, M. *Fedor Krest'ianin: Stikhiry* (Fedor Krestianin: Sticheras), *Pamiatniki Russkogo muzykal'nogo iskusstva*, vol. 3. Moscow: 1974, pp. 151-152.

The smoothness of the chant-based past was transmitted into the choral realm:

The most important thing is that the singing be pliant: smooth, coalescent, and connected. For this to occur, all measures must be joined in a special way: do not breathe between the last note of the preceding measure and the first note of the next measure. When you are taking a breath, do not separate the notes. See to it that the melody moves smoothly and fluidly to the greatest extent possible. Remember, *pianissimo* must be your [constant] preoccupation: *forte* will always come out. More sonorously does not mean more loudly, but rather, with greater clarity- then it will be heard. Don't forget: a chorus always benefits from soft singing: then *mezzo-forte* and *forte-fortissimo* will be much more effective, even though you will not expend great energy [to achieve it].¹⁵

In smooth, dignified величавое [exulting] singing, all voices merged to complement the sumptuous architecture, iconography, and vestments of the clergy, in a synthesis of aesthetic beauty, reaching out to glorify the Almighty with solemn reverence.

It is this quality of reverence and worship which has entered into the Music of the Russian Church, giving it (in its best forms), a wonderful quality of elevation, nobility and beauty, which at once lift the hearer above all material things. These are surely qualities greatly to be desired in our own Church Music, especially at a time when so much is tolerated that is utterly trivial, cheap and unworthy.¹⁶

Лаврские богослужения доставляли величайшее религиозное и эстетическое наслаждение. Совершались они по особому чину в обстановке древнейшего монастыря в величественных храмах. Великолепны были и звон лаврских колоколов, зовущих на молитву, и дивные, художественные облачения на духовенстве, и гигантские свечи, таинственно освещавшие старинные своды, древние иконы, позолоту иконостасов, и наконец, своеобразное обаятельное пение лаврских хоров. Для этой молитвы, для этих слез умиления люди часто проходили тысячи километров. Запыленные, усталые, загорелые, но бодрые духом, они несли в течение длинного, продолжительного и трудного пути в своих сердцах глубокую веру и любовь... уже могучие своеобразные лаврские мелодии разливаются под уходящими сводами древнейшего храма, под аккомпанимент чарующего пения настраивают торжественно, возвышенно и сосредоточенно.¹⁷ (The Services at the Lavra conveyed the most profound religious and aesthetic gratification. They were performed according to a distinct ritual in the midst of the ancient monastery setting in majestic churches. Magnificent were the ringing of the Lavra bells calling for prayer, the splendid artistic vestments of the clergy, the gigantic candles mysteriously lighting the old arches, ancient icons, the golden iconostasis and finally the distinctively unique and fascinating singing of the Lavra choirs. For this kind of praying, these tears of humility, people often walked for thousands of miles. Dusty, tired, sun-burned, but bright in spirit, in their hearts they carried during their lengthy and difficult journey a profound faith and

¹⁵ Arkhangel'sky on choral singing, as quoted in V. Morosan, *Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia*. UMI Research Press: 1986, p. 187.

¹⁶ A.Henderson, "Russian Church Music," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*. London: 1919, pp. 3, 10.

¹⁷ I.Nikodimov, *Vospominanie o Kievno-Pecherskoi Lavre* (Recollections of the Kiev-Pechersky Monastery). Munchen: 1960, pp. 28-30.

love...now the powerful distinctive melodies of the Lavra are flowing around the oldest church, to the accompaniment of the captivating singing, incitingly exalted, elevated and highly focused).

The solemn choral singing that had been developed in Russia over the centuries, with its malleable elasticity, intensification of text, and smooth phrase elision through staggered breathing, stands in direct opposition to the Western tradition in which each phrase of text (and music) falls into separate thought units, even at times marked by a fermata. In a recent issue of a journal published by the Orthodox Church of America, we read: “The text could be published with divisions into musical phrases... The pause and breath are the ways we ‘phrase’ words into thought units.”¹⁸ Thus nowadays the Western style of singing has become the status quo in some Russian Orthodox churches, evidencing a systematic erosion of national identity. To sing with a pause and breath after every phrase is a western Protestant tradition, which if taken out of context and transplanted into Russian Orthodoxy, turns its service into something resembling camp style singing, with breaks after every phrase, acceptable for a congregation incapable of sustaining sound, but not for a choir seeking to elevate the text, as is akin to Russian tradition. What it represents is a dumbing down of Russian church singing, robbing it of its national identity and replacing it with metric rigidity, with accents on the downbeat, pauses between phrases- in essence, singing that has nothing whatsoever to do with Russian Orthodoxy. There are no downbeats in Russian sacred music, for the simple reason that rhythm is dictated by the inflections of the text. On rhythmic flexibility, Smolensky wrote:

Ритмические построения совершенно свободны у нас вследствие прозы, которою изложены славянские богослужебные тексты, взамен греческого стиха. Необыкновенная ритмическая гибкость, способность наших напевов принаравливаться к каким угодно несимметричным и симметричным ритмам в прозаическом тексте, полная эластичность ударений церковно-славянской речи, сделали то, что мы чрезвычайно далеки от казенно-немецких ритмических музыкальных строк в наших древних напевах. У нас почти нет квадратного счета на 2, 3 или 4, как то возможно при стихотворном тексте. Наш прозаический текст, в соединении с свободно-ритмическим богатством речи, дал нам поле для составления древне-церковных напевов, самых удивительных по свободе ритмов и вместе по изяществу мелодий.¹⁹ (Rhythmic structure in our singing is absolutely free

¹⁸ *Orthodox Church Music*. St. Vladimir Seminary, Crestwood: 1985, pp. 8, 27.

¹⁹ S. Smolensky, «Ob ukazaniakh ottenkov ispolneniia» (On Nuances), p. 81.

due to the Church Slavonic prose, which replaced the Greek. A remarkable rhythmic flexibility, making it possible for our melodies to be applied to any kind of asymmetrical or symmetrical rhythms of the prosaic text, and the complete elasticity of stresses of the Church Slavonic language, have resulted in the fact that we are extremely far from the conventional-Germanic [Western] rhythmic musical structures in our old melodies. Practically absent is the idea of fitting our text into square musical units of 2, 3 or 4 beats, as is possible in verse text. Our prosaic text, together with its wealth of rhythmic fluidity of speech, gave us grounds for the creation of ancient liturgical chants, most remarkable in their rhythmic suppleness and melodic elegance).

Another aspect of erosion of national identity is today's trend towards unison and congregational singing. Congregational singing, appropriate for certain portions of the Service, and unison singing, an essentially Greek tradition, are not meant to replace the centuries-old Russian choral tradition.

Furthermore, there is a definite fundamental difference between Russian choral and Greek unison singing:

Мы, русские, всегда поем хором, соборим певцов, кроме, разумеется отдельных и предвиденных случаев. Противуположения одного певца целому хору есть один из наиболее любимых приемов в нашем народном пении. Сообразно этому в хоровом церковном пении, каково оно у нас изстари, мы выработали у себя искусство совершенно противоположное тому, что было когда то воспринято Русью от греков. У греков и до сих пор поет один певец- протопсалт- которому хор из желающих подтягивают без слов так наз. «исон» т.е. главный звук исполняемой части напева. У греков решительно нет и чередований одного певца с хором, противуположения «запева» с пением всего клироса. Мы, подчиняясь народному чувству, давно изгнали из своего храма солиста- протопсалта, оставив вместо него только запевалу- «головщика» (т.е. первого в хоре); мы точно также решительно изгнали из нашего пения «исон», уцелевший, напр. у болгар, сербов, румын, даже и в нынешней Червонной, Галицкой Руси, также и в Угорской Руси. Северная, Московская и лесная Русь совершенно переменила роли певцов, поставив вместо «протопсалта» целый хор, с непременным головщиком, и создав, для этих именно исполнителей, обязанность исполнять хором же всю обязательную, уставную часть напева.²⁰ (We Russians, always sing in chorus, with a gathering of singers, with the exception of course of certain situations. Contrasting one singer with the entire choir is one of the most beloved tradition in our folk singing. Therefore, in our choral church singing of long-standing tradition, we have developed an art completely opposite of the one which Russia inherited from the Greeks. The Greek tradition, to this day, is to have a soloist- the protopsalt- to whom a group of those who are willing, add without words, the so-called ison, the main pitch of a particular melody being performed. The Greeks do not cultivate the alternation of a lead singer with the choir, contrasting the intonation of a leader with the the entire klyros. We, subserviant to our people's ingenuity, long ago abolished from our church the protopsalt, having established instead, the zapevalogolovshchik (lead singer in a choir); we also, just as resolutely have expelled the ison, which nevertheless has survived in the tradition of the Bulgarians, Serbians, Rumanians and even in today's Chervonnaia and Galitskaia Rus', as well as in Ugorsk. However in

²⁰ S. Smolensky, «Ob ukazaniakh ottenkov ispolneniia» (On Nuances), pp. 72-73.

the north, the Moscow and central forest Russia, have completely altered the role of the singers, instituting instead of the protopsalt, an entire choir, with its lead singer, and prescribing to all singers the momentous responsibility of chorally executing the canonic portions of the chant melodies).

Unison singing has been promoted by followers of Tolstoy and similar-minded sectarian advocates of the revolution, who have dismissed church-related arts and aesthetics, robbing them of their beauty, a process that has resulted in the gradual erosion of tradition, only a step away from the destruction of the church.

В обществе и в печати нередко слышатся суждения, направленные против художественного исполнения за Богослужением в храме Божиим музыкально-гармонизованных церковных песнопений. Говорят и пишут, будто церковное пение не должно иметь целей музыкально-эстетических, будто оно должно быть безыскусственным и простым, т.е. негармонизованным и стало быть одноголосным (в крайнем случае-унисонным). Не послужат-ли скорее суждения о простоте в православном церковном пении на руку тем лицам в нашем обществе, которые увлекаются сектантскими идеями пашковцев, толстовцев, штундистов и др.? Ведь от притязаний на простоту в церковном пении весьма легкий переход к упрощению церковного обряда, к умалению церковно-богослужебного благолепия и к уничтожению наружных и внутренних украшений в храмах Божиих, то есть к тому, что именно и совпадает с идеями названных сектантов.²¹ (In society and in the press, one quite often hears comments against the performance of aesthetic harmonized singing of church music during the Services. They say and write, that church music should not have any musical-aesthetic goals, that it should be artless and simple, in other words not polyphonic or harmonized but monophonic (in extreme cases- in unison). Wouldn't these comments serve well those in our society, who are infatuated with the sectarian mindset of the Pashkovs, Tolstoys, etc.? From simplification of church singing, there is a very thin line to the simplification of church customs, to the belittling of dignity in our Services, and to the annihilation of both exterior and interior beautification of the church, in essence, that which coincides with the beliefs of these sectarians).

Today, the trend is to promote a return to unison singing at the expense of the choral music composed since the seventeenth century. Textbooks that claim to teach the history of Russian church music, stop at the seventeenth century and dismiss the entire choral tradition Russia developed over the last few hundred years.²²

A favorite pastime in seventeenth-century Russia was to sing or listen to sacred music performed outside of church. Both Tsars Aleksei and Fedor were enthusiasts and promoters of the church-related

²¹ S.Protopopov, *O khudozhestvennom elemente* (On the Artistic Element), p. 3-4.

arts. They encouraged singing in a wide range of genres and styles, from chant-based polyphonic sacred music,²³ to the singing of 3-part *kanty i psal'my* [spiritual songs], harmonizations of chants and multi-voice *kontserty* [vocal concerti], at performances for Christmas and various other holy days. For this sort of spiritual *развлечение* [entertainment], singers were rewarded with substantial sums of money as well as food and clothing, such as furs. Hundreds of manuscripts that have not yet been transcribed, attest to a great diversity of stylistic expression that prevailed in the musical language of Russia during the seventeenth century. This was also a time of great architectural flowering of the Moscow Baroque, when dedicated families built sumptuous churches replete with artistic treasures. The Moscow Baroque represented a time of aesthetic blossoming of all the church-related arts. Choirs grew in number considerably, serving both monastic and parish churches, as well as clergy and court officials. Although cloaked in a Western format, the music of that period also exhibited strong ties to the Russian past. Here, in the seventeenth century, lies the beginning of Russia's sacred choral expression with its unique individuality and manner of singing. Singers were well-versed in a variety of styles, from chant-based native polyphony to the new more homophonic style of the Western Baroque. Although vertical in its alignment of voices, the new style preserved a linear sense of compositional thinking, with emphasis on variation rather than exact duplication of parts. As a product of its time, the Moscow Baroque was consistent with the Western musical language of the period. There were tutti/solo alternations and imitative entries of voices. These existed side by side with such Russian features as *подголосие* [under-voice polyphony], fragments of chant, and a thick multi-layered texture.²⁴ Virtuosity was present, but it was not measured by the ability to sing rapid decorative passages, but by the ability to transmit the intensity of the text, and to solemnly sustain a long-winded melodic phrase, a practice inherited from the *znamenny* chant.

²² V.I. Martynov, *Istoriia Bogoslužebnogo peniia* (The History of Church Music). Moscow: 1994, p. 109.

²³ For a history of Russian Orthodox music, see J. von Gardner, *Bogoslužebnoe penie Russkoi pravoslavnoi tserkvi* (Liturgical Singing of the Russian Orthodox Church), 2 vols. Jordanville, NY: 1978-82. Volume I has been translated and edited by Vladimir Morosan, St. Vladimir Seminary Press: NY, 2000.

The same is true of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century music. Although Bortniansky was a product of the classical age and was expected to produce in the best manner of the classical West, his music for the church had a distinctively Russian national character.

Крайне не лепо и поверхностно мнение, что сочинения Бортнянского, нисколько не принадлежат русской музыке, и по своему характеру- западно-европейския. Духовныя сочинения Бортнянского, за немногими исключениями, принадлежат русской музыке, как по генезису мелодий, так и по характеру. Он был обязан удовлетворять своему назначению, т.е. сочинять не хуже итальянцев. Если бы он, вопреки эстетической потребности придворных вельмож того времени, угостил их русским контрапунктом, то несомненно, что его место тотчас же занял бы новый итальянец, выписанный из-за моря. Он был образованный, русский музыкант, он был великий мастер, идейный и вдохновенный художник, неустанно в течение всей жизни своей стремившийся к намеченной цели. В нем был гений, могущий удовлетворить эстетические потребности современников всех классов и возрастов и нескольких последующих поколений»²⁵ (Very false and shallow is the opinion, that the compositions of Bortniansky do not belong to Russian music and are, by their character- western European. The sacred works of Bortniansky, with a few exceptions, do belong to Russian music, in their melodic genesis as well as in their character. He was obliged to fulfill his position which was to compose not worse than the Italians. If he had acted against the aesthetic need of the court grandees of his time and had treated them to Russian counterpoint, then naturally, his position would have at once been taken by an Italian, across from the sea. He was an educated Russian musician, a great master, a high-principled inspired artist, tirelessly and during the course of his entire life, striving towards a designated goal. In him was a genius, capable of fulfilling the aesthetic needs of all classes and ages of his day as well as those of future generations).

Bortniansky's knowledge and experience, and most of all, his love of old chant melodies, led him to return to the rich tradition of chant-based singing. He did it in a very tactful, delicate but firm manner, and against the current of the Italianate style that was in vogue at the time. His compositions are devoid of the self-absorbed solos, a major step towards a focus on text and homogeneity of sound that became known as *стройность* [harmoniousness]. This was a bold step in reawakening Russian humility and austerity, at a time when eighteenth-century Russia was in the midst of westernization, with its focus on self-importance. Bortniansky's music evidences a profound adherence to text, as is the case, for instance, in his compositions for Great Lent. He also made sure that the St. Petersburg Court Chapel Choir was no

²⁴ For sources on the Moscow Baroque, see O. Dolskaya, *Vasilii Titov and the Russian Baroque*. Musica Russica, 1995, *Spiritual Songs in Seventeenth-Century Russia*. Koln: Bohlau Verlag, 1996 and „Vasilii Titov and the Moscow Baroque,“ in *The Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, London (1993).

longer involved in secular performances but was devoted entirely to sacred singing. Boisterous and superfluous vocal effects were avoided and soon the Choir developed a genuinely sacred style of singing, for the excellence of which it became known as the most respected interpreter of sacred choral music in the world.²⁶ The Chapel Choir was always held in high esteem, and when the Italian master Galuppi heard it for the first time, he exclaimed: «Such a great choir I have never heard in Italy!»²⁷ The Kievo-Pecherskaia Lavra Monastery Choir, consisting of forty male singers, was also known to sing стройно, harmoniously, highly focused, with good diction and with a well-blended sound in which no individual voice was heard, despite Russia's amazing abundance of natural but untrained voices in church choirs.

Despite the fact that the tenor was getting on in years, his voice was sonorous, of a tremendously lush timbre, something in-between a tenor and a delicate woman's contralto... as to the tenor soloist, his voice was exceptional, very even in both middle and high registers, with a velvety, delicate timbre; he sings with utmost flexibility, agility, completely free of straining. If this voice got the least bit of training, it would be a finding for an operatic entrepreneur who lives amongst modern gullet crushers bleating like sheep.²⁸

One very important aspect of Russian national tradition is to rely on basses, not simply for volume, but for the intensification of text and a smooth connection between phrases. For centuries, until communism silenced them, Russia was famous for its basses. Some church and monastery choirs were made up of nothing but basses who were valued, in demand, and often paid better salaries than choir directors. At the time of Peter the Great, a foreign dignitary remarked:

The magnificent basses, which in Russia are mightier than anywhere else, have voices so clear and profound, that they resemble the sound of an organ. In Italy, they would command great sums of money.²⁹

Memorable are the reactions of those who witnessed the basses and octavists of the Court Chapel Choir under Alexis Lvov's tenure:

²⁵ N. Kompaneisky, «Otvét na zametku o melodii gimna 'Kol' slaven nash Gospod'» (A Response to an Observation Regarding the Melody of the Hymn "Kol' Slaven"), *Russkaia muzykal'naia gazeta*, no. 8 (1902), p. 234, 237.

²⁶ S. Smolensky, «Pamiati D.S. Bortnianskago» (In Memory of Bortniansky), *Russkaia muzykal'naia gazeta* (1901), p. 923.

²⁷ I. Stachlin, «Izvestiia o muzyke v Rossii» (News About Music in Russia), *Muzyka i balet v Rossii XVIII veka*, reprint edition, B. Zagursky, trans. Leningrad: 1935, p. 60.

²⁸ N. Kompaneisky, «Tserkovnoe penie v Kieve» (Church Singing in Kiev), *Russkaia muzykal'naia gazeta*, no. 40 (1904), p. 877.

A wondrous vocal orchestra! The doubling of the fundamental [by the octavists] gives the ensemble a type of mellowness that is unknown in our vocal groups and makes this choir resemble a grandiose organ, the magnificence and effect of which upon an impressionable listener's nervous system is beyond description.³⁰

The singers of the Russian Imperial Chapel perform works by Bortniansky with a perfection of ensemble, finesse of nuances, and beauty of sound that is hardly imaginable. But this, instead of being the force of untrained masses of voices, is the product of exceptional art; one owes it to the excellence of the training of the chosen choristers. The choir is composed of 84 singers, men and boys, who perform either slowly, with an angelic calmness of expression, which requires an excellent vocal technique and art of sustaining power, resulting in a sound that surpasses everything that exists in Europe. They have low voices, unknown to us, which descend to the depths of the low f below the bass clef. They all stood motionless, eyes downcast, waiting with the most profound stillness for the moment to begin, and with a sign that was unseen by anyone and not perceptible as to who gave the pitch or tempo, they suddenly broke into one of the grandest 8-voice concertos by Bortniansky.³¹

Stunning is the historian Johann von Gardner's recollection of a Pontifical Service he had attended in Moscow in 1915:

Среди этой внезапно наступившей тишины, раздался негромкий, но наполнявший весь храм низкий грудной бас протодьякона Розова: 'Премудрость'. И потом еще тише, еще ниже, тихим говорком-рокотком: 'Достойно есть, яко во истину, блажити Тя Богородицу'.. тихо, тихо начал на обоих клиросах собранный полностью синодальный хор петь входное 'Достойно'. Чистые ровные голоса мальчиков-серебряные дисканты, медные альты, легкие порхающие тенора, певучие баритоны и бездонные бархатные октавы слились в один мощный, но тихий, дивный хор, наполняя весь Собор. Да, это незабываемо и блажен тот, кто видел и слышал эту красоту: такой славы и красоты больше нет на земле».³² (In the midst of this sudden silence, resounded the soft, low but filling the entire cathedral, sound of Protodeacon Rozov's chest-voice bass- Premudrost;. Then even more softly, even lower, with a quiet speaking voice- Dostoino iest', iako vo istinu, blazhiti Tia Bogoroditsu... and softly, softly, the Synodal choir fully gathered for the occasion, began to sing Dostoino iest' for the Pontifical Entrance, on both klirosy. The clear, straight voices of the boys- silvery discants, bronze-like altos, light fluttering tenors, lyrical melodious baritones and bottomless [fathomless], velvety octavists merged into one mighty, but quiet, extraordinary choir, filling the entire Cathedral. Yes, this is unforgettable and blessed is he who heard such beauty: such glory and beauty no longer exists on earth)

The pre-revolutionary conductor Vasilii Orlov also spoke of basses and their мягкое бархатное звучание [warm velvety sound]:

²⁹ *Dnevnik V.F. Berhgoľ'tsa* (The Diary of F. V. Bergholz), part 3. Moscow: 1903, p. 186.

³⁰ *Russkaia muzykal'naiia gazeta*, 38 (1903). Quoted in English in V. Morosan, *Choral Performance in pre-revolutionary Russia*, p. 82.

³¹ Hector Berlioz, *Les Soirees de l'Orchestre*. Paris: 1853, pp. 268-270.

Басы Синодального хора напоминали воим звуком отчасти виолончель- по легкости и простоте тона...От вторых басов и октавистов Орлов добивался бархатистого звука, полного и сочного, но отнюдь не резкого. Октависты, удваивая верхний бас, проводили как бы легкую тень к линии главного баса, вовсе не выделяясь на удивление миру” “От теноров Орлов требовал мягкости, но не силы.³³ (Basses of the Synodal Choir reminded one partially of the sound of the cellos, with their light and supple tone. And from the low basses, Orlov obtained a velvety sound, full and juicy, but never rough. Octavists doubled the upper bass, and provided a delicate shadow to the line of the main bass, who never stood out to “astonish the world.” From the tenors, Orlov demanded an ethereal gentleness, not power)

That rich yet mellow “velvety” bass sound of the past is the opposite of the rough crude sound one often hears today. As to the emphasis on low voices, bronze-like altos and fathomless velvety basses, it can be seen as the direct opposite of the West’s preoccupation with the upper voices. Basses were there to provide a rich and consistent foundation for the choir to lean on, which in turn led to a full harmonious sound. That foundation is lacking, for instance, in today’s interpretation of Tchaikovsky’s Liturgy and thus yields very different results from those which existed in pre-revolutionary Russia. When the Metropolitan Singers of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, led by I. Ternov sang Tchaikovsky’s Liturgy with delicate grace and elegance, a critic wrote:

Припевы были исполнены мужским хором так тихо, выделяя голос диакона, так мягко и гармонично, что послужили прекрасным фоном, на котором ярче выдавались красоты херувимской песни. Они умеют давать звук разнообразного характера, умеют выговаривать внятно слова. Заповеди блаженства были пропеты с таким изяществом и легкостью, что, не в обиду будь сказано, оперным солистам пришлось бы много раз побывать на спевке у Тернова, чтобы приобрести такое искусство.”³⁴ (The responses in the Litanies were performed by the male choir so softly, bringing out the voice of the deacon, so delicately and harmoniously, that they served as a wonderful background, on which more radiant was the beauty of the Cherubic Hymn. How worthwhile it would be for choir directors to listen to the enormous musical effect of such a performance of the Litany. The singers know how to emit sounds of different characters, they know how to pronounce the words clearly. The Beatitudes were sung with such elegance and grace, that one might safely say, that opera soloists would have to attend many of Ternov’s rehearsals in order to acquire such art)

That elegance and dynamic precision within a full-bodied harmonious whole, highly focused on text, is in essence that which differentiated Russian singing from that of other nations.

³² J. von Gardner, «Ushedshii mir» (A Time Gone By), *Zhar ptitsa* (November: 1956), p. 16.

³³ A. Nikolsky, «Vasilii Sergeevich Orlov», *Khorovoe i regenstkoe delo*, nos. 11-12 (1913), pp. 105-106.

³⁴ N. Kompansky, «Zapakoinaia Liturgiia v den’ konchiny Chaikovskago» (The Liturgy for the Dead on the Day of Tchaikovsky’s Death), *Russkaia muzykal’naia gazeta* (1902), p. 1073.

One does not know which is more admirable, the volume of sound which now and then sinks from a crashing crescendo to a pianissimo, which is like a concord of soft stops on an immense organ, or the precision in which the harmonies are blent. Those who had the privilege of hearing this choir and that of the Cathedral Choir at Moscow, and those who heard the private soldiers singing in the regiment of the gardes a cheval, not only have heard the final expression of what is characteristic of Russian music, but have been brought face to face with the Russian soul, its faith in the Eternal Love, its certitude in the love and presence of God and the existence of an invisible world. Two facts struck those of us who had never been to Moscow. Firstly, its beauty, and secondly, the democratic character of the town and of its people. I visited a school founded in memory of the famous critic Belinsky- a school where children of the very poorest class of the population receive education free of charge. Seldom have I seen a school where the children looked so happy.³⁵

An important figure associated with Russian national identity was the composer and conductor Alexei Fedorovich Lvov. He was summoned by Tsar Nicholas I to cleanse church music from the excesses of Italian fiorituras inappropriate for Orthodox worship. When he set out to harmonize the chant in his *Obikhod* [Book of chant harmonizations for daily services], Lvov introduced asymmetrical non-metric singing based on the speech inflections of the text. He realized that the phrases of text set to chant were irregular in length, and that the presence of bar lines and duple or triple metric division would only defeat the purpose of transmitting the text. Not to include bar lines in those days was considered uncivilized, yet Lvov had the courage to stand against the current and take the first step in the right direction. He also promoted the idea of seamless elasticity in singing, the use of gentle high voices elegantly supported by rich basses and the practice of doubling the bass with octavists, resulting in a warm, balanced, pyramid sound, better known as the St. Petersburg style, a direct manifestation of Russian national identity.

In his *Memoirs*, Lvov speaks of his reverence for chant and for the inherently Russian величавое пение [solemn singing] and its мягкое звучание [soft warm sound]. He replaces Italian dynamic

³⁵ Maurice Baring, "The English Visit to Russia," *The Russian Review* (1912), p. 104-108.

markings with such Russian terms as медленно or протяжно [slow or protracted], усилия [intensifying), величественно [solemnly].³⁶ About nuances, Lvov writes:

Эффект этой массы хористов в огромной зале, при верности пения и крайном соблюдении оттенков, был совершенно новый и столь разителен, что с трудом мог я дирижировать от чувства и сотрасения моих нервов, особенно во время pianissimo. Государь был в восхищении. С самага начала я заметил, что он покраснел и глаза его наполнились слезами. Пред Греческими ирмосами он сказал мне: 'Это то пение, которое напечатано в одну строку и к которому ты прилагаешь гармонию?'- 'Точно так', сказал я Государю. 'Ваше одобрение для меня все'³⁷ (The effect of this mass of choristers, singing with such preciseness and meticulous rendition of nuances was so stunning that I had difficulty conducting, especially during pianissimos. The Tsar was overwhelmed. From the start I noticed that he blushed and his eyes filled with tears. He said to me: "Are these the settings to which you are writing harmony?"» Yes, I replied. He grasped my hand and said with admiration: «That is the homogeneous [focused] sound I desired, thank you, thank you» to which I replied: «I am your disciple. Your approval means everything to me»)

From the time of the inclusion of Lvov's Obikhod in the churches across Russia, it was noticed that the number of parishioners increased, including Old-Believers, who having recognized their beloved chants, припевали³⁸ or sang along quietly with the choir. The use of shades of nuances to emphasize important words in harmonizations of chants was inherited from Lvov. Few will dispute the magnificence of even the simplest 4-part chant harmonizations when sung стройно [harmoniously]. The origins of nuances actually stem from крюковая нотация [Russia's ancient vocal neumatic notation], which contained within it, directions for shades of dynamics that were to be implemented by the singers.

В тексте вложена известная поэтическая мысль, вложено и художественное развитие этой мысли;- вложены иногда ряды мыслей, иногда и весьма сложные развития каждой из них; вложены всякия восклицания торжественныя, укорительныя, радостныя, печальныя;- вложены целыя сравнения, описания, увещания, и т.п. Ужели же можно предположить, что такая очевидныя особенности в отдельных частях текстов не находят в себе соответственных откликов в напевах, приданных тем частям? Крюковое письмо представляется значительно сложною и мудреною нотациею, когда его подробности служат для объяснения не одного только течения напева, но и оттенков его исполнения, а вместе и плана его музыкальной формы. Нынешние певцы не вникают в оттенки исполнения, указанные теми же самыми крюками,- не вникают в причины и в смысл нахождения известных знаков только на своих местах. Именно это-то нахождение и есть показатель музыкальной формы. Без оттенков при исполнении,- всякий

³⁶ A. Lvov, «Zapiski Alekseia Fedorovicha Lvova» (Memoirs of Alexei Fedorovitch Lvov), in *Russkii arkhiv* 4 (1884), p. 85.

³⁷ A. Lvov, «Zapiski», p. 99.

³⁸ Ibid, p. 92.

напев теряет прежде всего свою живость; напев мертвен- также как безжизненна, безчувственна всякая сонная, однообразная речь в сравнении с ясной, одушевленной и выразительно сказанною речью. Точно также без соблюдения указаний музыкальной формы,-всякий напев теряет прежде всего логику, осмысленность своего изложения, стройность отдельных частей и прояснение соотношений этих частей между собою, а в итоге- красоты построения целого песнопения, т.е. теряет художественность исполнения.³⁹ (In the text is set forth a particular poetic thought, a creative development of that thought- set forth are also particular series of thoughts, sometimes very complex developments of each one of them; set forth also are all sorts of exclamations, torzhestvennye, reproachful, joyful, sorrowful- entire comparisons, descriptions, etc. Surely can we not surmise that such textual subtleties cannot be echoed in their musical settings? The neumatic system is a complex and wise notation, as it serves not only to direct the flow of the chant, but also to execute its nuances in accordance with the plan of its musical form. Today's singers do not pay enough attention to nuances provided in the kriuki – they do not examine carefully the reasons for the placement of these particular signs. It is specifically that which determines the form. Without nuances during performance- each melody loses its liveliness; the melody is dead- just as lifeless, emotionless and devoid of character is a monotonous speech in comparison with one that is vivid, passionate and vibrant. In disrespecting the musical form- a melody loses first of all, its logic, its perceptive wisdom, and the focused balance of its individual parts together with the interrelationship between them, in essence- lost is the structural beauty of the entire chant melody, and of its aesthetic meaning in performance).

The composer and conductor Pavel Chesnokov, on the very first page of his most valuable book *Хор и управление им [The Choir and How to Direct It]*, defines the ideal sound of an a cappella choir our generation is seeking to recreate:

Попытаемся представить себе звучание такого хора: тихие, но широкие и полнзвучные аккорды, как волны, плавно катятся на нас; нас чарует ровная, полноценная звучность и удивительное слияние всех голосов в едином аккорде; мы не слышим в этой объединенной звучности не только отдельных певцов, но и отдельных партий хора, все слилось и уравнилось, чтобы образовать прекрасную звучность аккорда. Поражает цельность, монолитность этой звучности: хор с его многочисленными певцами представляется нам как бы единым живым организмом. Аккорды-волны начинают расти, расширятся и, наконец, достигают огромной мощи. В этом труднейшем процессе расширения, нарастания звука, в этой мощи хорового forte сохраняется вся та же слитность, целость, и в то же время ощущается такая легкость, как будто хор вовсе не затрачивает сил на это расширение звука, на это звучное, мощное forte⁴⁰ “Живые нюансы дают выражение. Выражение- душа исполнения”⁴¹ (Let us attempt to imagine the sound of such a choir: calm but expansive and full of sound are the chords, like waves, smoothly cascading on us; we are fascinated by the direct, resonant sound and the captivating blend

³⁹ S. Smolensky, «Ob ukazaniakh ottenkov ispolneniia» (On Nuances), pp. 66, 70, 72.

⁴⁰ P. Chesnokov, *Khor i upravlenie im* (The Choir and How to Direct It). Moscow: 1961, p. 21. This treatise on conducting has been translated by John Stuhr-Rommereim, and is available at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Bookstore.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 108.

of all voices in one chord: we cannot hear in this unified sonority not only individual singers, but even individual parts of the choir, all have merged together and evened out, in order to create the wonderful sound of a chord. Stunning is the wholeness, monolithic character of such a sonority: the choir, with its many singers becomes a unified living organism. The chords-waves begin to grow, get bigger and finally they reach enormous might. In this most difficult process of growth of sound, in this powerful choral forte is preserved all that togetherness, completeness, and at the same time is felt such airy weightlessness, as if the choir did not make the slightest effort to achieve this expansion of sound, this mighty, sonorous forte. Live nuances generate expression. Expression- is the soul of performance)

It is that soul and thus, its textual message, that is missing today. If there is no ensemble, there is no choir, only soloists, and instead of a peaceful, sonorous, inner forte, there is vocal showmanship and straining of voices. A unified monolithic sound leads to a clear projection of the meaning of the text, a goal that has yet to be achieved by choirs. Indeed, Chesnokov's main objective was to demonstrate balance, not only between parts, but within each part, ultimately leading to the choir sounding as one, and resulting in a perfect vehicle for transmitting the sacred text.

A composer whose importance in the transition from the St. Petersburg to the Moscow Synodal style of composition cannot be minimized, is Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. On Russian national expression he wrote:

Русское церковное пение- как народная песнь льется широкой, вольной струей из народной груди, и чем оно вольнее, тем полнее говорит сердце. Напевы у нас одинаковые с греками, но русский народ иначе поет их, потому что положил их в свою русскую душу. Кто хочет послушать, как эта душа сказывается, тому надо слушать пение в благоустроенном монастыре. Там услышит он, каким широким, вольным потоком выливается праздничный ирмос из русской груди, какой торжественной поэмой вышевается догматик, слагается стихира с канонархом, каким одушевлением радости проникнут канон Пасхи или Рождества Христова.⁴² (Russian Orthodox singing- like a folk song, flows in an expansive, free stream from the national bosom, and the freer it is, the more abundantly it speaks to the heart. Our melodies are analogous to those of the Greeks, but the Russian people sing them differently, because they have put their Russian soul into them. Whoever wants to hear how this soul is manifested, needs to do so in a good monastery. There he will hear, how the festive Irmos flows from the Russian bosom with a sweeping free current, how uplifting is the weaving of the poetry of the dogmatik, how the singing of the sticheras blends with the kanonarch, and how inspired and exalted are the Easter or Christmas Kanons).

⁴² Quoted in M. Rakhmanova, «Dukhovnaia muzyka» (Sacred Music), in *Muzykal'naia akademiia*, no. 2 (1994), pp. 52-53.

It is in Rimsky-Korsakov's choral works⁴³ that we begin to hear those awe-inspiring parallelisms that were part of clergy singing for centuries and finally settled as a major trademark of the Synodal School style of the late nineteenth century. It is here that we encounter such features as the doubling of the chant at different intervals (including fifths and octaves), the use of lowered sevenths, cadences at the unison or octave, hollow fifths (without the third), all of which come to maturation in the works of Kastalsky, Chesnokov, Kalinnikov and Rachmaninov of the Synodal School, among many others. In their solemn simplicity (diatonic and uncomplicated by modern harmonies), these пустоты or hollow fifths, as they were labeled by Rimsky-Korsakov, are a trademark of Russian national identity. The composer was very impressed by them during his visit to the Donskoi Monastery in Moscow and some of his compositions for the church are infused with the *torzhestvennost'* of the solemn monastic Muscovite style.

“Тихвинское архимандритское служение и церковное пение мне всегда нравились своей красотой и торжественностью.”⁴⁴ (The Tikhvin monastic rite of the clergy and monastic singing, always impressed me with its beauty and *torzhestvennost'*)

By the end of the nineteenth century, virtually no church was without a choir, even in far away provincial Russia, and some were conducted by women:

In parish churches, where there is nothing grand in the way of a choir- often only four or five men and boys- it is really wonderful how they keep the pitch through those long services. I have tried them with a tuning fork, and at the end of two hours, notwithstanding the heavy strain of the service, they were in exactly the same pitch they began in. There was no gradually getting flatter and flatter.⁴⁵

It is Ascension Day. I have just been to the convent. There were crowds of people, both local and from surrounding districts. There wasn't a place to be found in the church, but through the kindness of a nun I got into the gallery. The choir today was in the gallery and I was interested to watch the choirmistress, an old lady with characteristic nun's features still bearing traces of great beauty. Some of the things were sung from music, very well, so this old woman knows her music.⁴⁶

⁴³ Rimsky-Korsakov's sacred choral compositions were omitted in the Soviet edition of his Complete Works. They have been recently published by Musica Russica, Vladimir Morosan, editor.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 60.

⁴⁵ W. Birbeck, "Some Notes Upon Russian Ecclesiastical Music, Ancient and Modern," in *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*. London (1890-91), p. 162.

⁴⁶ Letter to Mme von Meck, 25 May, 1878. «To my Best Friend», ed. by Edward Garden and Nigel Gotteri. Oxford: 1993, pp. 277-278.

In the provincial southern region of the Kuban, in the city of Ekaterinodar, there was a church-sponsored summer music school⁴⁷ for everyone to attend, including women. In the long list of clergymen brutally murdered by bolsheviks in the Stavropol Diocese of the Kuban in 1918, we read:

В станице Попутной протоиерей Иванов 30 лет прослуживший в этой станице был заколот красноармейцами за то, что он в проповедях указывал, что они ведут Россию на погибель.⁴⁸ (In the county Poputnaia, the Protopriest Ivanov, having served for about 30 years in that county, was pierced to death by Red Army soldiers, for the simple reason that in his sermons, he stated that the Red Army is leading Russia to ruin).

Fr. Pavel's daughter, Nadezhda Pavlovna, was one such woman choir director, whose excellent large choir sang the latest repertoire (including Rachmaninoff) soon after it was composed. Fr. Pavel's entire family, together with Nadezhda Pavlovna and millions of others, were brutally tortured and murdered during Lenin/Trotsky's extermination of the Cossack population, among other nationalities,⁴⁹ simply because their people were dedicated to Orthodoxy, the Tsar and Russian national identity.

Провести самую беспощадную борьбу со всеми верхами казачества путем поголовного их истребления. Чем больше вырежем, тем скорее утвердится Советская власть на Дону... о полном, быстром и решительном уничтожении казачества. Заселять казачьи хутора выходцами из Центральной России. Чтобы под видом подавления истребить казачье население.⁵⁰ (Implement the most merciless struggle with all the upper levels of Cossack society by way of their extermination. The more of them we butcher, the quicker will Soviet leadership be established on the Don, a complete, quick and absolute obliteration of the Cossack people. Ordain the resettlement of Cossack farms with repatriation from Central Russia, so that under the pretense of suppression, we annihilate the entire Cossack population)

И вот, когда уже затихло, оцепенело и омертвело, когда остатки Врангелевской армии ушли за границу, а оставшиеся в Крыму были (около семидесяти тысяч) расстреляны или утоплены в Черном море с камнями, привязанными к ногам.⁵¹ (And so, when all quieted down, benumbed and deadened, when the remains of Wrangel's army escaped abroad, those who remained behind in Crimea (about 70 thousand) were shot or drowned in the Black Sea, with stones tied to their feet)

⁴⁷ A. Karasev, «Kratkii ocherk letnikh kursov peniia byvshykh v 1898 godu v gor. Ekaterinodare» (Brief Essay on the Summer Singing Courses in 1898 in Ekaterinodar), in *Russkaia muzykal'naia gazeta*, nos. 11-12 (1898).

⁴⁸ Valentinov, A. *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book). Paris: 1925, p. 44.

⁴⁹ See Soloukhin, V. *Solionoe ozero* (The Salty Lake). Moscow: 1994, pp. 62, passim.

⁵⁰ Correspondence between members of the Secretariat of the TsK RKP (Central Committee of the Communist Party) Jan-March 1919, in Genis, V. «Raskazachivanie v Sovetskoi Rossii» (The Cossack Extermination in Soviet Russia), *Voprosy istorii*, no. 1 (1994), p. 42.

⁵¹ Soloukhin, V. *Solionoe ozero* (The Salty Lake) p. 73.

Вечная Память Российским Новомученникам!- Memory Eternal to Russia's New Martyrs!⁵²

What has taken place since the onset of communism is not only the genocide of the Russian people but a very calculated extermination of Orthodoxy, and along with it, the annihilation of its church-related arts. By the early 1930s, darkness had fallen on Russia:

The date was February 18, 1932 (n.s.) It is a radiant and yet a terrible date, the Passion Friday of Russian monasticism- ignored by all and almost unknown to the whole world- when all of Russian monasticism in a single night disappeared into the concentration camps. It was all done in the dead of night and with the full knowledge of Metropolitan Alexis. Soon after this 'Holy Night', the freedom-loving United States of America was to recognize the Soviet tyranny as a lawful government. And all the while, the puppet-bishops of Sergianism [Moscow Patriarchate] declared throughout the whole world that Christians in Russia were free.⁵³

In the first months of the revolution, the School and the Synodal Choir were liquidated and the library of ancient church music manuscripts, was thrown into the basement of the Moscow Historical Museum."⁵⁴ "At the present, we do not have a single choir that might be called exemplary. The classics, ours as well as Western ones, are not being performed. We are subsisting on contemporary trash and a repertory of "whatever you wish." There are no "a capella" choirs at all. And this in the heart of Russia- in Moscow! And yet it is not so long ago that our Synodal Choir amazed Vienna with its "a capella" singing.⁵⁵

The main goal of communism and of its associates, internationalism and ecumenism, has always been the destruction of their fiercest enemy- religion- and together with it, national identity.

And another bigwig from the Land of the Soviets' architecture, N. Ginsburg, decided to erase from the face of Moscow any trace of national identity. He decided to let it all deteriorate naturally, with time, so that people would not remember the splendid aesthetic beauty of Moscow. He labeled it the «desinfection» of Moscow. Desinfection from what?! One wants not only to ask, but to cry out. From the Russian spirit, from the people's national aesthetic wealth, from the precious historical past, from the Russian glory and beauty.⁵⁶

The aim of the Soviet authority was and is not at all the subjection of the Church to itself, and not even her enslavement, but rather her total and definitive annihilation. Militant

⁵² This brief look at the southern region near Ekaterinodar is but one example of many, where entire nationalities were exterminated by the communists. *Struggling Russia. Government Documents*. October 25, 1919, pp. 496-498. Also see V. Soloukhin, *Solionoe ozero* and *Pri svete dnia*.

⁵³ I. Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints: The Lives of the New Martyrs*. St. Herman of Alaska Press: CA, 1982, pp. 367-368.

⁵⁴ P. Chesnokov's Letter to Alfred Swan. November 8, 1935. Quoted in Milos Velimirovic, «Some Letters of Pavel Chesnokov in the United States», *Slavonic and Western Music*, Oxford University Press: 1985, p. 264.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Milos Velimirovic, «Some Letters of Pavel Chesnokov in the United States», pp. 256-257.

⁵⁶ V. Soloukhin, *Posledniaia stupen'* (The Last Step), p. 129.

atheism is the State doctrine of the USSR. The subjection, the enslavement of the Church are only intermediate moments, steps toward her total annihilation. While the government authority openly announces its battle against faith and the Church, the Patriarchate gives the appearance of not noticing this, and even more, it strives to convince everyone of the contrary.⁵⁷

Especially zealous was Lunacharsky in his effort to ensure that «the study of Russian history be devoid of its national character and that students do not develop a love for their country».⁵⁸ As to Lenin's view of Russia as a nation, it is well-known that he hated all that was Russian, the Tsar, the people, the church and its clergy, the peasants and the proletariat.⁵⁹ To comrades who complained about his reckless treatment of Russia during the famine, Lenin replied:

It isn't a question of Russia at all, gentlemen. I spit on Russia! This is merely a phase through which we must pass on the way to world revolution."⁶⁰

To his his assistant Barzin, Lenin wrote:

“Hand out the work to Russian idiots: send the cuttings here, but not occasional issues (as these idiots have been doing until now).” Without a blush, Lenin could call his fellow-countrymen idiots who could only be trusted to do the simplest tasks, while left-wingers from Zurich had to be paid ‘arch-generously’.⁶¹

The irrevocable damage caused by communism to Russia's artistic treasures and aesthetics is beyond description. Here is but a small window into the tragedy, as seen through the eyes of those who witnessed the great theft committed by the communist regime, robbing Russia of its church and monastery valuables, aesthetic treasures from museums and private estates, many of which were sold abroad to finance the revolution and its subsequent 5-year plans. Newly released documentation evidences how ardently the people defended their church valuables and how aware they were of Lenin's lies about the famine. The details (enclosed quotations) of these documents demonstrate the devious and insidious ways of communism. In only a few years, from 1917 to 1924, Lenin and his revolution became responsible for 25 million lives. Aside from the millions who were slaughtered, it is by now a well-known

⁵⁷ R. Pipes, ed. *The Unknown Lenin: From the Secret Archives*. Yale University Press: 1996, p. 532.

⁵⁸ Brachev, V. «In our country, even the study of Russian history has been eradicated» in *Delo istorikov (1929-1931)* (The Historians' Affair (1929-1931)). St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 47.

⁵⁹ V. Soloukhin, *Pri svete dnia* (By the Light of Day), 1992, p. 89-90.

⁶⁰ E. Lyons, *Our Secret Allies: The Peoples of Russia*. New York: 1953, p. 96.

fact that the famine which killed millions of people, including peasants, was engineered by Lenin. Actually there was plenty of food stored from tsarist Russia to last for years in case of a natural disaster, but it was purposely not distributed so as to bend people to Lenin's will. By withholding bread, Lenin gained control of people's lives and even admitted to have forced them into submission.⁶² During the bolshevik seizure of church valuables (under the pretext of helping the famine), the people of Moscow offered bread or money in exchange for keeping their church valuables, but Lenin refused. In their letter addressed to the Secretariat of Lenin's Central Committee in charge of collecting church valuables, they [the people] wrote:

У Савеловского вокзала лежит 4000 пуда хлеба на площади и никуда не отправляют; мое предложение отправить в голодающую губернию, т.е. в Поволжье»⁶³ «Телеграмма совета приходской общины с. Барайтского Красноярского уезда Енисейской губернии В. Ленину с просьбой разрешить замену изымаемых церковных ценностей продуктами. На обороте. Приказ [от Ленина]: Ответить что замена ценностей хлебом воспрещается»⁶⁴ «Одновременно общия собрания прихожан выносят постановления о недопустимости изъятия церковных ценностей, предлагая брать вместо ценностей деньги»⁶⁵ «Большевицкий Синод по казенной почте и телеграфу разсылает приказы и назначения по всей России, карает и милует, дает хлеб и отнимает; и все остальные кафедры, церкви, приходы, священники очутились под железным колпаком его власти.»⁶⁶ (“On the floor of the Savelovsky Train Station lies 4000 poods of bread and it is not being sent anywhere; my suggestion is that they send it to the hungry, to Povolzhie” “Telegram from the parish committee of the Baratinsky Krasnoiarisk region of the Enisei county to V. Lenin with a request to permit us to substitute church valuables with food. On the back of the letter. Order from Lenin: Respond that the substitution of food for church valuables is prohibited.” “At the same time, committees of parish churches are releasing statements saying that the confiscation of church valuables is inadmissible, and that they are offering money to feed the hungry instead.” “The Bolshevik Synod is disseminating by mail and telegraph various decrees throughout Russia, admonishing and pardonning, giving bread and taking it away, all while employees of universities, churches, parishes, clergymen, find themselves under the iron lid of its power.”)

In a letter of protest, the art historian and curator of the historical museum in Viazniki of the Province of Vladimir, Nikolai Kharlamov lamented:

⁶¹ Letter from 1920 to Jan Barzin, member of the Bolshevik Central Committee. Quoted in Dmitri Volkogonov, *Lenin: A New Biography*, 1994, p. xxxvii.

⁶² V. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Complete Works). Moscow: 1958, vol. 36, pp. 269, 369, 449.

⁶³ *Arkhivy Kremliia: Politburo i tserkov 1922-1925* (The Archives of the Kremlin: The Politburo and the Church 1922-1925), 2 vols. Moscow: 1998, pp. 110-112.

⁶⁴ *Arkhivy Kremliia*, pp. 306-307.

⁶⁵ A. Valentinov. *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book) p. 57.

Икона Божией Матери Казанская древнего письма в шитой жемчугом с бриллиантовыми звездами (приснодевства) ризе, в серебряном, чеканном с жемчужными, бриллиантовыми и из цветных камней и перлов украшениями, имеет историко-художественное (музейное) значение. В общем живопись в жемчуге, серебряный венец и оклад со всем декоративным убранством иконы составляют столь неразрывное целое, такую интуитивно созданную великолепную концепцию, истинно прекрасного национально-художественного вкуса, что разрушение этого национально-художественного исторического целостного памятника искусства и старины является совершенно невыносимым и недопустимым.⁶⁷ (The icon of the Virgin Mother of Kazan is an example of antique iconography, sewn with pearl and diamond stars on the vestment, in silver embossed with pearls, ornamented with diamonds and colored precious stones- it is of historical-artistic (museum) value. In essence, the icon with pearls and a silver crown, in all its decorative attire, represents such a binding whole, such an intuitive creation of magnificent conception, of such truly wonderful national-aesthetic taste, that the destruction of this national monument of artistic, traditional aesthetic and historic value becomes totally inconceivable and inadmissible).

Newly published documents paint a tragic picture of the seizure:

1922 года Апреля 18, мы нижеподписавшиеся граждане с. Палеха, Шуйского уезда, собравшись сего числа, не можем остаться безучастными при обвинении о. Иоанна Рождественского в агитации в проповеди против Рабоче-Крестьянской власти. Считаем нужным довести до сведения Ревтрибунала хотя-бы о том, что благодаря трудам и энергии о. Иоанна, в селе Палехе в разное время были открыты следующие общественно-полезные учреждения, как то: 1) Палеховское Общество Потребителей, 2) Палеховская Библиотека Читальня, 3) Палеховское Кредитное Товарищество. О. Иоанн много содействовал распространению просвещения среди крестьянства; 4) Палеховская школа II ступени, разсадник знания несколько волостей уезда, обязана своим открытием больше всех- все ему же о. Иоанну.⁶⁸ (On April 18, 1922, we, whose signatures appear below, citizens of Palekh of the Shuia District, having gathered on this day, cannot remain uninvolved in the accusation that Fr. John Rozhdestvensky agitated against the Worker-Peasant regime. We consider it important to bring to the attention of the Revtribunal, at least the fact that thanks to the efforts and energy of Fr. John, in the town of Palekh, were opened the following institutions beneficial to our society: 1) The Palekh Society of Acquisitions, 2) the Palekh Reading Library, 3) the Palekh Credit Brotherhood. Fr. John contributed a great deal to art education among the peasants, 4) the Palekh Secondary School, which became a disseminator of knowledge for a number of different counties, is indebted to Fr. John for its existence...)

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 250.

⁶⁷ *Arkhivy Kremliia*, vol. 2, pp. 107-108.

⁶⁸ This is a protest against the communist government robbing Russia of one of its most famous schools of icon and miniature painting, the **Palekh** art center in the region of Shuia, appraised in the millions of dollars prior to the revolution, where thousands of protesters were murdered by order of the infamous letter by Lenin. *Arkhivy Kremliia*, p. 190. For Lenin's letter to Molotov and Politburo Members, Document 94, Top Secret, 19 March, 1922 see, R. Pipes, ed. *The Unknown Lenin: From the Secret Archive*. Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 152-155. For original letter in Russian, see *Arkhivy Kremliia*, pp. 140-144. One might add that the lackered boxes mimicking the miniature painting style of that school, are made by prisoners in concentration camps, then sold worldwide for hard currency, to further enrich the pockets of those who destroyed Russia and are still in power. See A. Shifrin, *The First Guidebook for Prisons and Concentration Camps of the Soviet Union*, 1982, p. 351.

Эксперты оценили в 375 млн золотых рублей одни только коронационные регалии» «Красин выполняя волю партии должен был тогда организовывать весьма деликатного свойства операции по нелегальной реализации за рубежом экспроприированных драгоценностей» «Драгоценности перевозятся за границу Внешторгом через надежных курьеров Коминдела или ответственных работников не подвергающихся пограничным осмотрам и хранятся при соответствующих миссиях» «Никакие церковные и религиозные общества не имеют права владеть собственностью. Прав юридического лица они не имеют» «Ценности пойдут для уплаты долгов Антанте, для предстоящей войны, не по назначению [для голодающих], а поступят в личное распоряжение коммунистов и разграбятя разными комиссиями. В Ростовском уезде в Варницком монастыре толпа верующих в количестве 300 чел. не допустила изъятие. Члены комиссии действовали насильно» «После расстрела толпы в Шуе власти способствовали распространению в Иваново-Вознесенской и соседних губерниях возвания владимирского митрополита Сергия (Страгородского), где он доказывал «бесполезность выступлений защиты храмов верующим, приводя примеры евангеля слов Христа» «Собранные церковные ценности пошли в первую очередь на самую кампанию по изъятию или, точнее говоря, на кампанию по расколу и разгрому Русской Православной Церкви!»⁶⁹ (“Experts have priced to 375 million gold rubles just the coronation regalia.” “Krasin in enacting the will of the party, had to very delicately organize an illegal way of dealing with the stolen treasures abroad.” “The valuables are being transported abroad by Vneshtorg through reliable courriers of the Komindel or responsible workers who are not subject to boarder searches, and they are preserved in missions accordingly.” “None of the church or religious institutions have the right to own possessions. Neither do they have any jursdictional rights.” “Valuables will be used to pay debts to Entente, for the present war, and not as prescribed [for the famine], but they will be at the personnal disposal of communists to be pillaged by various commissions.” “In Rostov at the Varnitsky Monastery the crowd of faithful numbering to 300 kept the pillaging from taking place.” “After the shooting of the crowd in Shuia, the authorities were influential in the dissemination in Ivanovo-Voznesenskoe and neighboring counties, of Vladimir’s Metropolitan Sergius’ (Starogorodsky) [later to become Patriarch of the Official Soviet Church] decree on how futile it is for the people to defend their churches, bringing forth examples from the words of Christ.” “The collected church valuables were used first and foremost to pay for the campaign on the church schism and the crushing defeat of the Russian Orthodox Church!”)

Явившись в Собор комиссия нашла там толпу верующих до 300 человек, которая не допускала комиссию к работе [и изъятию ценностей]. Пользуясь пребыванием т. Троцкого в Смоленске, комиссии удалось устроить с ним совместно совещание. К вечеру толпа верующих окружила Собор по сведением Политотдела в количестве до 6-7 тысяч человек. В исполнение указания т. Троцкого был разработан план агитационной кампании среди красноармейских частей, сначала заняться только подготовительной работой, одновременно комиссия поддерживала связь с верующими и вела с ними переговоры о выкупе церковных ценностей подлежащих изъятию. Эти переговоры имели и другую цель- отвлечь внимание верующих, составить среди их такое впечатление, что яко-бы мы не столь настойчивы в изъятии ценностей, желая с ними разрешить этот вопрос полюбовно. Было

⁶⁹ *Arkhiy Kremlia*, vol.1. pp. 19, 12, 13, 20, 66-69, 77, 82.

разрешено устроить собрание верующих, где бы они могли обсудить вопрос о возможности замены церковных ценностей. Поставить сильный вооруженный кардон у Собора в момент изъятия ценностей из надежных курсантов. Отдел должен выслать в момент изъятия ценностей, конный отряд на улицу. Состав толпы был самый разнообразный (подростки, женщины, торговцы, и т.д.) Со стороны толпы слышались ругань, крики и угрозы по отношению охранявших Собор курсантов. Выстрелы оказали свое психологическое действие и толпа начала расходиться. Пришлось вскрыть двери и войти в Собор. Подготовленными и экстренными мерами, сопротивление было сломлено и изъятие ценностей во всех остальных местах прошло безболезненно. По делу событий ведется судебное следствие и виновники событий будут преданы суду Ревтрибунала.⁷⁰ (Having arrived at the Cathedral, the commission found a crowd of 300 people that was not letting the commission do its work [seize the valuables] Taking advantage of comrade Trotsky's arrival in Smolensk, the commission was able to organize a meeting with him. Towards evening the crowd of faithful encircled the Cathedral, numbering in the 6-7 thousand people, according to the information received from Politotdel . Through the orders of comrade Trotsky was enacted an agitation campaign plan among Red Army divisions, first in terms of preparatory work, congruently with the idea that the commission must keep in contact with the faithful and keep holding talks with them about selling the church valuables. These talks had 2 goals- to distract the attention of the faithful, to create amongst them the notion that we are not that keen on taking away their valuables, that we want to resolve the situation amicably. Permission was given to organize a meeting of faithful, where they would be able to discuss the issue of what could be substituted for church valuables...[Meanwhile here were the real "preparations" taking care behind the backs of the faithful, O.D.]: We must place a strong fully armed battalion of very trusted students near the Cathedral at the moment of the removal of the valuables. Our division must send on the street, at the moment of the seizure of valuables, a detachment on horseback. The make-up of the crowd was most diverse (young people, women, merchants, etc.) On the side of the crowd were heard angry comments, screams and threats directed towards the students guarding the Cathedral. The shots had their intended psychological effect and the crowd began to disperse. We had to force the doors open and enter into the Cathedral. With the help of preparatory and extraordinary measures, the resistance was broken and the removal of the valuables proceeded on all fronts painlessly. Concerning these events, court proceedings are now taking place and the guilty ones [those who defended the valuables] will be brought to the justice of the Revtribunal).

Exorbitant sums of money were collected by the raiders of Russia- for instance, in the Znamensky Cathedral in Novgorod:

“Итог изъятия определяется следующими словами: “Всего изъято на два миллиарда рублей.”⁷¹ (The result of the seizure of these church valuables can be illustrated in the following words: “Altogether, valuables appropriated were in the amount of 2 billion rubles)

⁷⁰ *Arkhiy Kremlia*, pp. 222-226.

⁷¹ A. Valentinov, *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book), p. 286. And in the town of Vladimir, the amount of diamonds was valued to «4 миллиарда 900 миллионов» (4 billion and 900 million).

And at the Kiev Monastery:

Артистические предметы из Киева затребовали в Москву. Думали, что «Украинские товарищи» поработали там на совесть. Но каково же было удивление ОГПУ, когда через два с половиной года при повторной «чистке» Киево-Печерской лавры в ее подвалах обнаружили несколько пудов золотых и 110 пудов серебряных художественных изделий, укрытых от недобрых глаз реквизиционеров в 1922 году. Там же были найдены церковные украшения с 360 бриллиантами, несколько мешков со старыми процентными бумагами на несколько миллионов рублей и «контрреволюционная» переписка тихоновского толка.⁷² (Artistic valuables from Kiev were requested in Moscow. They thought that “Ukrainian comrades” had done their job conscientiously. But how surprised the OGPU was, when after two and a half years, during a repeated “cleansing” of the Kiev-Pecherskaia Lavra and her basements, they discovered to their dismay, that another bunch of gold poods, along with 110 poods of silver artistic treasures, had been hidden from the unfriendly eyes of the requisitioners in 1922. There, were also found church decorations with 360 diamonds, a few bags of old interest-bearing securities worth a few million rubles and some “contrarevolutionary” correspondence of the tikhonite type [followers of Patriarch Tikhon]).

Most was sold abroad to feed the revolution and support the members of the Communist Party's extremely lavish lifestyle.

Рынком сбыта церковных ценностей был избран не Ближний Восток, как предлагалось экспертами в запросе Троцкой, а Западная Европа и Скандинавия, как это нужно было правительству. Торговое посредничество приняла на себя Миссия Нансена. Именно Нансен вывез во Францию первую партию церковных ценностей и сумел ее реализовать среди коллекционеров. Удачно разошелся художественный товар и в Скандинавии, особенно в Швеции, где уже стали формироваться и частные, и государственные коллекции русского церковного искусства. Со временем богатейшее собрание русской иконописи и церковного прикладного искусства Национального музея в Стокгольме станет одним из крупнейших в Европе... Совнаркомовцы не мелочились и имели в виду исторические сокровища Эрмитажа, Российского Исторического, Русского и Румянцевского музеев, Оружейной палаты и Троице-Сергиевой лавры. И все на продажу за границу.⁷³ (The seller's market for the church valuables was not the Near East, as had been suggested by experts in the inquiry by Trotsky's wife, but Western Europe and Scandinavia, as it was suitable for the government. The sales work was undertaken by Nansen's Mission. It is precisely Nansen who exported into France the first part of the church valuables and was able to realize his sale among collectionneurs. Successful was also the sale in Scandinavia, especially in Sweden, where there began to form both private and state collections of Russian church art. With time, the wealthiest collection of Russian iconography and church applied art of the National Museum of Stockholm will become the largest in Europe. Sovnarkom members were not dealing with trifles, but with such historical treasures as the Hermitage, Russian Historical and Rumiantsev Museums, Armament Palace and the St. Sergius-Trinity Monastery. And all was sold abroad)

⁷² Vasilieva, O. and Knyshevskii, P. *Krasnye konkistatory* (The Red Conquistadors). Moscow: 1994, pp. 190-191.

⁷³ Vasilieva, *Krasnye konkistatory* (The Red Conquistadors), pp. 193, 195, 236. Many other such multi-million dollar sales took place worldwide. See: A. Valentinov, *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book). Paris: 1925.

Armand Hammer, for instance, became a billionaire by exporting Russian art treasures by the trainload and boatload, compliments of the Communist Party, which he extolled and promoted in the West.⁷⁴ And in the family of the Roosevelts can be found the Altar from the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.⁷⁵

History has not yet assessed the full impact of the cataclysm that destroyed Russia, pockets of evidence are only beginning to surface, exposing the grim reality that forced the country to relinquish its national identity :

В России началась искусственная денационализация, по прямой логике- с целью ослабления народа... Рассказывают, что некий Заславский, назначенный главным архитектором Москвы, ездил в автомобиле с секретарем, и на все, что ему бросалось в глаза, показывал пальцем и секретарь сидящий рядом, помечал в записной книжке. Что же могло бросаться Заславскому в глаза? Церкви, конечно, златоглавые церкви и златоглавые московские монастыри- Это. Это. Это. Это! – коротко бросал подонок и чад Заславский, а секретарь помечал. И вот, как по мгновению руки этого Заславского, на месте удивительных храмов XVI-XVII веков образовались чахлые скверики и пустые площадки. Сотни взорванных московских церквей.⁷⁶ (In Russia, there began a process of denationalization, with a direct purpose-to weaken the people. There was a certain Zaslavsky, appointed as chief «architect» of Moscow, who drove in a car with his assistant, and on everything that caught his eye, he would point his finger, and the assistant who sat next to him, marked it in his notebook. What did catch Zaslavsky's eye? Churches, of course, golden domed churches and Moscow's golden domed monasteries. This. This. This. This! – were the brief commands thrown by the lowlife, monstrous Zaslavsky, and the assistant noted. And thus, by the wave of Zaslavsky's hand, in place of XVI-XVII-century churches, there arose withered courtyards and empty squares. Hundreds of Moscow's churches blown up...)

Так пусть же знают русские люди, потомки наши, если все еще они будут чувствовать и считать себя русскими людьми, что взрывали в Москве не завалюхи а несравненные по красоте и своеобразию храмы, старинные особняки, памятники архитектуры, сотни тысяч уничтоженных сельских церквей и колоколен. Вся эта сумятица должна быть направлена на денационализацию, на разрушение народных ценностей, на выхолащивание патриотизма из русских сердец. Троцкий во одной из своих вдохновенных речей воскликнул: «Будь проклят патриотизм!»⁷⁷ (Let it be known to Russian people, our offsprings, if they will still feel like and consider themselves Russians, that in Moscow, they blew up not worthless shacks but unparalleled

⁷⁴ See Carl Blumay, *The Dark Side of Power: The Real Armand Hammer*. New York: 1992.

⁷⁵ V. Soloukhin, *Pri svete dnia* (By the Light of Day). Moscow: 1992, p. 178.

⁷⁶ V. Soloukhin, *Posledniaia stupen': Isповed' vashego sovremennika* (The Last Step: A Confession from Your Contemporary). Moscow: 1995, p. 127.

⁷⁷ V. Soloukhin, *Posledniaia stupen'* (The Last Step), p. 130-passim.

in beauty and originality, churches, antique mansions, masterpieces of architecture, hundreds of thousands of obliterated rural churches and belltowers. All this chaos was directed towards the denationalization, or eradication of that which the people held most dear- it was the extraction of patriotism from Russian hearts. In one of his most inspired speeches, Trotsky exclaimed: «Let patriotism be damned!»)

Russia's pre-revolutionary spiritual, aesthetic and national wealth was enormous, but communism virtually destroyed it. In recent years, knowing that they brought the Soviet Union to total ruin, and not wanting to take responsibility in the eyes of the world, its leaders renamed it as Russia, falsely proclaiming that communism had fallen. Communism has not ended by any means, and the grandchildren of those who enslaved Russia continue to hold their privileged posts, not only in today's "Russia" but worldwide.⁷⁸ Communism has far from collapsed- it has entered its silent phase of world revolution, which has been sought consistently- step by step⁷⁹ - since its inception in the West.⁸⁰ "Gentlemen, comrades, do not be concerned about all you hear about glasnost' and perestroika and democracy in the coming years. These are primarily for outward consumption. There will be no significant internal change within the Soviet Union, other than for cosmetic purposes. Our purpose is to disarm the Americans and let them fall asleep."⁸¹ The process of denationalization and annihilation of religion, especially Orthodoxy, are core objectives of the Marxist-Leninist International and a steadily unfolding modus operandi.

Советская власть- прочное правительство, которое может быть названо "всенародным правительством" с безконечно большим правом, чем какое бы то ни было из мыслимых российских правительств. Отсюда стремление избежать резкого и прямого разрыва с прежним строем и на время укрыться от всякой политической определенности под флагом "аполитизма." Советская власть- первое в мире правительство, которое принципиально отвергает всякую государственную церковь

⁷⁸ Anatoliy Golitsyn, *New Lies for Old: The Communist Strategy of Deception and Disinformation*. New York: 1984 and *Perestroika Deception: A Memoranda to the Central Intelligence Agency*, 1995.

⁷⁹ Reference is made to the Roman General Fabius who won his battles by advancing slowly, *step by step*. This was advocated by the 19th-century *Fabian Society*, a major center of socialist activism, named after the general and led by the Webbs (with such members as George Bernard Shaw), who founded the London School of Economics. Lenin translated their *Treatise on Socialism* into Russian while imprisoned in Siberia by the tsarist regime, which allowed him to hunt, have a servant and bring his library along to "prison." About how he gained weight due to fancy meals served to him, and the many other benefits of the Siberian "prison," see N. Valentinov, "The Wonderful Banishment [to Siberia]" in *Maloznakomyi Lenin* (The Little-Known Lenin). Paris: 1972, pp. 38-57.

⁸⁰ In 1931, Dimitrii Manuilsky stated: "The bourgeoisie will have to be put to sleep. So we shall begin by launching the most spectacular peace movement on record. There will be electrifying overtures and unheard of concessions. The capitalist countries, stupid and decadent, will rejoice to cooperate in their own destruction. They will jump at another chance to be friends. As soon as their guard is down, we shall smash them with our clenched fist." Dimitry Manuilsky in a lecture delivered in 1931 at the Lenin School on Political Warfare in Moscow.

⁸¹ Speech given by Gorbachev to the Politburo, November 1987.

и всякую совместную деятельность с какой бы то ни было церковью.⁸² (The Soviet regime- is a practical form of government, which can be labeled as an all-people's "world government" with an infinitely bigger set of rights than any Russian government. Thus it is important for now to avoid any kind of sharp and direct separation from the previous order of things and temporarily hide from any definite position under the flag of being "apolitical." The Soviet regime- is the first, in all world governments, to reject any state church and any relationship to any type of church)

In the 20th century the necessary equilibrium between tradition and the search for the new has been repeatedly upset by a falsely understood "avant-gardism"- a raucous, impatient "avant-gardism" at any cost. Destruction thus, became the apotheosis of this belligerent agant-gardism. It aimed to tear down the entire centuries-long cultural tradition, to break and disrupt the natural flow of artistic development by a sudden leap forward. In Russia, this impulse and its manifestations preceded and foretold the most physically destructive revolution of the 20th century. It is there that we first heard scathing imprecations against the entire Russian and European way of life, the calls to sweep away all religions or ethical codes, to tear down, overthrow, and trample all existing traditional culture, along with the self-extolment of the desperate innovators themselves, innovators who never did succeed in producing anything of worth.⁸³

План уничтожения всякой религии и всякой церкви- церкви во всем мире, во всех странах и на всех материках принадлежит едва ли не первое место. Пусть на западе не пришло время для таких форм антирелигиозной агитации и пропаганды, как у нас. Оно не за горами. К нему надо готовиться.⁸⁴ (The plan of eradicating all religions and churches- churches in the entire world, in all nations and in all continents, is the first and foremost target. Maybe in the West, time has not yet come for the form of antireligious agitation and propaganda such as ours. But it is not far off. And for that, we must prepare)

Agitation and propaganda, with their insidious methods of infiltration and control, have met with great success, together with devices such as the instigation of conflicts to create dissension, division and eventually schisms, which continue to weaken the church for the ultimate purpose of annihilation.⁸⁵

Подбрать лучших агитаторов и в частности военных. Агитации придать характер чуждый всякой борьбы с религией и церковью, а целиком направленный на помощь голодающим. Одновременно внести раскол в духовенстве наряду с агитационной работой должна идти организационная.⁸⁶ (Select our best agitators partially from the military. Do not give this agitation the appearance of being in any way offensive to religion and the church, but totally dedicated to help the famine. At the same time, bring a schism in the clergy. Work on agitation must be carried on congruently with that of organization)

⁸² *Arkhiy Kremlia*, vol. 1, pp. 328-329.

⁸³ A. Solzhenitsyn, «The Relentless Cult of Novelty and How It Wrecked the Century», in *The New York Times Book Review* (February 7, 1993), p. 3.

⁸⁴ A. Valentinov. *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book), p. 239.

⁸⁵ Victor Sheymov, *The Tower of Secrets*, 1993, p. 268.

⁸⁶ *Arkhiy Kremlia*, p. 134-135.

“В ходе кампании по изъятию следует разгромить этих последних “вечекистскими методами” и с помощью “сменовеховцев” “советского духовенства.” Следует разрешить этим последним организовать, провести собор против “монархистов” и сразу после собора, “не давая сменовеховским вождям очухаться,” разгромить и их, “превратить в выкидыш” буржуазную реформацию русской церкви.⁸⁷ (During the seizure of valuables campaign, it is imperative to crush them with “chekist methods” and with the help of “renovationist-minded” members of the “Soviet clergy.” It is imperative to allow the latter to organize a council against monarchists and immediately after the council, “not giving them a chance to collect themselves,” destroy them and “reduce to abortion” the bourgeois reformation of the Russian church).

Почти всю работу- мы могли бы возложить на «спецов»: хороших с головой, устроенной по современному, преподавателей школ второй ступени, университетских преподавателей, врачей, агрономов, техников (в особенности электриков), химиков и т.д. При агитаторе ЦК следует создать маленькую коллегия инструкторов естественников (относя сюда и врачей и агрономов). Выезжая в губернские города они должны устраивать собеседования с местными спецами, наперед подобранными из указанных выше профессий, и выяснять вместе с ними в каком направлении должна пойти их работа. Мы очень медленно и неуверенно будем продвигаться в нашей анти-религиозной борьбе, пока в университетах остаются незамещенными кафедры по истории религии и религий.⁸⁸

⁸⁹ (Almost all the work- we could delegate to “specialists”: those with a good head, structured according to today’s mentality, secondary school teachers, university professors, physicians, agronomists, technicians (especially electricians), chemists, etc. In the department of agitation of the TsK (Central Committee) must be instituted a small group of science instructors (including physicians and agronomists). Then by traveling into provincial towns they must organize meetings with local specialists, previously selected from the above professions, and decide with them what direction their work must take. We must proceed very slowly and cautiously in our anti-religious struggle, especially for now, while there are still people in universities teaching the history of religion that have not yet been replaced).

Какова политика советской власти по отношению к церковному расколу? Раскол в церкви выгоден рабоче-крестьянской власти, ибо это ведет к ослаблению ее врагов, к победе революции.⁹⁰ (What is the policy of the soviet regime towards the church schism? The schism in the church is beneficial for the worker-peasant power, since it leads to the weakening of its enemies, thus to the triumph of the revolution)

Записка Троцкого в Политбюро о политике по отношению к церкви. 30 Марта 1922. Совершенно секретно: Октябрьская Революция докатилась до церкви только теперь. Переход от «самодержавного» к «благоверному временному правительству». При переходе к советской власти, отделение церкви от государства помогло безхребетной церковной иерархии приспособиться и отмалчиваться... Чем более решительный, резкий, бурный и насильственный

⁸⁷ *Arkhiy Kremlia*, p. 36.

⁸⁸ A. Valentinov, *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book), p. 142-143.

⁸⁹ Parallels can be drawn to the retreats and conferences of some of today’s professional organizations, such as in the administrative circles of the education field. Although on a more sophisticated level, they are nevertheless a brainwashing, agenda-laden tool of political agitation.

⁹⁰ A. Valentinov, *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book), p. 80.

характер примет разрыв сменовеховского крыла с черносотенным, тем выгоднее будет наша позиция. Чтобы запоздалой реформации совершиться, ей нужно время. Вот этого-то времени мы ей не дадим, форсируя события, не давая сменовеховским вождям очухаться. Кампания по поводу голода для этого крайне выгодна, ибо заостряет все вопросы на судьбе церковных сокровищ. Практические выводы- 1. Провести агиткампанию в самом широком масштабе. 2. Расколоть духовенство 3. Изъять ценности как следует быть. 4. Расправиться с черносотенными попами . 5. Побудить определиться и открыто выступить сменовеховских попов. Неофициально поддержать. 6. Теоретически и политически подготовиться ко второй кампании»⁹¹ В другом письме Троцкий пишет: «Новое церковное управление может определиться в трех направлениях: 1) сохранение патриаршества и выборы лояльного патриарха, 2) уничтожение патриаршества и создание коллегии лояльного синода, 3) полная децентрализация, отсутствие всякого центрального управления. Гораздо выгоднее, если между этими тремя ориентировками разгорится серьезная борьба. ⁹² Нужно расколоть попов или вернее углубить и заострить существующий раскол. Мы должны в агитации исходить из этого основного сейчас факта. Задача агитации- поддержать сейчас эти низы против верхов.»⁹³ 3го Мая 1922: Тихона вызвать и затребовать от него в 24 часа публикации отлучения от церкви... потребовать издания специального послания заграничному православному духовенству и выдаче представителям Соввласти ценностей находящихся в заграничных церквах. В случае если Тихон откажется от исполнения вышеуказанных требований такового немедленно арестовать предъявив ему все обвинения совершенных им против Советской Власти по совокупности.⁹⁴ (Trotsky's note to the Politburo concerning church politics. March 30, 1922. Absolutely secret. The October Revolution is only now making its way to the church. Transition from "absolute" to "all-righteous provisional government." During the transition to Soviet power [smooth transition indeed, long planned by the S-R agitation movement from the 1870s and accomplished with the help of the Duma and then the Provisional Government, O.D.], the separation of church and state helped the spineless church hierarchs adapt and keep silent... The more resolute, severe, brutal and violent in character will be the switch from blackhundreds to renovationists, the more advantageous will our position be. In order for the belated reformation to occur, she will need time. And that is exactly what we will not give her. We will force the events, not giving the renovationists a chance to come to their senses. The famine campaign is very beneficial for this, since it sharpens all issues regarding church treasures. Practical deductions- 1) Conduct an agrarian campaign in its widest scale. 2. Divide the clergy. 3. Take firm possession of all treasures. 4. Execute the blackhundred clergy [The term Black Hundred, had falsely acquired a negative connotation due to S-R agitation and infiltration ⁹⁵ for the purpose of discrediting the clergy prior to the revolution , and it

⁹¹ *Arkhivy Kremliia*, vol. 1, p. 161-164.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 181.

⁹³ *Ibid*, p. 251.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 252.

⁹⁵ Documents related to the pre-revolutionary liberal Duma, attest to a meticulously planned agenda: "With regards to the Duma conference, it has been admitted that the S-R (Social-Democratic Party) must systematically make use of all conflicts that may arise between the state and the Duma, and within the Duma as well, all in the interest of the widening and deepening of the revolutionary movement"... "The conference of the Duma also confirmed that it is imperative to strengthen and systematize the propaganda and organizational activities in the army and schools." ... "The student Sokolov belongs to the Soviet of the Russian People and is active in Black Hundred agitation." P. Almazov, *Nasha revoliutsiia 1902-1907 (Our Revolution 1902-1907)*. Kiev: 1908, pp. 676, 678, 706. The Duma and its members are directly responsible for the downfall of Russia. They and the Social Revolutionaries shared the same slogan *Doloi samoderzhavie!*(*Down with Autocracy!*), together with the same main goal, to do

continued to be automatically used to agitate against all clergy dedicated to Orthodoxy and the Tsar. The misuse of the term is common in the West as well, O.D.] 5. To awaken and openly let the renovationist priests come forward. Support them unofficially. 6. Theoretically and politically prepare for the second campaign. In yet another letter, Trotsky writes: “The new church administration can be determined in 3 new directions: “1) Preservation of the patriarchy and selection of a loyal patriarch, 2) annihilation of the patriarchy and formation of members of a loyal synod, 3) total decentralisation, complete lack of a central government. It is much more advantageous, if between these 3 options there will ignite a serious battle. We must divide the clergy or rather deepen and sharpen the existing schism. We must, in agitation, depart from this basic fact. The goal of agitation- to support for now these lower echelons against the upper. May 3, 1922: Fetch Tikhon and demand that he publish a renouncement of the church in 24 hours... demand from him a special epistle to the clergy abroad and the disbursement to the representatives of the Soviet regime of all valuables found in churches abroad. In case Tikhon refuses from enacting the above mentioned requirements, immediately arrest him, presenting him with a list of accusations on the basis of his guilt towards the Soviet regime).

Циркулярное письмо ЦК РКП. 16 Августа 1923. Строго секретно. Разъяснить членам партии, что наш успех в деле разложения церкви и искоренения религиозных предрассудков зависит не от гонений на верующих- гонения только укрепляют религиозные предрассудки,- а от тактичного отношения к верующим при терпеливой и вдумчивой критике религиозных предрассудков, при серьезном историческом освещении идеи бота, культа и религии и пр. 15 Сентября 1923. В результате мы получили значительное разложение верующих православных масс, отпадение и уход от церкви отчасти в сектантские организации. Обновленцы стремятся укрепить свое влияние не только в советской России, но и за рубежом.⁹⁶ (Letter for circulation to the Ts.KPKP. 16 August 1923. Strictly secret. To explain to the members of the party, that our success in the matter of the break down of the church and the eradication of religious beliefs depends not on the persecution of the faithful- persecution only strengthens religious beliefs,- but on the tactful relationship with the faithful during a patient and thoughtful critical discussion of religious beliefs, and a serious historical clarification of the idea of god, cults, religions, etc. 15 September 1923. In result, we have acquired a significant breakdown of orthodox faithful masses, a falling out and departure from the church, partially into sectarian organizations. The renovationists are now working on strengthening their influence not only in soviet Russia but also in the Church Abroad)

Thus nothing was initiated «by the people» or individuals, but by a group of elites headed by such figures as Lenin, Trotsky and others who were in high positions of power. Lunacharsky, for instance, although mostly known for his “contribution” to Soviet art and education, also played an important role in the extermination of religion.

away with the Tsar. For the role of the Duma in revolutionary agitation, see: *Politicheskie partii Rossii: S'ezdy i konferentsii konstitutsionno-demokraticheskoi partii* (Political Parties in Russia: Conferences of the Constitutional-Democratic Party), 3 vols. Moscow: 2000.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 417, 422-423.

Чрезвычайно важным мероприятием в борьбе с религией пришлось постановление Луначарского о прекращении отпуска жалования из общенародной казны служащим всех культов, при бывших и буржуазных школах.⁹⁷ (Extremely important in the battle against religion, is Lunacharsky's decree on the discontinuance of the issuance of salaries from the people's treasury for those who work for any cults [derogatory Soviet term for religion] or former bourgeois schools)

Since the revolution, sermons containing any kind of complaint or criticism of the Official Church of Moscow or the government are strictly forbidden.

Произнесение проповедей, допускаются свободно, без какой либо предварительной цензуры, при условии, чтобы по содержанию своему они фактически имели исключительно религиозный характер. (Постановление ВЦИК от 13, IV-21 г.)⁹⁸ (The giving of sermons is freely allowed, without any type of censorship, provided that, their contents be exclusively religious. Decree of the VtsIK from 13 , IV-21).

Persecution as set up by Marxism-Leninism continues to this day in Russia and abroad, forcing the faithful into schism and weakening the True Church.⁹⁹ Even before the revolution, Lenin's Communist Party, which continues its work on a more hidden and sophisticated level today, was mainly established not to enforce communism in an economic sense, but to combat and exterminate religion and national identity. Lenin wrote back in 1905:

По отношению к партии социалистического пролетариата религия не есть частное дело. Мы требуем полного отделения церкви от государства, чтобы бороться с религиозным туманом чисто идейным и только идейным оружием, нашей прессой, нашим словом. Но мы осовали свой союз, Р.С-д.Р.П между прочим, именно для такой борьбы против всякого религиозного одурачения рабочих. Для нас же идейная борьба не частное, а общепартийное, общепролетарское дело.¹⁰⁰ (With respect to the party of the socialist proletariat, religion is not a private matter. We demand a total separation of church and state, so that we can struggle against the religious fog armed with our press, our words. We have created our soviet, the R.S-D.R. P (the Social-Democrat [Communist] Party), by the way, precisely in order to battle the religious fooling of workers. For us that struggle is not private, but something the entire party must undertake).

⁹⁷ A. Valentinov. *Chernaia kniga* (The Black Book). Paris: 1925, p. 23.

⁹⁸ *Arkhiy Kremlia*, vol. 1, p. 384.

⁹⁹ The True Church represents the continuation of the legitimate pre-revolutionary Russian Orthodox Church, as opposed to the Official Church of the present Moscow Patriarchate which is part of the government *nomenclatura*. The True Church is also often referred to as the catacomb or underground church. See *V obiatiiakh semiglavago zmiia: Tserkov v poraboshchennoi Rossii*. (In the Embrace of the Seven Headed Serpent: The Church in Enslaved Russia). Montreal: 1984. Also, Victor Sheymov, *The Tower of Secrets*, 1993, p. 185. Anatoliy Golitsyn, *New Lies for Old: The Communist Strategy of Deception and Disinformation*, 1984. *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB*, 1999. Ivan Andreev, *Is the Grace of God Present in the Soviet Church? Notes About the Catacomb Church in the USSR*. Monastery Press, Wildwood, Alberta, Canada, 2000. Michael Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*. Monastery Press, Wildwood, Canada, 2000.

¹⁰⁰ V. Lenin, *Sotsializm i religiiia* (Socialism and Religion), quoted in *Antireligioznik*, vol. 10. 1937, p. 4.

In preparation for his “Long-Term Program for Atheistic Education,” Gorbachev declared in 1987:

There must be no let-up in the war against religion because as long as religion exists Communism cannot prevail. We must intensify the obliteration of all religions.¹⁰¹

As to national identity, Lenin’s Protocol at the X Meeting of the Communist Party in 1921, made it very clear that there is a particular danger, a distinctive damage in leaning towards great Russian chauvinism.¹⁰² This was echoed by Zinoviev in 1923: “we must definitely place edgewise, or demand that the Party cauterize with red-hot metal anything and everything that even alludes to the great Russian chauvinism.”¹⁰³ On August 20, 2001, Putin echoed these words: “Ancient Orthodox teaching was free of chauvinism. If God saved all nations, that means that all are equal before God. This simple truth makes it possible to build a strong and centralised multi-ethnic state and a unique Eurasian civilisation,”¹⁰⁴ thus likewise distancing himself from Russian national identity and continuing the internationalist path laid down by Lenin.

During large-scale outdoor processions, Russian sacred choral music, if sung well and according to tradition, is especially feared by the powerful elite, as it could lead people to rise against their oppressor, the communist regime- a regime that forcibly entered their homes and robbed them of everything, religion, morals, food, culture, the arts and aesthetics.

По разрешению местной власти, состоялся крестный ход... этот ход был разрешен под многими условиями, одним из которых являлось запрещение петь во время прохождения через слободу».¹⁰⁵ (With the permission from local authorities, a religious procession was held. This procession was permitted under many conditions, one of which was that singing was prohibited while walking through town. [Today, persecution continues for members of True Orthodoxy or those who are not part of the Official Church . O.D.]

On the day of Patriarch Tikhon’s funeral, the streets of Moscow were jammed. These were not groups of aging, pious women, but representatives of all classes not only of Moscow but of nearby villages, small town and cities. The crowds streamed towards the Donskoy monastery. The cathedral and the immense yards of the monastery were packed with people. The walls of the monastery, the turrets, roofs, and trees were filled with those who wanted to bid their last respects to the Patriarch. There were probably some 300,000 persons within the monastery walls, and perhaps even more on the streets and nearby squares. All the churches of Moscow rang their bells when the funeral procession started. The choir sang “Eternal Memory,” and the crowd began to sing with the choir.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Speech to the Politburo given in November, 1987.

¹⁰² V. Brachev, *Delo istorikov* (The Historians’ Affair). St. Petersburg: 1997, p. 46.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ *Ecumenical News International*, August 22, 2001.

¹⁰⁵ *Arkhiy Kremlia*, p. 437.

¹⁰⁶ Archpriest Michael Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*, 1972, p. 52.

Little news of the Catacomb Church of the Tikhonites has come to the free world. The Soviet press long kept silent about her, wishing to give the impression that all believers in the USSR stood behind the Moscow Patriarchate. They even attempted to deny entirely the existence of the Catacomb Church, calling it the “sect” of True Orthodox Christians. It was apparently impossible to keep silent about it any longer; its numbers are too great and it causes the authorities too much alarm. The Soviet rulers fall into a rage over the fact that there exist people who fear God more than men. They are powerless before the millions of True Orthodox Christians.¹⁰⁷

At daybreak of April 25, 1922, the sentence of the “just and sincere people’s court” was pronounced: 18 people- to be shot; the rest- sentenced to hard labor of different durations. The proposal of the chairman to beg the highest authority for mercy- was answered with a fiery speech by Father Archpriest Yezerky with a refusal in the name of all sentenced- Only a sigh was heard in the hall at the announcement of the sentence, no moans, no tears. A great redeeming sacrifice was given for the sins of the Russian people and quietly the people dispersed. But not to go home, but to gather in the square, where they awaited all night long for the fated hour. It was already daybreak, the sun was coming up, when the heavy doors of the court building opened and those sentenced to death emerged into the square, guarded heavily by a forest of bayonets. They walked, their heads uncovered, their hands crossed on their chests, their gaze turned high toward heaven, to where their gracious Redeemer of the world awaited them; where all is forgiven, all forgotten, where there is no suffering, no evil- And loudly rejoicing, poured out their song: “Christ is risen from the dead!” Enraptured, the crowd pressed toward them with the answer: “In truth He is risen!” Their [the prisoners’] hands and the hems of their clothing were kissed. The guards drove the crowd off with the butts of their rifles, but they were coming and coming, pushing back the soldiers. A detachment of horse guards appeared, driving the people back with their horses, hitting them with rifle butts, with whips- nothing helped. The song, full of exaltation kept flowing, the enraptured people hurled themselves towards the martyrs- a truck, full of Red Army soldiers, cut their way through the crowd. They grabbed those sentenced and literally threw them into the van. The truck roared and hurried away. But the joyful Paschal hymn “Christ is risen” was heard long after; it sounded for a long time in the clean air of the sunny, spring morning. The “public hearings” and “trials by deponents” clearly showed the extraordinary, moral purity and pious deeds of the true believers, the “Tikhonites”, and the repugnant lowness and treachery of all kinds of “renovationist” members. And these trials and proceedings became the most powerful, religious sermons, rather than being used as anti-religious propaganda.¹⁰⁸

In the terrifying days of 1921, when Russia was littered with corpses, someone wrote the following prophetic words in his diary:

Не могу простить себе, что я в те времена, когда существовали громадные хоры, когда в соборах и монастырях совершались торжественнейшие служения, - любил все это как-то вскользь, мимоходом между делом (а вернее бездельем). Давно надо было поставить все это в ряд наипервейшей духовной улады. Пройдут

¹⁰⁷ Ivan Andreev, *Russia’s Catacomb Saints: Lives of the New Martyrs*, 1982, pp. 567-568.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Prof. Ivan Andreev, *Is the Grace of God Present in the Soviet Church?* Monastery Press, Wildwood, Alberta: 2000, pp. 96-98, as excerpted from Prof. Ivan Andreyev, *History of the Russian Church from the Revolution to Our Days*. Jordanville, N.Y. 1952.

десятки лет, мы перемрем, дети наши состарятся, будут пожалуй искать духовных утех на земле, пойдут, может быть, в церковь, но не услышат уж таких мастеров пения, останутся только воспоминания о былой красоте церковного пения да ворох старых забытых нот. Бедные потомки! Как много у нас было от наших предков разного чудесного добра, и как мало его перейдет в их наследие!¹⁰⁹ (I cannot forgive myself, for the fact that in those days, when there existed enormous choirs, when in the cathedrals and monasteries were performed grand majestic services, - I loved it all as if it happened in passing, in-between things (or rather in idle). I should have categorized it long ago into the leading order of things in spiritual fulfillment. Decades will pass, we will die, our children will age, perhaps they will seek spiritual fulfillment on earth, and maybe they will enter a church, but they will no longer hear such masterful singing, what will remain are memories of the past beauty of church singing and a pile of forgotten musical scores. Our poor offsprings! How many wonderful things we possessed from our ancestors, and how little will be transmitted into their legacy!)

Tchaikovsky wrote about communism: «It is impossible to find any utopia more absurd, anything more in contradiction with the natural tendencies of man. And how boring and intolerably colorless life will probably become when and if equality of property is established. Life is a struggle, and if there were no struggle there would be no life, just a senseless vegetation.»¹¹⁰ A small window on the Russian countenance, prior to communism:

Не одна Москва была прекрасна в России. Россия вся из конца в конец была прекрасна. Вот описание Нижнего Новгорода. Город блестал редкой красотой... Очнем горят золоченые церковные главы, кресты, зеркальные стекла дворца и длинного ряда высоких домов. Под ними из темной листвы набережных садов сверкают красноватые битые дорожки. Ударили в соборный колокол-густой малиновый гул его нагорных и заволжских дружно подхватили соборный благовест. На набережной, вплотную усеянной народом на лодках и на баржах все сняли шапки и крестились широким крестом, взирая на венчавшую чудные горы соборную церковь¹¹¹ (It was not Moscow alone that was magnificent. All of Russia, from one end to the other was magnificent. Here is a description of Nizhny-Novgorod. The city sparkled of a rare beauty. Lit up like fire are the golden church domes, crosses, the mirrored glass reflections of the palace and of the long row of tall houses. Under them, from the dark foliage of the embankment gardens, appear small glittering reddish roads. They sound the cathedral bell- its deep mellow resonance spills over the unbounded space. In the nearby mountain and left bank of the Volga villages, they immediately join in concert with the cathedral's bell ringing. The embankment, densely covered with people on boats and barges all took their hats off, made a widely gestured sign of the cross, gazing at the cathedral crowning the splendid mountain)

Every Saturday the peasants had steam baths and prepared for Sunday as a festival. It was a gorgeous sight as they flocked into church in their bright clothes. The girls wore the

¹⁰⁹ N. Okunev, *Dnevnik Moskvicha 1917-1924* (The Diary of a Moscovite 1917-1924). Paris: 1990, pp. 452-453.

¹¹⁰ P.I. Tchaikovsky, quoted in Vladimir Volkoff, *Tchaikovsky: A Self Portrait*. Boston: 1975, p. 157.

¹¹¹ Quoted from Melnikov-Pechersky, *V lesakh* (In the Woods) in V. Soloukhin, *Pri svete dnia* (1992), pp. 18-19.

lovely Ukrainian flowered head-dress and brilliant blouses and skirts and highly coloured boots. The men had wide Cossack trousers, leather boots and shirts embroidered in every colour by their best girls. Many came from villages ten miles away, and all country churches had a big space in which to keep the horses and little carriages during the service. The congregation stood or knelt on a stone floor, bowing low in prayer. They were, the richest, healthiest, handsomest peasantry in the world. The fertility of the good earth made overwork and underfeeding unknown. They all lived well, and came to church not to escape from hard materialism but to rejoice and to show off their lovely apparel. How different from the little chapels of Ireland, where, in spite of the poetry in them, the peasants come to mass work-worn and humble! There was of course no organ, only magnificent singing. In the choir of strong natural voices were splendid basses. The musical talent of the peasants amazed foreigners. Under a good conductor they sang Tchaikovsky's most complicated Masses to perfection.¹¹²

When the Synodal Choir toured Europe, prior to the revolution, critics hailed it as the best in Europe:

The Moscow choir showed us that we can stop being so self-assured and secure in our western European pride... How rich sacred music can be in which an entire culture is represented, it is the truly sacred model for the future.¹¹³

Through faithful self-criticism, Russia once stood at the zenith of European cultural artistic expression. It is now crawling out from under the rubble and its people are desperately trying to regain their national identity. One cannot blame anyone for not remembering how to sing Russian sacred music, as people who were in any way associated with Orthodoxy, have either been exterminated or suffered terrible persecution. Thus today's inadequate and erroneous performance practices are in danger of becoming the model for the twenty first century. "Where will the beauty of the coming centuries come from if we, our generations, do not preserve it in ourselves and do not pass it on to our descendants in an ennobled form and in ever-increasing amounts?"¹¹⁴ It is important to take a very close look at Russia's pre-revolutionary past and reclaim its national heritage and traditions.

¹¹² P. Rodzianko, *Tattered Banners*. London, 1939, p. 53

¹¹³ Quoted in Ptitsa, K. *Mastera khorovogo iskusstva* (The Masters of the Choral Art), pp. 8-43.

¹¹⁴ V. Soloukhin. *A Time to Gather Stones*, tr. Valerie Nolan. Northwestern University Press, 1993, p. 235.