

CAESAROPAPISM IN BYZANTIUM AND RUSSIA

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ONE of the greatest obstacles encountered by the Church in her task of Christianizing human society has been, it should seem the phenomenon of Caesaropapism. This term calls for a definition. It is often used interchangeably with Erastianism. Now, the latter is a definite doctrine advocating the submission of Church to State, as enunciated by Thomas Lieber (Erastus), a Protestant theologian of the sixteenth century. Therefore, the meaning of this term is fixed. The significance of the term Caesaropapism, on the other hand, has not been so circumscribed. I shall use this word to designate the vaster and underlying general tendency in history, of which Erastianism is but an expression and a later phase.

The term Caesaropapism is, moreover, most appropriate, for semantically and ideally it reaches to the memorable day when the problem of the correlation of Church and State was for all time authoritatively solved.

When, in reply to His questioners, our Lord said: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's,"¹ He laid down the rule for all Christians to follow. When analyzed, the reply of our Lord establishes, first of all, the mutual distinctness of the spiritual and the temporal; moreover, it sets up a hierarchy of values: for the opposition of the words Caesar and God emphatically proclaims the superiority of the spiritual and the secondary character of the temporal, that is to say, of Church and State. These words of our Lord constitute, thus, the basis for the correlation of the two powers.

What that correlation ought to be, has been indicated by the Church throughout the ages. The sovereign pontiffs—whether as early as St. Gelasius I or as late as Leo XIII—have declared it to consist in an harmonious delimitation of the sphere of each power and, as Pope Leo says, in an "orderly connection, which may be compared to the union of the soul and body in man."²

¹ Matt. 22:21.

² In the encyclical *Immortale Dei*.

It can be safely asserted that Christianity alone teaches the correlation of the spiritual and the temporal as based on their mutual distinctness and the superiority of the former. Non-Christian societies confuse the two powers and either make religion a part of the State, or make the State a part of a religious institution.

However, even throughout Christian history, Caesar, i.e., the temporal power, regalist or nationalist, has endeavoured to deviate from the clear Christian teaching regarding this matter. This he has often done under the impact of resurgent paganism within Christian society.

It is this tendency of Caesar to disregard the teaching of Christ on the correlation of the two powers which is herein designated as Caesaropapism, since its ultimate, albeit often inarticulate, aim—its *reductio ad absurdum*—is indeed to make Caesar a pope as well, at once the head of State and Church (as in the Russian Empire), or at least (as in the Byzantine Empire) to replace the pope by Caesar as the point of concentration, the center of unity in the Church. Caesaropapism, in a word, is that *relationship of Church and State in which the former is determined by the latter*. It is not a doctrine, but an historical tendency; not a heresy, but a mother of heresies.

In an examination of that tendency, three phases or degrees of intensity are observable in its process. The first phase is the attempt to undo the orderly connection between the spiritual and the temporal and to obliterate the line of harmonious delimitation between the two powers; when this has been achieved, the superiority of the spiritual is denied, and claims are laid to the coequality of State and Church. Once all this has been admitted, it leads to the second phase which is the subjugation of the spiritually superior by the physically stronger: of Church by State. The third phase, the logical conclusion of the process, is the absorption by Caesar of the things that are God's.

An outline of the caesaropapistic ideologies in Byzantium and its "eldest daughter," Russia, is interesting, inasmuch as it represents that tendency in its purest form. To be sure, the whole of Christendom has, at one time or another, witnessed and suffered from Caesar's usurpation of the spiritual. The West has had its Caesaropapism abortive in, e.g., Gallicanism, and its Caesaropapism triumphant in, e.g., Anglicanism. Yet no other polity, save Byzantium and its heirs,

has fostered a Caesar strong enough to require no professed heresy to achieve his subjugation of the Church.

BYZANTIUM

I feel inclined to believe with St. Augustine in the providential character of the growth of the *pax romana* which paved the way for the peace of the Catholic Church.³ But I am, furthermore, inclined to accept the barbarian invasions of western Europe in the fourth and fifth centuries as most opportune, if not also providential. For the fall of the Roman Empire in the West placed the papacy, the center of Christian unity, outside the immediate sphere of the encroachments of Caesar.

From the point of view of what may be called theology of history, the Roman Empire had been called upon to perform a definite role in the drama of history. After that role had been filled, the invasions provided for it the means of exit. From this point of view, the Empire's eastern (Byzantine) continuation was a sort of anomalous survival; it, too, should have vanished. And an anomaly will indeed be revealed in an examination of its Caesarian ideology—an anomalous survival of paganism in a Christianized state.

The ideology of Byzantine Caesaropapism was born of the interplay of three elements: the Roman state, the Byzantine Church, and Greek nationalism. Its existence may justify the assumption that social complexes are incommensurably less capable of conversion than individuals.

At the epoch of Constantine's conversion, the Roman *imperium* bore a multiple burden of pagan heredity. Child of the republican institutions of Rome, it had been brought into the world through the maieutic activity of the self-effacing Octavian; but it was also an heir to the Hellenistic divine monarchies, and, furthermore, it had undergone in its formative period the steady influence of the Iranian empire of the Sassanids.

The Roman emperor held the tribunician and proconsular powers and was *pontifex maximus* at the same time. He then gradually as-

³ *De civitate Dei*, XVI-XVIII; cf., e.g., Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, II (CSEL, LXI, 578-636).

sumed the character of a divine monarch, which he had always enjoyed in the eastern provinces. Finally, the sacred monarchy of Persia had had a large share in shaping the ceremonial expression of the Roman emperor-worship.⁴

The conversion of Constantine did not transform the pagan nature of the Roman *imperium*; and this pagan survival in the newly-established *pax christiana* constituted the phenomenon of Caesaropapism and conditioned the ultimate disruption of Christian unity. This phenomenon arose here *modo Minervae* at the very moment of the conversion of the Empire; for it was nothing other than paganism-in-Christianity, and not as elsewhere a gradual development due to corruption.

Hence, the Roman state of the post-Constantinian period was afflicted from the very start with what has been called *le mal byzantin*. From the beginning it evinced the confusion of the two powers—spiritual and temporal—claims to coequality of State and Church, and the domination of the latter by the former.

The obviously pagan divine attributes of the imperial power, though flagrantly incompatible with the Christianity of its holders, were only gradually given up. The now empty title of *pontifex maximus* continued to be borne by the Christian emperors till the reign of Gratian (375). When these titles were finally renounced, the emperors still clung to Constantine's claim to be "external bishop"⁵ or to Leo the Isaurian's pretension to be "king and priest."⁶ Although no Christian emperor could any longer claim divinity for himself, the style of "sacred" or even "divine" continued to be in use to designate his person, his palace, his edicts, his finances, his bed-chamber, etc. These details, not important in themselves or when observable elsewhere (as

⁴ Cf., e.g., J. B. Bury, *The Constitution of the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 1910); L. Bréhier, "L'Origine des titres impériaux à Byzance," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XV (1905), 162-77; J. Maurice, "Les pharaons romains," *Byzantion*, XII (1937), 71-103; E. Kornemann, "Die römische Kaiserzeit," in A. Gerke and E. Norden, *Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft* (2d ed.; 1914), III, appendix 4.

⁵ Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, IV, 24.

⁶ Βασιλεὺς καὶ ἱερεὺς εἶμι, wrote Leo III to Pope St. Gregory II, as is clear from the latter's reply (Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio*, XII, 975). The emperors were acclaimed as "king and priest" in the councils of the fifth and sixth centuries; cf. G. Ostrogorsky, "The Relations between Church and State in Byzantium" (in Russian), *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, IV (1931), 122-23.

in the case of the style "sacred" applied to the Holy Roman emperor in the West), acquire an alarming significance when viewed in the context with the Byzantine Empire's recent pagan past.

Next, the Roman *imperium* could not abandon its claim to divine foundation, though its individual holders had, as Christians, given up the claims to divinity. Hence the ever-present tendency to regard the Empire, or its Byzantine survival, as of an especial divine institution, coequal with the Church of Christ. It is an easy step from the orthodox idea of the predestined role of the Empire, as found in, e.g., St. Augustine or Prudentius, to the caesaropapistic Byzantine theophanism which already finds its expression in Eusebius' fulsome panegyrics to the first Christian emperor.⁷

Finally, Caesar, as "external bishop," endeavoured to control the spiritual sphere in accordance with what the Abbé Bousquet calls his politico-dogmatic conceptions.⁸ He would say with Constantius, "What I wish shall be the law of the Church,"⁹ and with Justinian he would take upon himself the condemnation of heretical writings (e.g., *The Three Chapters*). He would dabble in heresies himself and would make amateurish attempts at religious reconciliations. Within five centuries following the conversion, at least five different heretical movements were fostered by the imperial court: Arianism, Monophysitism, the "comprehensiveness" of the *Henoticon*, Monothelism, and Iconoclasm.

It may be of interest to quote, in this context, Vladimir Soloviev, the great Russian thinker, who was received into the Church in 1896. In a work which may be called his profession of faith, the "Russian Newman" says:

The fundamental truth and the special idea of Christianity is the perfect union of the divine and the human, fulfilled individually in Christ and fulfilling itself socially in Christian humanity, where the divine is represented by the Church (concentrated in the Supreme Pontificate) and the human by the State. This intimate connection of State and Church presupposes the latter's primacy, because the divine is anterior and superior to the human. Heresy attacked precisely the

⁷ *Vita Constantini*, III, 23; *De laudibus Constantini*. The Messianic kingdom spoken of by Isaias is the Christian empire; Constantine is the new David, and his reign on earth is the reflection of the Word's rule in heaven.

⁸ J. Bousquet, *L'Unité de l'église et le schisme grec* (Paris, 1913).

⁹ Athanasius, *Hist. Arian.*, 33.

perfect union of the divine and the human in Jesus Christ, in order to destroy at its base the organic link of Church and State and to attribute to the latter an absolute independence. Now one can see why the beliefs of New Rome—which in Christianity would preserve the absolutism of the pagan State—were so favourable to all the heresies which were but variations on a single theme that, namely, Jesus Christ was not the true Son of God, consubstantial with the Father.¹⁰

And:

Instead of this synthetic and organic union of the divine and the human, [the Byzantines] proceeded to confuse the two elements, to divide them, and to let one absorb and suppress the other. At first they confused the divine and the human in the sacred majesty of the emperor. As in the confused idea of the Arians, Christ was a hybrid being, more than man and less than God, so also Caesaropapism—this political Arianism—confused without uniting the temporal and the spiritual powers and made the autocrat more than a chief of State, without being able to make him the true head of the Church.¹¹

These essentially anti-Christian tendencies of the Romano-Byzantine state are in a way quite understandable: the pagan heredity was too strong to be overcome. What is more difficult to understand, however, is the fact of the inroads of Caesaropapism into the Church.

The Christianization of the Empire was, unfortunately, followed by a certain lowering of standards among some elements in the clergy. There arose the group of court ecclesiastics or ecclesiastical courtiers, quite ready to subscribe to the Caesaropapism of their master and even, if need be, to his heresies.

The removal of the imperial capital to Constantinople raised its hitherto insignificant bishop to a position of the highest importance in the East, and secured for him the elevation to the rank of patriarch; but it reduced him, on the other hand, to the role of a court prelate.

In the course of centuries two parties, as it were, may be said to have developed in the bosom of the Byzantine Church. One was that of the caesaropapistic court ecclesiastics, ambitious and unscrupulous, of whom the notorious Eusebius of Nicomedia was the prototype. The other represented the orthodox Catholics who never ceased to have recourse to the See of Peter for guidance and aid in their common struggle against the encroachments of Caesar. This was the party of SS. Athanasius, Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, John Chrysos-

¹⁰ *La Russie et l'église universelle* (Paris, 1889), p. xxv.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. xlvi.

tom, Maximus Confessor, Theodore of Studion, the "Sleepless," and the Studite monks.

The court ecclesiastics displayed at once submission to the State and ambition in the Church. The endemic tendency of the caesaropapistic Byzantines to determine the spiritual by the temporal is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the rise of the see of the imperial city. That tendency made itself felt already as early as the local Synod of Antioch (341), canon nine of which provided that the ecclesiastical dignity of a bishopric shall depend on the civil rank of its city.

At the First Council of Constantinople (381), New Rome was made, by canon three, the next patriarchal see after Old Rome. The Council of Chalcedon (451) is particularly interesting as a manifestation of the opposite trends within the Byzantine Church. While, on the one hand, the orthodox Catholic spirit in that Church made itself manifest in the reiterated affirmations of papal supremacy and infallibility, the caesaropapistic spirit was, on the other hand, responsible for bringing to its logical conclusion the tendency in question. Canon seventeen of Chalcedon confirmed canon nine of Antioch; while canon twenty-eight extended the jurisdiction of the See of Constantinople, confirmed canon three of the First Council of Constantinople, and, on the sole ground that New Rome was now honoured by the presence of the emperor and the senate, extended to its bishop, insofar as patriarchal rank was concerned, equality of honour (lit.: "of seniority") with, and the next place after, the See of Peter, whose privileges—if the usual interpretation be correct—it quite unhistorically declared to have been formerly conceded on the same ground by the Fathers.¹²

The papal legates, who presided over that Council and in whose absence canon twenty-eight had been drawn up, protested against it in the session of November 1, 451; Pope St. Leo the Great, for whose approbation and ratification the acts of the Council had been sent, an-

¹² Cf. S. Herbert Scott, *The Eastern Churches and the Papacy* (London, 1928), pp. 193–206. The author demonstrates that the primacy of the Apostolic See was in no way attacked, and the whole question was concerned merely with patriarchal rank. He suggests, moreover, citing an article by A. Westall in the *Dublin Review* for 1903, that the words *οἱ πατέρες εἰκότως ἀποδεδώκασι τὰ πρεσβεία* should be taken as referring to Peter and Paul. It is interesting to note in this context that so excellent an historian as Ostrogorsky (*op. cit.*, p. 126) refers only to the "equal honor" and fails to mention the "second place."

nulled that canon. Patriarch Anatolius, of whom the Pontiff wrote, "non dignetur regiam civitatem, quam apostolicam non potest facere sedem," bowed to the papal decision; he admitted that the confirmation of the canon depended on the Pope.¹³

Nevertheless, the second place of Constantinople, not equal honour, was made a law by Justinian (*Novellae*, 131); this belied the caesaropapistic contention of later Byzantine canonists that the preposition *μετά* in the phrase "next after" should have been taken in a chronological sense.¹⁴

Not content with the newly acquired place in the Empire, the bishop of the imperial city assumed, despite papal censure, the style of "ecumenical patriarch"¹⁵ and reduced to dependence the other patriarchates, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, which had been weakened by the Nestorian and Monophysite secessions.

The imperial caprice made and unmade the patriarchs of Constantinople, who paid for the imperial favour by subscribing to their sovereign's religious irregularities. The history of the "ecumenical patriarchs"—and of their dependents in the sees of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem—is often a sad picture of ecclesiastical subservience to civil power.

¹³ Mansi, *op. cit.*, VI, 277; cf. Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 198. The First Council of Constantinople became ecumenical through papal ratification, dogmatically since the sixth, and canonically since the thirteenth, century; cf. J. Bois, "Constantinople, Ier Concile de," *DTC*, III, 1227-31.

¹⁴ Moreover, in this letter, the bishop of Constantinople is called "beatissimus" in contradistinction to the title "sanctissimus" applied to the pope. The second place of Constantinople was recognized by the papal legates at the Fourth Council of Constantinople (869); it was officially conceded for the Latin rite at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), and for the Byzantine rite at the Council of Florence (1439). Cf. A. Palmieri, "Constantinople, Église de," *DTC*, III, 1307 ff.; J. Hefele, *History of the Councils* (Edinburgh, 1883), III, xi; R. Souarn, "Rome et le 28e canon de Chalcedoine," *Bessarione* (1896), I, 875-85; II, 215-24. The later Byzantine canonists confused patriarchal status with the question of primacy.

¹⁵ This title was assumed by John IV the Faster at the local council of 588. It had been used previously as a title of courtesy, v.g., by Justinian (*Cod.*, I, 1, 7; 4, 34; *Novellae*, 3, 5, 6, 16, 55-57) towards both pope and patriarch; cf. Mansi, *op. cit.*, VI, 1005, 1012, 1021, 1029; VIII, 895. Pope Pelagius II annulled the decision of the council of 588 (Mansi, *op. cit.*, IX, 1213); St. Gregory the Great never ceased to protest against the title, assuming by contrast that of "servus servorum Dei." The patriarchs of Constantinople have, nevertheless, persisted to this day in using the style which had come to express the subjective conception of universality of caesaropapistic Byzantium (cf. *infra*). Cf. Bousquet, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-15; Palmieri, *art. cit.*, III, 1333-35.

Accordingly, the above-mentioned imperial heresies caused five schisms of the Byzantine Church from the center of unity. But the See of Peter and the Byzantine orthodox Catholics invariably triumphed, and every schism ended in a reconciliation on the Roman terms.¹⁶

Seeing these secessions and those that followed, and perceiving the almost inherent tendency towards schism on the part of the Byzantine Church and of Caesar, one cannot help wondering at the strength of the adherence to the unity of the Church displayed by the Easterners, which for so long made it possible to curb that tendency and to heal its outbursts.

The Germanic invasions had reduced the Roman Empire to its Hellenistic, eastern Mediterranean half. Then the Moslem conquests further diminished it, confining it practically to the Greek or half-Greek populations of Europe and Anatolia. The final diminution of the Empire caused the revival of Greek nationalism, hitherto sub-

¹⁶ The Arian schism was terminated in 380 by the edict of the Emperors Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius. It obliged all Christians worthy of being called Catholics to hold to the faith which St. Peter had delivered to the Romans, and "which has been up till now imparted by him." In the following year, that faith was defined at the First Council of Constantinople.

The Eutychian Monophysite schism was ended at the Council of Chalcedon, at which the Eastern bishops accepted the Tome of Pope St. Leo. They exclaimed that "Peter hath spoken by Leo," and then, in a letter to the Pope, called him "the interpreter to all of the voice of Peter."

The Acacian schism, which was caused by the *Henoticon* of the Patriarch Acacius and the Emperor Zeno, was healed in 519. The Patriarch of Constantinople and the Byzantine bishops accepted the formula of Pope St. Hormisdas, which proclaimed the inerrant headship of the Apostolic See.

The Monothelite schism was ended at the Third Council of Constantinople (680-681), at which the dogmatic letter of Pope St. Agatho, proclaiming the inerrancy of the faith of Peter and of the Roman Church, was accepted by all.

Finally, the first Iconoclast schism was brought to an end at the Second Council of Nicaea (787), at which the dogmatic letter of Pope Hadrian I, which once more asserted the faith of Peter and the authority of the Holy See, was acclaimed by all.

Cf. *Codex Theod.*, XVI, 1, 2; Mansi, *op. cit.*, III, 521 ff.; VI, 529 ff.; VII, 1 ff.; X, 863 ff.; XI, 186 ff.; XII, 985 ff.; XIII, 1 ff.; Hefele, *op. cit.*, II, vii; III, xi; V, xvi, xviii, and c. 2; J. Bois, "Constantinople, Ier Concile de," *DTC*, III, 1227-31; *id.*, "Chalcédoine, Concile de," *ibid.*, II, 2190-2208; *id.*, "Constantinople, IIIe Concile de," *ibid.*, III, 1259-74; G. Fritz, "Nicée, IIe Concile de," *ibid.*, XI, 417-41; J. Froget, "Conciles," *ibid.*, III, 636-76; E. Amann, "Hormisdas," *ibid.*, VII, 161-76; Palmieri, "Constantinople, Église de," *ibid.*, III, 1307 ff.; Scott, *op. cit.*, *passim*. The next two schisms, Photian and Cerularian, were screened with "Orthodoxy." Cf. *infra*.

merged in the vastness of the *orbis terrarum*, and ushered in the third element contributive to the growth of Byzantine Caesaropapism.

We must delve deep into history in search of the roots of Greek nationalism, and of the dislike for the Latin West with which it has become inextricably bound.

The tribal particularism of the ancient Greeks is well known to all. Nevertheless, Alexander's dream of amalgamating the peoples of his ephemeral empire into one was to a certain extent realized under the Diodochi, when the Hellenic and other eastern Mediterranean cultural and ethnic elements fused together in the phenomenon of Hellenism.

It was this united eastern Mediterranean front that Rome encountered in her eastward expansion, and it was this cultural syncretism whose resistance to that expansion was finally crushed at Actium. On the other hand, the western victor was the one conquered by the vanquished East, in the steady process of the orientalization of the Empire.

The transference of the imperial capital to Byzantium was a landmark in that process. Now the Hellenistic elements controlled the *pax romana*; the *imperator* had become a Hellenistic βασιλεύς; Greek superseded Latin as the official language. Actium was thus avenged; the empire of Augustus was in eastern hands.

Yet the burden of empire disrupted the apparent unity of Hellenism. The disaffection for the imperial administration on the part of the Syrians and the Egyptians together with their nascent ethno-cultural particularisms tore these peoples away from the Byzantine rule. Since the "politico-dogmatic conception" of the emperors was, through the Roman triumphs over occasional vagaries, still orthodox, the rebels espoused the Nestorian and Monophysite heresies in order to achieve their own politico-dogmatic independence. Thus the first religious secessions to have survived to this day came into being; in this way the road was paved for the Mohammedan conquests.

Patriotism in a nation has been compared to a man's expression of individuality, and a people's nationalism, to a man's egoism. All egoism thrives at the expense of someone else; so also does nationalism. And Byzantine nationalism found its *bête noire* in the Latin West.

Europe had in the meantime—after the downfall of the western half of the Empire—undergone a considerable transformation. The havoc

wrought by the barbarian invasions had abated, and a new order, that of the Frankish state, succeeded the turmoil. The Church, wary as regards the Byzantine Caesar of the pagan heritage and weary of his encroachments, welcomed the rise of this new order, which, uncouth though it was, had no pagan totalitarian tradition to impair its Christianization. It might, moreover, prove to be a counterpoise to the eastern Empire. Accordingly the theoretical restoration of the Empire in the West was for the Church the only means of counterbalancing Byzantine Caesaropapism.

All this, however, was only more fuel to the fire of the Greek's old dislike of the West. The Grecian disdain for the barbarian proved an anodyne to the imperial pride, humbled by the diminution of the Empire and outraged by the elevation of what it considered to be an anti-Empire of Charlemagne.

The passion of nationalism invaded the Church as well. The party of court ecclesiastics, resentful of Rome's past victories over their heterodoxy and of her obstruction of their ambition, fell a willing victim to it. The orthodox party, too, that once watchful supporter of the Holy See, was to follow in its rival's footsteps, especially after the disappointments at the sad state of affairs at Rome in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Such were the circumstances in which the separation of the Byzantine Church from the center of unity took place. It remains to see what was the role of Caesaropapism in bringing it about. All the previous secessions from Rome had been achieved through heresy—not that heresy was necessarily adopted in order to achieve a schism; it was rather that the adoption of a heresy by a Christian body caused Rome to cut that body off from the Catholic Church.

Now, however, the situation was different. There was a body of Christians owing its delimitation as a body to its inclusion in a state. And this Christian body, imbued with Caesaropapism, became for temporal reasons weary of its ancient subordination to the See of Peter, which happened to lie outside the limits of that state and to be on friendly terms with that state's political rivals.

The resort to heresy, in order to accomplish the desired separation, was precluded by the definition of dogma which had been going on in the preceding centuries. To negate the existence of the supremacy of

the See of Peter was as impossible as to deny the existence of the visible Church herself. Now, when a millennium separates us from those momentous days, we notice non-Catholic historians prone to deny that their forefathers were ever subject to the universal authority of the Apostolic See. But the Byzantine contemporaries of Photius and Cerularius knew better. For them the papal supremacy was a reality—unpleasant, irksome, perhaps—but, nonetheless, a reality. Innumerable monuments—scriptural, patristic, conciliar, liturgical—testified to the divinely instituted headship and inerrancy of the See of Peter.^{16a} The very men who led the revolt against the papacy had themselves at one time or another sought papal recognition or approbation. Something else had to be done. As Soloviev says:

It was not the frankly heretical party, nor the truly orthodox one which moulded for the future centuries the destiny of the Christian East. The decisive role in this history was played by a third party, which, while occupying an intermediary position between the other two, was not distinct from them by mere nuances, but had a well determined tendency and pursued a thoroughly premeditated policy. The great majority of the Byzantine higher clergy belonged to this party, which may be termed 'semi-orthodox' or rather 'anti-Catholic orthodox.' These prelates, through either a theoretical conviction, or routine sentiment, or attachment to common tradition, held fast to the orthodox dogma. They had nothing really against the unity of the universal Church, but on the condition only that the center of this unity be among them. Since, in reality, it lay elsewhere, they preferred to be Greeks rather than Christians, and accepted a Church divided rather than the Church unified by a power, to their eyes foreign and inimical to their nationality. As Christians they could not be caesaropapistic in principle, but as Greek patriots before all, they preferred Byzantine Caesaropapism to Roman papacy.¹⁷

So Byzantine Caesaropapism, eschewing frank heresy or revolt, arrived at an ingenious solution. It identified itself with what it held to be orthodoxy. "Orthodoxy" and nationalism became one—the one dynamic passion of the Byzantines. The establishment of the western Empire of the Franks provided the spark needed for the explosion. If the pope, in resisting eastern Caesaropapism, was to set up in

^{16a} Scott, *op. cit.*, *passim*. This Anglican scholar has once for all disposed of the later denials of the original recognition of papal supremacy and infallibility by the East during the first millennium of the Church's history.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. xxxiii.

the West the anti-Empire of Charlemagne (presumably too Christianized to succumb to the *mal byzantin*), then the Byzantine Autocrat would have unto himself an anti-pope and an anti-church all his own. Psychologically, the ground had been well prepared for this.

We must stop now to examine two different conceptions of universality, Christian and pagan. The universality of the Catholic Church is *objective*; it is based on the command of our Lord to "teach all nations"; the whole world is for the Church, built upon the rock of Peter, one vast field of Christianization. The universality of the Roman Empire, on the other hand, was *subjective*; the Empire *was* the world, the *orbis terrarum*; hence, one might speak of the Roman Empire as comprising the world, although the existence of Parthia, India, China was well known to all. The two ideas of universality, objective and subjective, may for one brief moment have coincided in the *pax christiana*.¹⁸ But already the transfer of the imperial residence to the shores of the Bosphorus symptomized the inevitable separation of the two conceptions. The Catholic Church, centered at Rome, kept the Christian idea; the Byzantine Caesarian ideology retained and represented only the pagan, subjective idea.

Thus the Byzantine Empire *was* the *οικουμένη*, centered at Constantinople; therefore, the caesaropapistic imperial Church could not depend on an outsider. Hence, the insinuations, as early as the illegal canon twenty-eight of Chalcedon, that New Rome—because the capital of the Empire—should succeed to the universal, ecumenical headship of the Church; hence, too, the style of ecumenical patriarch—presumably as patriarch of the Empire (*οικουμένη*) arrogated by the bishop of the imperial city.¹⁹

There had developed, as a consequence, a conflict between these ideas of universality. The objective, Catholic idea conceived of the Church as coextensive with the universe and therefore supranational. The subjective, Byzantine idea conceived of the *οικουμένη* as coextensive with the Empire and of a national church determinable by it. The

¹⁸ This coincidence of the two conceptions was reflected in writers such as St. Ambrose, Orosius, Prudentius, and, especially, Eusebius of Caesarea (*Theophania*, III).

¹⁹ This will explain the vehemence of papal remonstrances on the assumption of this otherwise empty title.

conflict of these two conceptions was—and still remains—to a great extent the essence of the schism.²⁰

Now the national-orthodox Church-State of Byzantium (New Rome) found, as it were, a legal pretext for achieving its separation. Under the lead of Photius, in the ninth century, and under Cerularius in the eleventh, it hurled at Rome an accusation of heresy and declared Rome's consequent forfeiture of her once inerrant headship. What had been before, could not be denied; now, however, things were to be different. Now the Byzantine Empire and the orthodox Church were coincident.

One may ask how this extraordinary accusation was, at least speciously, substantiated. By a very curious *tour de force*. If we examine the long list of accusations against what was now termed "Latin heresy"—this list grew as it passed from the pen of Photius to that of Cerularius, Leo of Achrida, or Nicetas Stethatus—we perceive that the whole structure is based on fantastic, trumped-up charges and the confusion of rite with dogma.

The Catholic Church has from the earliest times developed a certain diversity of ritual expression, which of course has no bearing on her mark of unity. This diversity of rites still characterizes her, despite all the secessions of the past.

From the beginning there have existed three principal branches of liturgical worship in the three original patriarchates, Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. These are the Latin, Alexandrian, and Antiochene Liturgies; the Byzantine rite is a ramification of the Antiochene. With the gradual ascendancy of the see of the imperial city over the other eastern patriarchates, the Byzantine rite tended to supplant—and later succeeded in so doing—the other eastern rites within the Empire.

The points on which the Latin rite and usage differed from the Byzantine included, for instance, the insertion of the word *Filioque* into the Creed; this was really a question only of the fact of insertion, not of principle. For insofar as the principle was concerned, the Greek

²⁰ The subjective idea of universality is pregnant with dispersion, for each geopolitical unit must conceive of itself as a microcosmic universe. In conjunction with Caesaropapism, it will lead to innumerable national churches, each aspiring to have a patriarch (i.e., a pseudo-pope) at its head. This is the spectacle which the Eastern dissidents present.

Fathers themselves, e.g., Origen,²¹ Basil of Caesarea,²² Epiphanius,²³ Cyril of Alexandria,²⁴ Tarasius,²⁵ and John Damascene,²⁶ all confessed the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, though some, like St. Basil and St. John Damascene, preferred the use of the preposition *διὰ* (through).²⁷ Again, unlike the Byzantines, the Latins used unleavened bread in the Holy Eucharist, kept fast on Saturdays, did not abstain from milk and eggs in Lent; their priests did not wear beards, but their bishops wore rings. It was precisely such differences, distinguishing the Latin from the Byzantine rite and usage, that were attacked as differences in dogma and, therefore, as heresy.

In view of these accusations, one cannot help wondering how enlightened prelates of the then most civilized country in Christendom could stoop to such puerile captiousness. Of course, we must admit that the task of the Byzantines was not an easy one. How else could they find heresy in the Chair of Peter, which the best amongst them had ever recognized as the indefectible fount of orthodoxy?²⁸ Were they really enlightened? To reply to this, we must examine the intellectual background of the Byzantine Church.

Byzantine higher education, like the Byzantine state, bore the heavy imprint of Caesaropapism. We have seen that despite the Christianity of its holders, the imperial power remained essentially unchanged from the days of pagan Roman totalism. The same was true of Byzantine higher education. Centered at the University of Constantinople and flourishing under the imperial aegis, it continued the educational tradition of pre-Christian Rome in spite of the Christianity of the individual professors and students. Just as the Christianized Empire at its birth was infected by a fully-grown Caesaropapism, so its protégé, the Byzantine educational system, possessed from the start that absolute degree of laicization which has been reached in the West only after centuries of slow process. Neither under Theodosius II nor under Michael VIII, were theological studies ever admitted into the curricu-

²¹ *Comment. in Joannem*, II, 6.

²² *De Spiritu Sancto*, 18, 47.

²³ *Adv. haereses*, LXII, 4.

²⁴ *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate*, 34.

²⁵ For his confession at the Second Council of Nicaea, cf. Mansi, *op. cit.*, XII, 1121.

²⁶ *De fide orthodoxa*, I, 12.

²⁷ Among Western writers, Tertullian used the preposition *per* (*Adv. Praxeam*, 4).

²⁸ Scott, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

lum of the University of Constantinople.²⁹ "This trait is one of the characteristics of the intellectual development of Byzantium. Unlike the West, which in one synthesis embraced the knowledge based on reason and observation, on the one hand, and the truths of the Faith, on the other, Byzantium always separated sacred science from the profane science inherited from pagan antiquity."³⁰

For religious education of any kind, one had to repair to patriarchal, episcopal, or abbey schools. Thus the intellectual training of the ecclesiastics was entirely distinct from that of the laymen. So, for instance, in the ninth century, the future patriarch, Nicephorus, having completed his lay course of education and having been one of the imperial secretaries, decided to live in a monastery. It was then only that he first approached what his biography calls the "knowledge of things divine." His possession of secular knowledge is commented upon.³¹

As a result there developed a rivalry between the centers of the two learnings: amateurish dabbings in theology on the part of the laymen brought up in the pagan tradition, and an attitude of hostile distrust for secular learning on the part of the clergy, particularly the monks. There developed, in a word, what in the nineteenth century, after the secularization of the West, was called—with infinitely less justice—the conflict of science and religion. It culminated in the bitter struggle of the Byzantine Church and the University of Constantinople in the fourteenth century.³²

The inevitable outcome of this situation was the intellectual impoverishment of the clergy, which had failed to develop Christian intellectuality, and the religious ignorance of the laity. It was fortunate that St. Nicephorus, for instance, had had time, while still a layman, to complete his religious education before his elevation to the patriarchate. But with men like Cerularius, the case was quite different. Two years before his elevation to the patriarchal throne, he was a worldly and ambitious courtier, plotting the overthrow of his sovereign; and it

²⁹ L. Bréhier, "Notes sur l'histoire de l'enseignement supérieur à Constantinople," *Byzantion*, III (1926), 84-85; Fuchs, "Die höheren Schulen von Konstantinopel in Mittelalter," *Byzantinisches Archiv*, VIII (1926), 5; J. M. Hussey, *Church and Learning in the Byzantine Empire* (London, 1937), pp. 22-23.

³⁰ Bréhier, *art. cit.*, p. 85. ³¹ *Vita Nicephori*, II, 14. ³² Bréhier, *art. cit.*, *passim*.

is quite clear that, unlike Cerularius, he had had no sound religious and theological training.

In the light of this short survey, the confusion of ritual with dogma and even the invention of false charges, upon which the accusation of heresy hurled at the Roman Church was based, presents nothing really astonishing. One need not even suspect the good faith of the majority of the ultra-nationalistic Byzantine ecclesiastics and laymen who accepted these accusations at their face value—accusations which, if poor in essence, were rich in number.³³

We must not forget, furthermore, that nationalism is a passion, and that all passion begets blindness. Hence, when we see, half a millennium later, the majority of the bishops of a certain kingdom submit, on no higher authority than an act of parliament, to the transfer of their spiritual allegiance from the Vicar of Christ to their particular king, the attempts of the Byzantines to justify their similar action by quasi-intellectual quibbling appear almost respectable.

Having finally severed itself and its eastern dependencies from the center of unity (hope of reunion being frustrated by the fear and hate of the Norman and the crusader), the Byzantine world plunged itself into the spiritual stagnation of Caesaropapism. The Orthodox emperor, to be sure, did not supplant the ecumenical patriarch; that was to be achieved in Russia. Both ruled quasi-diarchically over the national-Orthodox State-Church; but it was Caesar who was the senior partner and who, once the God-established center of unity in the universal Church had been rejected, caesaropapistically set himself up to replace it. This is made clear in the following teaching of the Constantinopolitan patriarch, Anthony IV. Rebuking, in 1393, a recalcitrant Grand Duke of Muscovy, the Patriarch states: "It is impossible for Christians to have the Church, but not to have the Emperor."³⁴

³³ A. Lebedev, *A Sketch of the History of the Byzantino-Eastern Church in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (in Russian; Moscow, 1892), p. 112. For the complete list of accusations, cf. A. Palmieri, *Acta Academiae Velehradensis* (Prague, 1912), nn. 1-3; Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, CLI, 1266; CLV, 97, 735, 737; CXL, 543; cf. B. Leib, *Rome, Kiev, et Byzance* (Paris, 1924).

³⁴ F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi*, (Vienna, 1862), II, 189-92; cf. A. Vasiliev, "Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?" *Byzantion*, VII (1932), 358 ff.

Thus, forgetful of the formula of the orthodox Ambrose, *Ubi Petrus, ibi Ecclesia*, the Byzantines devised for themselves a new one: *Ibi Ecclesia, ubi Caesar*. Soloviev writes: "... This profound contradiction between pretended orthodoxy and practiced heresy was the death principle for the Byzantine Empire. It was the true cause of its downfall. It was just that it should have perished at the hands of Islam. For Islam is Byzantinism consistent and sincere, free from all inner contradiction."³⁵

It may be not devoid of interest to examine here the views of a Russian scholar in defence of his spiritual mother, Byzantium. There is a definite trend among certain Russian byzantinologists and Church historians to deny the existence of Caesaropapism in Byzantium. Perhaps the most brilliant modern scholar of that group is George Ostrogorsky. Ostrogorsky bases his denial of the fact of the existence of Caesaropapism in the Byzantine Empire on the perfectly correct observation that the emperor was never officially the head of the Church (as in Russia).³⁶ But since such scholars as H. Gelzer,³⁷ J. B. Bury,³⁸ L. Bréhier and P. Batiffol³⁹ (before Ostrogorsky), and Otto Treitinger,⁴⁰ who affirm that fact, are equally aware that the Byzantine Emperor was not *de jure* the head of the Orthodox Church, Ostrogorsky's attempt to explain away the existence of Caesaropapism by narrowing its definition smacks of *ignoratio elenchi*.

The Russian scholar's thesis is that not only was there no Caesaropapism in Byzantium, but Byzantine history, on the contrary, shows an emancipation of the Church from all control of the State. He divides that history into two periods: the survival of Roman paganism, and the rise of Byzantine mediaevalism. He concedes the imperial encroachments on the Church in the first period; but, he argues, that was accepted in the West as well as in the East. He quotes, in support of this, a letter of Pope St. Leo the Great to the Emperor, in which the Pontiff writes: "Debes incunctanter advertere regiam potestatem tibi

³⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. xlvii.

³⁶ *Art. cit.*, p. 121 ff.

³⁷ "Die Verhältniss von Staat und Kirche in Byzanz," *Hist. Zeitschrift*, LXXXVI (1901), 193 ff.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*

³⁹ *Les survivances du culte impérial romain* (Paris, 1920).

⁴⁰ *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee* (Jena, 1938).

non solum ad mundi regimen sed maxime ad Ecclesiae praesidium esse collatam."⁴¹

The second period opened in the seventh century; it was, according to Ostrogorsky, marked by the birth, in both East and West, of the "new, mediaeval ideology,"⁴² i.e., of the belief in the distinction of the spiritual and temporal, and in the independence of Church from State. He considers St. Maximus Confessor as the protagonist of this new idea. The imperial reaction to this trend in the Church resulted, according to Ostrogorsky, in the Iconoclast struggle, which then resolved itself into the equipoise of the Byzantine diarchy of the Orthodox emperor and patriarch.

The author traces the history of the rise of the Constantinopolitan bishop from canon twenty-eight of the Council of Chalcedon to the position of a theoretical diarch assigned to him by the *Epanagoge*, a legal code of 879-886.⁴³

The division proposed by Ostrogorsky is quite unwarranted, from the point of view of both Church and State. It is rather difficult to accept his contention that it was only in the seventh century that the Catholic Church developed the "new, mediaeval" idea of her independence from the State and of the distinctness of the spiritual. This idea is inherent in Christianity. Ostrogorsky himself is aware of St. Maximus' eastern predecessors in the struggle against Caesar, e.g., SS. Athanasius, John Chrysostom.⁴⁴ One wonders, therefore, why he chose St. Maximus as ushering in the "new period." As regards the West, Pope St. Leo's words, "alia tamen ratio est rerum saecularium, alia divinarum" (*Ep.* 104, 3), give the orthodox sense of "protection" to *praesidium* (in the statement quoted above), and refute the meaning Ostrogorsky would read into it. The whole structure, moreover, collapses before the clear teaching on the proper correlation of the two powers as enunciated in the fifth century by St. Felix II (III) and by St. Gelasius I.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Mansi, *op. cit.*, VI, 325.

⁴² *Art. cit.*, p. 125.

⁴³ Cf. G. Vernadsky, "Byzantine Teachings regarding the Powers of Emperor and Patriarch," *Recueil Kondakov* (in Russian; Prague, 1926), p. 143 ff.; and "Die kirchlich-politische Lehre des Epanagoge," *Byz. neogr. Jahrbuch*, VI (1928), 119 ff.

⁴⁴ *Art. cit.*, p. 124.

⁴⁵ Cf. A. Ziegler, "Pope Gelasius I and His Teaching on the Relation of Church and State," *Cath. Hist. Review*, XXVII (1942), 412 ff.

The diarchy, patent in the *Epanagoge*, which had succeeded the earlier struggles, signified both the acquiescence of the Byzantine Church to the fact that Caesar had become its determining factor, its center of unity, and also Caesar's theoretical recompense to the acquiescing Church. Thus, though he had had previously to fight the Church's resistance even to the extent of heresy, now he no longer needed to do so.

The history of the Byzantine Church is not typified by the superficial progress from the dignity arrogated by its head at Chalcedon to that bestowed upon him by imperial law. Rather, it is typified by the deeper process from the motives of canons seventeen and twenty-eight of Chalcedon to the teaching of Patriarch Anthony IV. That is the true history and the truly caesaropapistic development of the Byzantine Church. That is the cause and condition of anti-Catholic "Orthodoxy."⁴⁶

RUSSIA

Russia was, in many respects, Byzantium provincialized and barbarized. Child of a sick mother, she received, together with the life of Christianity, the parental malady of Caesaropapism.

St. Vladimir's conversion, in 989, brought about a dichotomy in Russian society. On the one hand, there was the small minority of the clergy and the thorough Christians; on the other, the vast majority of but imperfectly Christianized masses, still largely pagan at heart. And, unfortunately, any great influence of the minority was precluded by two of its outstanding characteristics.

First, the composition of the clergy was largely foreign—Greek. In the eyes of the subjectively universalist Byzantines, Orthodox dogma and Byzantine ritual were one and the same thing, and constituted the exclusive mark of the imperial church. This, as we have seen, was the essence of the schism. Accordingly, other Churches and States of the Byzantine rite before the schism, or of the Orthodox faith after it, were, from that point of view, mere adjuncts of the Byzantine *οικουμένη*. Hence the Byzantine reluctance to accept the existence of native clergy

⁴⁶ For the countefaccusation by some Orthodox of a dogmatic "Papocaesarism" in the Catholic Church, and its refutation, cf. Ivan Kologrigov, S. J. in *Orientalia Christiana*, VI (1926), 139–60.

in its dependencies. Hence, also, the later refusal of Russia to recognize the existence of non-schismatic Churches of the Byzantine rite.

Secondly, the better—and especially the monastic—elements in eastern Christianity have always displayed an abhorrence of the world which smacked of Manichaeism. It was this Manichaean spirit that had undermined in Byzantium the resistance of the orthodox-Catholic party to caesaropapistic encroachment and would now help to ensure its victory in Russia.

With time, however, the local Russian element tended to supersede the Greek element, in the lower ranks of the clergy at least; this entailed a definite lowering of the intellectual level of the Russian Church. This intellectual decline was, on the other hand, the price which had to be paid for bridging the chasm between the two groups in Russian society. The Byzantine tradition of ritualism served as the bridge. As Miliukov writes:

The decline in the level of education among the clergy was a far more striking phenomenon than the gradual advancement of the religious standard of the masses. This progress must be recognized as an indisputable fact. . . . Drawing close to each other the priests and the parishioners of ancient Russia arrived finally at a fairly analogous religious understanding—equally remote from both initial points: the ascetic fervor of the hermits and the pagan creed of the masses. The priests grew more and more accustomed to identifying the substance of religion with its outer forms, whereas the masses, having primarily not even assimilated the forms of religion, gradually grew to value them. By force of habit they attributed to the rites the same mysterious and magic significance found in earlier days in the rites of the ancient folk cult. It was the magic significance of the rite which became the cause and condition of its popularity. Therefore the rite served also as a middle course upon which met the upper and lower strata of Russian faith: the former gradually losing the true conception of the contents, the latter gradually gaining an approximate understanding of the form.⁴⁷

Several factors contributed to Russia's following her spiritual mother and mistress, imperceptibly but docilely, into the Cerularian schism.

First, the Greek higher clergy in Russia, appointed from Constantinople, successfully spread anti-Catholic propaganda; the basis of which—the confusion of rite with dogma—particularly well suited the intellectual level of the Russians of the time.

⁴⁷ Paul Miliukov, "Religion and the Church," *Outlines of Russian Culture* (Eng. ed. by Michael Karpovich; Philadelphia, 1943), I, 10-11.

Then, the Mongol invasions cut Russia off from the West and severed her last link with Catholicism: the marriage ties of her Rurikid princes with the dynasties of western Europe. Furthermore, the national unity of Russia, achieved at Kiev before the Mongol onslaught, had been followed by political unification headed by Moscow. Supported by the Church, the rising Muscovite state acquired the taste for the Byzantine lessons in Caesaropapism. And the adherence to the Byzantine example was only intensified by the imitation of the cruder and franker forms of oriental despotism, as shown by Muscovy's overlords, the Mongol khans.

Finally, rapacious western neighbors—the Lithuanians, the Poles, the Swedes, the Germanic knights—profiting by the Mongol destructions, sought to divide Russia into so many European colonies. This provoked in the Russian people a violent hatred for the Westerners, which then, unfortunately, was transferred to their religion as well, which religion happened to be Catholicism. All this served to consummate, by the end of the thirteenth century, the juridical as well as psychological separation of Russia from Rome.

The period which followed the downfall of Kievan Russia in the thirteenth century was, until the regeneration in the fifteenth, one of bleak despondency and of spiritual as well as material impoverishment. Succeeding it, the fifteenth century was a feverishly crucial epoch. This renaissance was centered in the Muscovite north, whither the stream of cultural and political continuity had been deflected after the destruction of the Kievan south.

The hitherto docile child of Byzantium had come of age and superseded her mother. Before this epoch, Russia depended on Constantinople intellectually, religiously, and even politically: she had no independent thought; her Church was under the jurisdiction of the ecumenical patriarch; and the Grand Dukes of Muscovy were, in theory at least, vassals of the Orthodox emperors.

Now, however, Russia attained her politico-religious emancipation and developed an independent religio-political ideology. Two historic events had contributed to this. The reunion of the Eastern dissidents with the See of Peter was promulgated at the Council of Florence in 1439. Russia was represented at the Council—along with other Easterns—by her primate, the future Cardinal Isidore. But

hatred for the Latins, inculcated by Byzantium and enhanced by unfortunate relations with some western neighbours, was so great, and the fusion of Orthodoxy and nationalism so complete, that the Union of Florence was rejected by the Muscovite Grand Duke. And yet the Union had been accepted by the Byzantine Emperor and by the Patriarch. This left the Russians stupefied. Had not the Byzantines themselves taught them about the heretical defect of Old Rome and the orthodox purity of the New? Had not the Byzantines instructed their pupils to hate the Latin West? Something must have gone wrong. The faith of Russia in the orthodoxy of Byzantium was sorely shaken. An expression of this can be found, for instance, in the nearly contemporaneous pamphlet *On the Council of Florence*, by a priest named Samson, in which the following statement occurs: "The Byzantine Caesar John apostatized from holy piety and darkened himself with the darkness of heresy. But the Russian land has remained orthodox and has become enlightened with the light of piety."⁴⁸ The sole purpose of this work was to extol Russia at the expense of Byzantium.⁴⁹

The second event occurred less than two decades later when the imperial city of Constantine, New Rome fell under the blows of the Turks. The theoretical overlord of the Russian State was no more. In this the pious Russians did not fail to see a punishment for the "apostasy" at Florence.⁵⁰

Now, Russian thought had been impressed with two fundamental principles of Byzantine Caesaropapism: first, that Orthodoxy and nationalism were one; secondly, that the Roman Empire—the perfect, ecumenical, theophanic state—was coincident, coequal, and coeval with the Church. It could no more perish from the face of the earth

⁴⁸ Cited in V. Sipovsky, *History of Russian Literature* (in Russian; St. Petersburg, 1910), I, 161.

⁴⁹ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁰ In one of his letters, Jonas, Metropolitan of Moscow, with whom the Grand Duke replaced Cardinal Isidore, wrote: "You know, my children, how many misfortunes had befallen the imperial city (Tsargrad), from the Bulgarians and from the Persians . . . nevertheless, it had in no way suffered from them so long as the Greeks kept piety. But as soon as they apostatized from piety, you know how they suffered, what was their captivity and slaughter; and as for their souls—God alone knows" (cited in V. Vlasov von Waldenberg, *The History of Russia* [in Russian; Harbin, 1936], pp. 249–50); cf. Miliukov, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

than she. On this premise the Russians soon arrived at the inevitable conclusion. Since the Empire and Orthodoxy were one, the Byzantine "betrayal" at Florence, on the one hand, and the fall of Constantinople, on the other, left Russia as the sole Orthodox State and the Empire's sole successor.⁵¹ Thus there was born the famous idea of Moscow as Third Rome.

This theory found its full expression at the end of the fifteenth century in the epistles addressed to various important personages of Muscovy by Philotheus, Hegumen of St. Eleazar, near Pskov. Thus, in his letter to Grand Duke Ivan III, he wrote:

The Church of Old Rome fell because of the impiety of the Apollinarian [= "Latin"] heresy; that of Second Rome, Constantinople, was smitten under the battle-axes of the Hagarenes; but this Church of Third Rome—of Thy sovereign dominion—the Holy Catholic (*sobórnaia*) Apostolic Church, shines over the whole universe brighter than the sun. And let it be known to Thy Lordship, O pious Czar, that all the kingdoms of the Orthodox Christian Faith have converged in Thine one realm. Thou art the sole King of the Christians in the whole universe. Hear and comprehend, O pious Czar, that all the Christian realms have come to form Thy sole realm; that two Romes have fallen, and the Third stands, and a fourth shall never be: Thy Christian Realm shall not devolve upon others.⁵²

The idea of Moscow as Third Rome was enhanced by the marriage of Ivan III with an imperial princess of the House of the Palaeologi and reached its logical conclusion the next century in the coronation of Ivan IV the Terrible as Czar, i.e., Caesar, in 1547, and in the elevation, in 1589, of the primate of Russia, the metropolitan of Moscow, to the rank of an autocephalous patriarch.

In the domain of thought, Russia had inherited the subjective universality of pagan Rome and caesaropapistic Byzantium. Now "Holy Russia" was the *οικουμένη*; the czar was Caesar; the patriarch, a quasi-pope; Moscow, Third Rome. The subjectively ecumenical national-orthodox State-Church of Moscow—Third Rome—was, in the eyes of her children, the only authentic microcosm of the objective universe.

⁵¹ The only other Orthodox state left at that time was Georgia. But it was then too weak and too uninterested in imperial dreams to be considered a rival. Nevertheless, the several attempts on the part of the Russian rulers of the time to secure marriage alliances with the Georgian Bagratids, relatives of the Byzantine imperial houses, may perhaps be accounted for on ideological grounds; cf. W. E. D. Allen, *A History of the Georgian People* (London, 1932), p. 127 and note 1.

⁵² Cited in von Waldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 250; cf. Miliukov, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

It is not devoid of piquancy to observe how the Byzantine lessons turned in the end against themselves. The subjective conception of universality—like the subjectivist idea of private judgment—is *ex natura* pregnant with division. The psychological autonomy of Russia, the inevitable fruit of that conception, had been achieved before the official recognition of her autocephaly by the patriarch of Constantinople, just as the psychological separation of Byzantium had been reached before the open break with Rome. Since excessive subjectivism is seldom consistent, Russia—as previously Byzantium—sought to obtain the sanction of its independence by the very authority it was prepared to deny. Also, as in the case of Byzantium's attack on Rome, Russia attempted to bring to its logical conclusion the conjunction of Orthodoxy and nationalism, by accusing of heterodoxy all outside herself, even the very Greeks!

Typical of this trend is the *Legend of the White "Klobuk"*—a piece of Byzantine anti-Catholic propaganda adapted to the Russian exigencies of the fifteenth century. According to it, the Emperor Constantine had offered Pope Sylvester a white *klobuk* (the head-gear of the Byzantine, especially Russian, bishops, a combination of the *kamelaukion* with a veil), and being unworthy to reign where the episcopal power had been established by God, left Rome to him. But when the Roman See fell into heresy, the white *klobuk*, through the ministrations of SS. Constantine and Sylvester, and an angel, was transferred to Constantinople. So far the Byzantine version; worthy of notice is the involuntary admission of the Petrine supremacy. Now comes the Russian superimposition. Again the above saints cause the Constantinopolitan patriarch to send the *klobuk* to Russia, for, as they say: "Old Rome fell away from the glory of Christ's Faith, through pride and wilfulness; in New Rome, which is Constantinople, the Christian Faith shall perish by the violence of the Hagarenes; but in Third Rome, which is in the Russian land, there shall shine the grace of the Holy Ghost. . . All the Christian lands shall end and converge in the one Russian Realm, for the sake of orthodoxy."⁵⁸

In the fields of legendary and fictional literature this trend expressed

⁵⁸ Cited in V. Sipovsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-69. The conjunction of the Third Realm with the reference to the Holy Ghost may raise the question of a possible connection of the dreams of the Muscovite divines with the ideas of Joachim of Flora.

itself also in tales about the foundation of the Russian Church by St. Andrew the Apostle, in genealogical pamphlets tracing the Muscovite Rurikids to Caesar Augustus, and in legends about their succession to the regalia of Byzantine, and even Babylonian, monarchs.⁵⁴

Thus, also, in the middle of the seventeenth century, Arsenius Sukhánov, the Czar's messenger to the Eastern Churches, in a book entitled *The Disputation of the Faith with the Greeks*, came to the conclusion that, since there existed between the Muscovites and other Easterners differences in such matters as infusion or immersion at baptism, the manner of making the sign of the cross, the number of alleluias to be sung on certain occasions, etc., Russian Orthodoxy was higher and purer than that of the others, and that the Russians need not pay attention to the Greeks in matters of religion. This view was widely accepted in Muscovy.⁵⁵ In the same way, the Muscovite hierarchs a century earlier, had not hesitated to accuse the Athonite monk Maximus of heresy and to immure him in a distant monastery, for striving too zealously to correct abuses in the Russian Church.⁵⁶

The idea of Moscow as Third Rome and all it implied, remained, however, only the proud dream of Muscovite divines and politicians, sadly at variance with the material and spiritual realities of the day. In the first place, the final overthrow of the suzerainty of the Golden Horde by Ivan III and the subjugation of its remnants by Ivan the Terrible, though contributing to the enhancement of Muscovite pretensions, did not in fact obtain for Russia the position of a major power. All her encounters with her western as well as her southern (Crimean), neighbors exposed to the world—and presumably to herself—her considerable weakness. The country, though vast, remained disorganized and poor.

In the second place, conditions of appalling ignorance, immorality, superstition, and heresy were rampant among the masses and affected even the ruling elements of both Church and State. The following complaint of Gennadius, Archbishop of Novgorod sufficiently illustrates the intellectual level of the lower clergy in the fifteenth century:

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 165–68; Miliukov, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Before the Russians, the Byzantines had claimed St. Andrew as the founder of the "Great Church"; cf., v.g., Bousquet, *op. cit.*, pp. 112–13.

⁵⁵ Sipovsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 228–29 and note 1.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 148–49.

They bring before me a peasant to be ordained priest or deacon: I bid him to read from the Epistles, but he does not know even how to begin; I bid him to be given a Psalter, and this he hardly reads, as if in a delirium. . . . I bid him be taught at least to read the *Ektenes*, but he cannot master even one word: you tell him one but he [repeats] another. You bid him begin with the alphabet, and he, having studied a little, begs to be dismissed, does not wish to study. . . . And if you refuse to ordain, they will complain to me: Such is our land, my Lord, we cannot find anyone who would be versed in learning.⁵⁷

The Council of the Hundred Chapters, convoked in 1551 by Ivan the Terrible, stated that "unless the illiterate be ordained, the churches will remain without chant and Christians will die unrepentant."⁵⁸

The endeavour to reform these religious and cultural conditions—as well as, in a measure, the wars of Ivan IV—reflected the desire to bridge the discrepancy between Muscovy's melancholy reality and lofty vision.

While the great majority of clergy and laity remained entirely apathetic, the small active minority developed two opposing schools of thought regarding the proposed reform.

On the one hand, there stood the so-called "Josephians" (*Iosifliáne*), or alumni of the abbey school of Volokolamsk, founded by Hegumen Joseph Sánin (Volótsky). Joseph's program aimed at the closest possible alliance of Church and State and at the return to what was termed "ancient piety." The Josephians, who succeeded in monopolizing for a century the direction of the Russian Church, presented almost a caricature of the Byzantine Court ecclesiastics of the past. Spiritual and intellectual stagnation and subservience to Caesar were their chief characteristics. Adhesion to sheer form, letter, ritual; veneration of texts as texts, whether Holy Scriptures or laws of the Byzantine Emperors, the lives of the saints, or apocrypha and legends; abhorrence of creative thinking, which they disparagingly called "new thought" or "opinion"—all this was inculcated upon Hegumen Joseph's pupils. Devoid of practically all sound theological training, these ecclesiastical bureaucrats in the service of Caesar, following Sánin's precept of "God-enlightened and God-prescribed perfidy," not infrequently forgot the things that are God's. "Opinion is the mother of all passions," was the teaching of one of Joseph's pupils; "opinion is another Fall."⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Cited in von Waldenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-48; cf. Miliukov, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁵⁸ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 242-44; cf. Miliukov, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

A revulsion against the deadening tenets of official Caesaropapism was expressed by the opposing school of "new thought." Its best exponents and leaders were the "Ancients" (*Stáritsy*) or Hermits from beyond the Volga, centred about the Monasteries of Vologdá and of St. Cyril-in-Bielózero, of whom the foremost was St. Nilus Sorsky. They preached and practiced ascetic-contemplative pietism, sought "inner experience," and strove—in contrast to the Josephians—to reform the Church by searching for the "substance of religion," by disregarding forms, and by denying the Church any right to interfere in politics.

The conflict that developed between the two schools of thought produced a voluminous polemical literature. Joseph Sánin published his treatise *The Illuminer*, embodying the views of his school and attacking "new thought." Bassianus Patrikéiev, a pupil of Nilus Sorsky, appears to have been the author of the reply which contained the thought of the Hermits.

The progress of Caesaropapism caused this split in the Russian Church, just as it had given rise to the two parties within the Byzantine Church. But now, without the moderating guidance of the See of Peter, the mutual revulsion of the opposing elements propelled them to opposite extremes. While the worldly elements controlled that Church *ad maiorem Caesaris gloriam* and extolled form at the expense of substance, the spiritualist elements fled the world in a Manichaean mood, and, contrarily to the official school, decried all forms. The grosser among the latter degenerated into the phenomena of schismatic sectarianism. The struggle between these trends convulsed the Russian Church from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

It is a fact to command attention that Catholicism alone establishes the harmonious correlation of the spiritual and the material, of soul and body, of form and matter, of Church and State. Dissent is born of the disturbance of that equipoise; its life consists in the perpetuation of that disequilibrium. Hence, the temporal determines the spiritual; form is thought of as foe, not spouse, of matter; State controls Church; religion is rent between Caesaropapism and Manichaeism.

The large masses had in the meantime combined the paganism which they had outgrown with the Christianity which they had imperfectly acquired, and evolved the phenomenon of "double faith" (*duoévêrie*),

which was expressly condemned by the Council of the Hundred Chapters in 1551. This "double faith" proved a fertile soil for the seeds of sectarianism sown by the active minority of the Manichaean recusants. Berdiaiev states:

Ancient Russian paganism mixed itself with Russian Christianity and gave it a very special character. Russian Orthodoxy has concealed within itself a certain Christian Dionysianism which is not encountered in Byzantine Orthodoxy. There exists somewhere a point of contact between Russian Orthodoxy and such extraordinary mystic-Dionysiac sects as the Russian flagellants (*khlysty*), a sect in which Christianity is fused, in a bizarre, even terrifying fashion, with ancient Russian paganism. . . .⁶⁰

These growing tendencies within the Russian Church came to a *dénouement* in the seventeenth century, in the patriarchate of the celebrated Nikon. This great man was possessed of learning, righteousness, and the zeal of a reformer, without the heterodox excesses of either the Josephians or the Hermits. His ecclesiastical reforms, fully supported by the State, were centered on bringing the practices of the Russian Church in concordance with those of the other Orthodox Churches. But they provoked the long prepared schism (*Raskól*) of the "Old Believers," who, true to the idea of Moscow as the Third Rome, had logically enough come to regard the Muscovite brand of Orthodoxy with all its defects as the true faith, and that of the other Easterners as quasi-heresy; and they refused to accept the correction of the one by the standards of the others. More would have followed the *Raskól*, had not the lessons of Caesaropapism included, besides subjective universality, also submission to the State: and the State stood by the reforms of Nikon.

Yet the attempts to put in practice the Byzantine theory of caesaropapistic diarchy proved abortive as soon as Nikon tried to stave off the interferences of the czar; his downfall brought about the further subjection of his successors to the civil power.

The period between the accession of Peter the Great (1682) and the murder of Paul I (1801) marked the final stage in the process of Caesaropapism: the absorption of Church by State. What Byzantium had left unfinished, Russia brought to its conclusion.

⁶⁰ *Russian Religious Idea* (in Russian; Berlin, 1924).

This period was opened by the reforms of Peter the Great, which thrust the flabbiness of Byzantino-Mongolic Manichaeo-Orthodox Russia into the tight uniform of a western Protestant-Brandenburgian State. The Orthodox Muscovite czar transformed himself into the Emperor of All the Russias. The Patriarchate was abolished by 1721, and the State-Church of Third Rome was now ruled by the autocrat alone through two channels: the *temporalia*, through the Governing Senate, and the *spiritualia*, through the Holy Governing Synod.

The Holy Synod was founded on the Lutheran model and was composed of the bishops and other high ecclesiastics of the Russian Church. The Josephian tradition of most of them, and the Lutheran tendencies of some, did not make it too difficult for them to take the following oath, prescribed for all the members of that body upon induction into office: "I profess under oath our most gracious Lord, the Monarch of All the Russias, to be the Supreme Arbiter of this Ecclesiastical College."⁶¹ Over this body there presided a civilian styled Procurator, responsible to no one save the emperor and significantly referred to by Peter as "our eye."⁶²

The famous *Ecclesiastical Regulations*, composed by Theophanes Prokopovich, the Lutheranizing Archbishop of Pskov, and promulgated by Peter in 1720, transformed the clergy into state functionaries. They were obliged—and this one instance sums up all the fruits of Caesaropapism—by an imperial ukase to violate the secrecy of confession, and to denounce to the authorities the unrepentant perpetrators of crimes against the State, accomplished or intended.⁶³ Whether ever actually applied or not, the very existence of such laws and the Russian Church's acquiescence in them are sufficient.

Although the legislation of Peter the Great and his immediate successors leaves no doubt that the Emperor of Russia was now *de facto* absolute head of the Russian Church, nevertheless he was nowhere explicitly so called. It was Paul I who became *de jure* head of the Church. In the Law of the Imperial Succession, promulgated by that monarch in 1797, it was solemnly and officially stated that "the Sovereigns of Russia are the Heads of the Church."⁶⁴ The process begun at Constantinople had been concluded at St. Petersburg.

⁶¹ *The Complete Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire*, VI, 150.

⁶² *Ibid.*, VI, 144-45. ⁶³ *Ibid.*, XV, 245, 598-99. ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, XXIV.

Outside the Established Church, the Manichaean spiritualist elements were represented by numerous sects, some of which displayed a resemblance to the sects of the Protestant West. Finally, the grandiose vision of Moscow as Third Rome was secularized in the course of the nineteenth century and, under Hegelian influence, expressed itself as the Slavophile movement.

The religious conditions of the Russian Empire in that century prompted Soloviev, in 1889, to write:

We are told that the emperor of Russia is a son of the Church. So he should be as the head of a Christian state. To be more effectively such, however, the Church must exercise authority over him, and have a power independent of, and superior to, the power of the State. With the best intentions in the world, a secular monarch will never be truly a son of the Church if he is its head and governs it through his functionaries. The Church of Russia, deprived of all point of support—a center of unity outside the national state—was fated to become enslaved at last by the secular power. That power, with nothing left in the world superior to itself, with no one from whom to receive religious sanction—a partial delegation of Christ's authority—was equally fated to degenerate into anti-Christian absolutism.⁶⁵

Was it not ironical that the Caesaropapism of West-hating Byzantium and Russia should in its last stage have met and mated with Lutheran Protestantism, its western counterpart, in its last phase, and that both should have engendered the enigmatic fruit of the Russian state, which to this day is haunted by the caesaropapistic vision of Moscow as Third Rome? And now, with the decay of secularism and its replacement by false spiritualities throughout the world, that dream—once secularized as Panslavism—has been reborn, phoenix-like, of the ashes of the European civilization.

The alacrity with which the Orthodox Church transferred its allegiance from the national-imperial to the national-soviet State, as soon as it was invited, and the recent demonstrations of ecclesiastical servility at Moscow indicate how thoroughly the Byzantine lesson in Caesaropapism has been learnt: that Orthodoxy and nationalism are one; that Caesar, not the Pope, is the center of Church unity.

⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 73.