Letters from Heaven

POPULAR RELIGION IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

EDITED BY JOHN-PAUL HIMKA AND ANDRIY ZAYARNYUK

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Introduction

ANDRIY ZAYARNYUK and JOHN-PAUL HIMKA

One might well ask: Why put together at this time a collection on popular religion? When two leading European philosophers were choosing the theme for their seminar on Capri in 1994 they independently decided on religion, believing it to be the foremost concern of our times.[1] Although it is clearly the case that religion has become increasingly prominent in East European historiography over the past decade, our collection was not meant simply to reflect this current interest in religion among intellectuals.[2]

Religion seems to retain its currency in scholarship, but another component of this collection's subtitle, popular, has been less fortunate. At a certain point historians believed that popular culture was a concept well worth using. They believed that it allowed them to uncover the attitudes, values, and beliefs of ordinary people, things from which their learned contemporaries felt estranged and which they could not articulate.

The starting point for many studies of popular culture was Peter Burke's work, which claimed to show how the split between popular and elite had occurred and why folk or popular culture had to be rediscovered in the nineteenth century.[3] For many scholars popular culture was a concept that helped challenge definitions of culture as something shared, and pointed instead to inherent splits and conflicts as well as to symbolic resources for the resistance of the dominated and disempowered.[4] This interest in popular culture among historians coincided with the paradigmatic shift from 'hard social' to 'new cultural' history, which is said to have occurred in the 1980s. Instead of deducing people's experiences from social structures and conflicts, historians turned to the mechanisms of cultural production.[5]

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Outside of the discipline of history, popular culture became a prominent research topic in the context of a new academic project – namely, cultural studies – developing on the tradition of works associated with the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (established in 1964). Drawing on Gramsci's concepts of hegemony revived and rearticulated by Stuart Hall, scholars in cultural studies came to see popular culture as resistance through appropriation based on the potential multiplicity of meanings available in any cultural product.[6] Another theoretical impetus influencing the turn of cultural studies to the popular came from Michel de Certeau's work.[7]

In both cases, in history (usually early modern) and in cultural studies (usually contemporary), the convergence of all these trends resulted in a wave of works on popular culture in general and popular religion in particular that appeared in the mid-1980s and early 1990s.[8] But as often happens with paradigms, the high moment of the concept was also the time when assumptions behind its usage were seriously questioned.

First of all, it appeared that the emphasis on resistance and creative reworking of meanings was hiding the other side of the process – namely, the exercise of domination, the sustentation of a certain political regime. At the end of the 1990s some authors were observing the decline not only of cultural elitism but also of the celebratory 'cultural populism' in much of cultural studies.[9]

Works that appeared at the end of the 1990s made little use of the term 'popular religion.' In the 1980s and first half of the 1990s popular religion, along with popular Catholicism, popular Methodism, or popular millenarianism, could often be seen in the titles of academic monographs; in the late 1990s and early 2000s the term 'popular' has been almost completely omitted from the titles of history monographs. While the rise of popular culture as a heuristic device for historians was accompanied by major discussions, its decline was not discussed at all, especially in history.[10] This was part of the thinking that led to putting together this collection.

Another reason was the situation with regard to East European (largely Russian but also Ukrainian) history. As had happened before with other discussions, East European history came a bit late to the discussion of popular culture and popular religion. Quite often, when popular religion came up, it was simply ascribed to the lower classes as something they must have had differently. As one of the classics of Russian social history put it: 'Sociologists and ethnographers taught that religious beliefs and systems are products of societies and of status groups (or

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social classes). If they are right, then we can assume a priori that official denominations never express reality in matters so complex. We are therefore allowed to hypothesize that as long as peasants live in conditions and an environment that set them apart from other social groups in society, they will certainly develop and stick to their own way of believing.'[11] Peasants had a religion of 'their own making.'

A turning point in the East European history of popular religion occurred in connection with the criticism of the concept of *dvoeverie* (i.e., the preservation of pre-Christian beliefs at the core of popular faith, something that made this popular religion different from that of the official church). The new trend is clearly visible in a recent collection on religion and culture in early modern Russia and Ukraine. It tried to show that the popular religion in question was not something altogether separate from the religion of the upper classes, and indeed it turned attention to the church itself – a topic underprivileged in both Soviet and Western social history.[12] Christine D. Worobec was the first scholar to state the influence of the church on popular practices and to describe these practices as first of all Christian.[13]

Since then the study of East European religion has moved in several directions, with very little reflection on these directions. The decline of the great divide into popular and learned/official/elite revived old concerns with the specificity of Russian/Orthodox culture/civilization. Some works of this trend are discussed in the essays of the present collection.[14] The emphasis on the specificities and the particularities of 'Russian' religious experience reflected the idea that culture is based on belonging and sharing.

Although work on the religion of 'ordinary people' proliferated, it no longer relied on the concept of popular culture. Quite often it turned towards subjective experiences, which, especially in the context of modern times, could be analysed in the context of their liberation from the restraints of the traditional culture.[15] Others continued to compromise and dissect images of popular beliefs constructed by educated society, showing how these images were interconnected with various intellectual and political projects and how they had little in common with the reality of popular practices.[16] Yet some others were trying to investigate the religious enthusiasm of the masses, showing that religion was a value in itself, something that cannot be reduced to politics, social change, or cultural system.[17]

In this collection we have tried to show how the history of popular religion is written after the end of the paradigm: what are the directions

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in which this field is moving and what theoretical framework fits which purpose better. Believing that quite a few scholars of Eastern Europe have been exploring new territory, we decided to bring their work together for a serious discussion of the issues in question and engagement with their theoretical frameworks, models, and concepts. We felt that such an engagement was even more pressing because of how East European history usually lags behind in confronting its own assumptions, theories, and methods. Thus this collection representing recent departures made in the study of East European popular religion also had to become a much needed confrontation of the different approaches to and different uses of popular religion in this context.

We used 'popular religion' as a signal to our authors about the kind of texts we were interested in. In our letter to individual authors we wrote: 'There are a number of definitions of popular religion, so let us suggest where our interests lie. It is in these senses (adapted from Mircea Eliade's *Encyclopedia of Religion*): the religion of rural and peasant society, folk religion, the religion of the laity in contrast to that of the clergy (where the clergy is the bearer of a learned tradition usually based on the prestige of literacy), the religion of a subclass or minority group in a culture, the religion of the masses as opposed to the religion of the sophisticated, discriminated, and learned within a society.'[18]

In fact, we were not interested in all the kinds of popular religion in the territory we had loosely delineated. We left Judaism, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and even sects derived from Orthodoxy aside and instead concentrated our attention on what we would call Orthodoxy, if it were that simple. But we were also including the Uniates of Ukraine and Belarus within the parameters of our interest. Most of the contributions in this volume focus on popular Orthodoxy, but one concerns a phenomenon within popular Uniatism or Greek Catholicism (Andriy Zayarnyuk), another has a section explicitly devoted to Uniates within a study largely focusing on the Orthodox (Sophia Senyk), and yet another concerns iconography that was both Orthodox and Uniate (John-Paul Himka).

Perhaps the following description of the sphere of our interest, though imperfect, will be helpful: the traditional or majority religion in the territories of the Eastern Slavs. Thus we avoided all the confessions that were explicitly connected with the minority groups defined mainly though their confessions or confessions whom contemporaries identified as exclusively practised by unlearned and 'simple' people.

In the same letter in which we apprised our contributors about what

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we meant by 'popular religion,' we also said: 'We are especially interested in contributions that would problematize the very categories "popular," "religion," and "popular religion."'[19] In fact, we wondered if the term 'popular' still made any sense to them (and we knew that it did not for some), and if it did, which connotations did they attach to it.

Several of our authors responded to our suggestion and engaged this problematization frontally. Roman Holyk, writing about early modern popular religion in Ukraine, insists on the need to see the religious mentality as a whole. We should think about early modern spirituality 'as a continuum that unites all the highest achievements of the mystical-theological experience of the intellectual elites as well as the most primitive popular religious experiences of the lower classes and the marginalized. Often the low religion is sharply distinguished from the high religion as something naive from the serious or simply complicated. Yet it is important to remember that today's standards of naivety or simplicity do not entirely correspond to those of that time.'[20] And Paul Bushkovitch, focusing on the reign of Peter I, also questions the relevance of the term to the Russian situation: 'If the term is to be meaningful, popular religion should imply a variety of religious experience that is characteristic of non-elite layers of society and possesses a certain autonomy from elite culture ... The problem is that it is difficult to find examples of practices that are restricted to lay, non-elite layers of society. Even before Peter, it is by no means clear that the practices historians call popular were restricted to laymen or the lower orders of society.'[21]

The same conclusion also suggests itself from a reading of Sophia Senyk's article. The entire article by Vera Shevzov is situated on the fuzzy border between 'official' and 'popular' religion. John-Paul Himka suggests that what looks like folk iconography may actually be rooted in religious high culture, and Eve Levin makes a similar point about folk religious customs. Part of the reluctance of scholars to apply the category of 'popular religion' to the Eastern Christian experience derives from the much smaller role in Orthodoxy of the elite intellectual developments so characteristic of Western Christendom (scholasticism, theology at medieval universities).

On the other hand, we depart from the notions of culture as a system shared by those participating in it, from notions of culture as something singular that can be defined by its characteristic traits, from notions of culture as something that can explain this or that cultural phenomenon; yet we can find 'popular religion' to be a term still worth using. Just as

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in the case with other cultural forms, the term 'popular religion' does not necessarily imply that there is a unified whole (popular religion), juxtaposing itself against another such whole (official religion).

The investigation of cultural forms as practised in contemporary cultural studies can still use the term 'popular' meaningfully and usefully without constructing some kind of dichotomy between 'popular' and 'elite' or 'low-brow' and 'high-brow.' 'Popular' forms can be conceptualized as consumption versus production, as tactics versus strategy, as what de Certeau would call enunciation versus articulation. In this context, popular does not become anti-something so that the only way to investigate it is in relationships with practices it tries to oppose. With such connotations as outlined here 'popular' has been used successfully in the context of art history – especially in the discussion of the breakup of nineteenth-century elite culture and the rise of modernism.

'Popular' also continues to maintain its connections with the lower classes and history from 'below.' In this context the emphasis is placed on the idea of usage and appropriation. Certain cultural forms by becoming popular acquire new meanings and are used by the disempowered and dominated. In this case there is no clear-cut break between popular and elite, yet the concept of 'popular' is still worth using for discovering how these new meanings are produced, how the cultural forms are used, and how they shape the experiences of those using them. In this instance, political systems and mechanisms of social domination and subordination turn into necessary parts of the discussion.

That is why for some contributors the concept seemed to work better than for others. Natalie Kononenko describes a situation in which the official, elite church was dismantled, or at least severely restricted, by the Soviet state authorities; in the absence of that other level, a folk Christianity with its own idioms flourished. In the contribution by Andriy Zayarnyuk, texts associated with traditional religion as practised by the peasants are used to resist an elite modernity, including religious modernity, and this modern elite condemns the texts as superstition. Here are instances in which the contestation suggested by the term 'popular religion' are borne out.

But those hesitant to make a clear distinction between popular and high or official and those still finding 'popular' to be a useful analytic category are all moving away from spatial images in thinking about popular culture. Instead of pinning 'popular' down to a particular set of beliefs or ideas, they search for practices impossible to grasp otherwise than in relationship with other practices, configurations of social

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relationships, political institutions, and ideologies. From being a particular 'culture,' popular practices in the articles of this collection turn into the site of intersection with other practices, in some cases connoting inclusion and participation and in others, resistance. In many of these texts 'problematizing' religion and popular forced the authors to resist any attempt to define these categories, and quite often 'thick description' of practices appeared as the best way to approach certain religious and popular phenomena.

As to the territory covered by the book, it is not quite Russia and Ukraine. Many of the articles concern a period long before the term 'Ukraine' entered usage in its modern meaning, and the same really applies, if not so obviously, to the term 'Russia.' Moreover, one of the studies contains a section specifically devoted to Belarusian material (Sophia Senyk). Several studies concern 'Russia' in the wide sense of the Russian Empire, inclusive therefore of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus (Christine Worobec, Paul Bushkovitch, Vera Shevzov). Sophia Senyk describes her space of investigation as 'Rus',' which she defines as 'the entire territory inhabited by Eastern Slavs.' There is a loose territorial convergence in the selected studies, but all the authors bring to their work their own understanding of how that territory is constituted. For Vera Shevzov, for example, Pochaev, located in Ukraine today and located in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the time its miracle-working icon was acquired by the monastery, is a 'local community' of the 'Russian nation.' Other authors in this volume, including ourselves, would not think this way about what they call Pochaiv or Počaiv.

We have decided not to impose uniformity of place names and transliteration practices in the authors' individual texts. For example, we have left it up to individual authors to use Kyiv or Kiev. We have also decided not to impose uniformity of terminology on the authors. Thus what appears as the Tuesday of Fomina week in the article by Christine Worobec is the Tuesday after Doubting Thomas Sunday in the article by Natalie Kononenko. For different reasons, neither specialists nor general readers require standardization to understand these articles. We believe therefore that the richness of these texts will be better served by allowing a diversity of practice.

All translations, unless otherwise indicated, are by the authors. The one exception is in the essay by Roman Holyk; this entire essay was translated by John-Paul Himka, who also translated quotations from other works, except where otherwise indicated.

The time periods covered by the different essays range in the main

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from the fifteenth century to the early twenty-first, but several of them refer also to practices and texts of earlier centuries.

The volume is organized in the following way. It opens with a reprint of an article by Christine Worobec, which itself opened the set of problems with which this collection is concerned. Here the original article is supplemented by a postscript citing the latest relevant work. Christine Worobec's article explored peasant practices related to death in late imperial Russia. It is followed by an article by Natalie Kononenko on the same theme, except set in post-Soviet Ukraine. This is the sole article in the collection by a nonhistorian, and it makes for an interesting contrast with the others.

The theme of death gives way to five articles that revolve around the theme of mentalities. It is in this section that many of the issues broached in this introduction find their richest exposition. The studies by Roman Holyk, Valerie A. Kivelson, and Eve Levin all primarily concern the medieval/early modern period, and they appear in an order that moves from the most general and generalizing study to the most concrete. The essay by Paul Bushkovitch focuses on the reign of Peter I (1682–1725), a touchstone period for the idea of a division between elite and popular culture and religion in Russia. Andriy Zayarnyuk's contribution is centred on the nineteenth century.

The last three contributions concern icons, which constitute one of the most distinctive features of Orthodox/Uniate religious culture, with strong popular connections. These are organized in roughly chronological order. Sophia Senyk's study of icon adornments moves from medieval times to the nineteenth century. John-Paul Himka's article deals with the fifteenth through eighteenth centuries, and Vera Shevzov's with the late nineteenth and early twentieth.

NOTES

1 Gianni Vattimo, 'Circumstances,' in *Religion*, ed. Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo (Stanford, 1998), ix.

2 Some representative recent titles include William B. Husband, *'Godless Communists': Atheism and Society in Soviet Russia, 1917–1932* (DeKalb, IL, 2000); Frank E. Sysyn and Serhii Plokhy, eds, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* (Edmonton, 2001); Edward E. Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905–1946*, Indiana-Michigan Series in Russian and East European Studies (Bloomington, IN, 2002); Valerie A.

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Kivelson and Robert H. Greene, eds, *Orthodox Russia: Belief and Practice under the Tsars* (University Park, PA, 2003); Sergei I. Zhuk, *Russia's Lost Reformation: Peasants, Millennialism, and Radical Sects in Southern Russia and Ukraine, 1830–1917* (Washington, 2004); and Mark Steinberg and Heather Coleman, eds, *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia* (Bloomington, IN, forthcoming).

3 Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1978).

4 For this tradition, the classical work was Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Reasons of Misrule,' in her *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford and London, 1975), 97–123.

5 Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989).

6 See, for example, John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (Boston, 1989).

7 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984).

8 Bob Scribner and Trevor Johnson, eds, *Popular Religion in Germany and Central Europe, 1400–1800* (New York, 1996); Gábor Klaniczay, *The Uses of Supernatural Power: The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, 1990); Kaspar von Greyerz, ed., *Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800* (Boston, 1984); Christina Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief* (Oxford, 1984); E. William Monter, *Ritual, Myth and Magic in Early Modern Europe* (Athens, OH, 1984); Robert W. Scribner, 'The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the "Disenchantment of the World,"' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (1992–3): 475–94; Marc R. Forster, 'The Elite and Popular Foundations of German Catholicism in the Age of Confessionalism: The Reichskirche,' *Central European History* 26 (1993): 311–25; and Robert W. Scribner, *For The Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge and New York, 1981).

9 Jim McGuigan, 'Cultural Populism Revisited,' in *Cultural Studies in Question*, ed. Marjorie Ferguson and Peter Golding (London and Thousand Oaks, CA, 1997), 138–54.

10 For one of the best discussions of 'popular culture,' see Steven L. Kaplan, ed., *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Berlin and New York, 1984). The problems with cultural populism have been discussed in cultural studies (see the work cited in note 9), but without the involvement of historians.

11 Moshe Lewin, 'Popular Religion in Twentieth-Century Russia,' in *The World of the Russian Peasant: Post-Emancipation Culture and Society*, ed. Ben Eklof and Stephen Frank (Boston, 1990), 156.

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12 Samuel H. Baron and Nancy Shields Kollmann, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Russia and Ukraine* (DeKalb, IL, 1997).
13 See the essay by Christine D. Worobec reproduced in the present collection. It was originally published in 1994.
14 See, for example, the discussion of specifically Orthodox attitudes and conceptualizations of gender and sex by Valerie A. Kivelson.
15 See, for example, Heather J. Coleman, 'Becoming a Russian Baptist: Conversion Narratives and Social Experience,' *Russian Review* 61 (January 2002): 94–112.
16 See, for example, Chris J. Chulos, 'Myths of the Pious or Pagan Peasant in Post-Emancipation Central Russia (Voronezh Province),' *Russian History* 22, no. 2 (1995): 181–216.
17 Vera Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution* (New York and Oxford, 2004).
18 The encyclopedia entry referred to is Charles H. Long, 'Popular Religion,' in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade, 16 vols (New York, London, 1987), 11: 442–52.
19 See the incisive discussion of the problems with the category 'popular religion' in Robert O. Crummey, 'Old Belief as Popular Religion: New Approaches,' *Slavic Review* 52, no. 4 (1993): 700–12; esp. 702–3.
20 See below, p. 96.
21 See below, pp. 147–8.

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Death Ritual among Russian and Ukrainian Peasants: Linkages between the Living and the Dead

CHRISTINE D. WOROBEC

In the preindustrial and early industrial worlds, people had to confront death frequently. The average life expectancy was much lower than it is today in developed countries, and sudden death, brought on by epidemics or famine, was a regular phenomenon. Individuals had to deal with the loss of not only the elderly, but also wives, husbands, sisters, brothers, and other adults in the prime of life – as well as children, many of whom died before the age of ten.[1]

Religious beliefs and the enactment of elaborate death rituals that provided linkages between the living and the dead helped the bereaved cope with the continual loss of relatives, helpmates, and actual or potential labourers for the family economy. Belief and ritual also provided the hope and strength to continue with life's struggles: 'It is religion, with its attendant beliefs and practices, which legitimates death and enables the individual "to go on living in society after the death of significant others and to anticipate his own death with, at the very least, terror sufficiently mitigated so as not to paralyze the continued performance of the routines of everyday life."'[2] As conditions for life improved and life expectancy grew significantly, and as death became more remote from the experience of the living – today, people generally die in hospitals rather than at home, and morticians instead of relatives prepare the body for burial – many of the traditional death rituals disappeared, leaving only a shell of beliefs to help (often inadequately) the living cope with the loss of a loved one.

Death ritual is normally a subject of inquiry for anthropologists. Only recently have historians of European societies turned their attention to this intriguing subject, asking many of the questions that anthropologists have devised for their field studies and posing new ones that

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provide a historical framework for the study of societies.[3] Death rituals reveal a great deal about past societies, including their mores and world views, the power relationships between the elderly and the young as well as between men and women, the individual's relationship to the community, and the interchange and tensions between clerical and popular or unlearned religion. The examination of death ritual among Russian and Ukrainian peasants in imperial Russia in the last decades of the nineteenth century attempts to elucidate these variables. These two peasant societies, despite variations among regions and even villages, shared a subsistence economy and common cultural patterns, particularly in the belief structure of the Orthodox religion.

The sources documenting death ritual among postemancipation Russian and Ukrainian peasants are largely from nineteenth-century ethnographers intent on preserving the lore of the traditional village, which they worried would disappear once urbanization and a cash economy captured the imagination of the peasantry. The sources are problematic in that they describe only practices that occurred outside the institutional church. They tend to be silent on Orthodox ritual and only mention in passing the priest's role in the funeral and subsequent commemorative services. This lack of interest in the official ritual may be explained in part by the familiarity of the authors and their educated readers with Orthodox practices, which they felt did not need further comment, and in part by the authors' disdain for the Orthodox Church – a sentiment shared by a significant segment of educated Russian society. They considered the church unresponsive to the needs of society at large. For them, it had become a bulwark of the autocracy, beginning in the early eighteenth century with Peter the Great's abolition of the Moscow patriarchate and relegation of the church to the status of a bureaucratic wing of the government. The ethnographers' search for pagan remnants in peasant religious beliefs testified to the institutional church's ineffectiveness. Indeed, these observers in the field sometimes took an ahistorical approach, assuming that religious practices and their meanings were immutable and that nineteenth-century peasant beliefs were indicative of the medieval world view.[4]

Russian Orthodox ecclesiastics and clergy added to the perception of the peasant as heathen. In his memoir, four years before the emancipation, the parish priest I.S. Belliustin bemoaned the fact that

> out of one hundred male peasants, a maximum of ten can read the creed and two or three short prayers (naturally, without the slightest idea or

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> comprehension of what they have read). Out of one thousand men, at most two or three know the Ten Commandments; so far as the women are concerned, nothing even needs to be said here. And this is Orthodox Rus'! What a shame and disgrace! And our pharisees dare to shout for everyone to hear that only in Russia has the faith been preserved undefiled, in Rus', where two-thirds of the people have not the slightest conception of the faith![5]

Belliustin went on to characterize Russian peasants as not having 'the remotest conception of anything spiritual.'[6] He sought to awaken his ecclesiastical superiors to the problems plaguing the institutional church, particularly the unsatisfactory education and untenable economic position of parish priests, who were dependent on the good graces of their parishioners. In his opinion, it was no wonder that with ill-prepared, alcoholic priests and nonordained servitors, the church failed miserably in its mission to reach the masses. While Belliustin was correct in pointing out the church's failure to move beyond the liturgical framework and teach peasants the catechism, he took his denial of the faith of illiterate peasants too far. Faith cannot be reduced to the reading of the Creed and a few prayers and the recitation of the Ten Commandments. The judgment of the Orthodox Church, with its increasingly rationalist views from the mid-eighteenth century onward, denied popular beliefs any validity, wishing to assert a monopoly over mediation with supernatural forces.

Scholars of the Orthodox Church and religious practices of the Russian and Ukrainian masses have tended to agree with nineteenth-century observers of the peasantry, stressing the dual nature of Orthodoxy as a syncretic amalgam of Christian and pagan beliefs. They continue to present nineteenth-century peasant beliefs as having been strongly influenced by the pagan past and at times insist that these beliefs mirrored the thought pattern of the masses throughout the centuries. According to the preeminent scholar of Russian Orthodoxy, G.P. Fedotov, 'the Russian peasant has been living in the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century.'[7] One literary scholar more recently expressed astonishment 'at the degree to which the Russian peasant succeeded in preserving his ancient, pre-Christian customs and worldview.'[8]

It is time for historians of the Russian Empire to follow the lead of social historians of Western Europe by critically approaching ethnographic and religious sources and examining the belief systems of the masses on their merits, heavily influenced as they were by the doctrines

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of the official church.[9] This means going beyond the binary model of paganism and Orthodoxy, or *dvoeverie*, and rejecting the assumption that nineteenth-century beliefs and rituals among Russian and Ukrainian peasants mirrored those of the ancient past until those beliefs and rituals can be systematically compared with medieval texts. That is not to deny the flexibility of Christianity in both Western and Eastern Europe to incorporate pagan elements during the conversion process, but to shift the focus away from the early history of the Orthodox Church to the living practices of the faithful in the nineteenth century, when distinguishing between Christian and pagan elements was no longer relevant. Otherwise, the label 'Christian' becomes meaningless, referring only to a tiny spiritual and educated elite that knew how to interpret evangelical texts and church dogma correctly.[10] Russian and Ukrainian peasants believed themselves to be practitioners of Orthodoxy, drawing upon Christian symbols and magical rites to guard against the vagaries of everyday life. Such an approach does not ignore the Orthodox Church's censure of some peasant practices, but pinpoints the reality that in all cultures 'religion as practised' does not always meet the ideal of prescribed religion.[11] It also underscores the fact that clerical beliefs and what the church termed superstitious beliefs stemmed from the same world view.[12]

Certainly, to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century scientific mind, the popular belief system was riddled with superstition revolving around apparitions, fairies, magical healing, and the fantastic. But the very word 'superstition' is a value judgment of a largely secular world. Such condescension ignores the fact that peasants took these beliefs seriously, confident that they were complementary to the magical rituals of the Orthodox Church. Christianity, after all, stressed such things as the immortality of the soul, linkages between the living and dead through prayer and memorial services, the purification of holy water, healing through prayer, and the power of the cross, all of which the peasants absorbed and elaborated upon in making their world intelligible and manageable. According to anthropologist Clifford Geertz, 'For those able to embrace them, and for so long as they are able to embrace them, religious symbols provide a cosmic guarantee not only for their ability to comprehend the world, but also, comprehending it, to give a precision to their feeling, a definition to their emotions which enables them, morosely or joyfully, grimly or cavalierly, to endure it.'[13] This study looks at the ways in which late-nineteenth-century Russian and Ukrainian peasants, largely in conformity with Orthodox practice, coped

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with the world around them and healed the rift created by the loss of individuals from the community and family. In examining the Ukrainian peasants' understanding of life after death in Khar'kov province, an ethnographer of that time rejected the opinions of many of his contemporaries, concluding that 'it is ... necessary to remember that neither dual faith nor superstition and prognostications constitute the basic foundation of the people's philosophy; rather, a deep, heartfelt religious feeling' undergirds that philosophy.[14]

Death ritual and popular beliefs about death during the period from 1870 to 1917 serve as a microcosm of the Russian and Ukrainian peasant universe, in which there existed a strong linkage between the world of the living and the world of the dead – a linkage predicated on the Christian concept of the soul's immortality. The deceased were not divorced from the living but continued to play an active role in society, communicating with the living in a variety of ways. At times they were benevolent and at other times dangerous to the well-being of the community. To facilitate their benevolence, family and community observed numerous customs to ease the passage of the dead from this world to the next. The care with which they prepared the deceased for the afterlife also reinforced the community's unity and the respect accorded the elderly. The active participation of community members in the services and rituals that honoured and bade farewell to the dead served both to placate the dead and to ensure that similar care would be taken when they died.[15] The dead, in turn, were expected to intercede with God on behalf of the living.

The world of nineteenth-century Russian and Ukrainian peasants was inhabited by a host of spirits and demons who were believed responsible for such recurring calamities as drought, freak storms, illness, and even death. The peasants ultimately feared the dead and interpreted some of these disasters as their vengeful acts. Death was understood as the will of God, and the extent to which the deceased had sinned during their lifetimes determined whether they experienced a peaceful or torturous afterlife. Peasants viewed an unexpected death as divine punishment of sins.[16] Deaths inflicted by the human hand, whether suicide or murder, were unnatural and against God's will. Denied a Christian burial, the souls of the victims were destined to wander the earth and avenge their sufferings by inflicting problems on the living.

Russian and Ukrainian peasants did not take death lightly. The elderly and the seriously ill, who knew that death was imminent, had to

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make preparations to ease their transition from this world to the next. This meant cleansing the conscience and taking steps to ensure that the living carried out their Christian obligation to remember the dead through prayer. In the Orthodox funeral service, the dead ask the living to say prayers for them: 'Therefore I beg you all, and implore you, to offer prayers unceasingly for me to Christ our God, that I be not assigned for my sins to the place of torment; but that He assign me to the place where this is Light of Life.'[17]

Signs portending the imminence of death aided individuals in their preparation for it. The fourteenth-century icon of Saints Boris and Gleb in Kolomna includes an image of Boris dreaming about his impending death, depicted here as a black dog.[18] Death imagery in dreams was also strong among peasants. For example, the inhabitants of the Ukrainian village of Shebekino, Kursk province, put a good deal of stock in dreams and the actions of birds as messengers of death. An individual who dreamt about a deceased father or grandfather building a house (in this case signifying a grave) and inviting the dreamer to live with him was destined to die shortly. If in a dream a person lost a tooth without experiencing pain, the person's spouse, brother, or sister would soon die. If, on the other hand, losing that tooth involved a great deal of pain and the appearance of blood, death would claim a child, mother, or father. Death might also be heralded by a screeching owl, a bird beating at a window at midnight, or a bird trapped in a hut.[19] In the Russian province of Riazan', death might appear as a skeleton or old woman when the individual looked in a mirror at night; as white flowers in a dream; or as a bird darting in and out a window. Death was also likely when a person's hair and nails grew quickly.[20] Unusual occurrences in dreams and reality thus confirmed the foreboding of death that elderly or gravely ill individuals had.[21] Such premonitions of death were characteristic of premodern societies in which 'there was no clear boundary between the natural and the supernatural.'[22]

With death looming, peasants made arrangements concerning the state of their soul. Confessing sins to a priest and taking the Sacrament eased their conscience.[23] In isolated Russian villages of Vladimir province, the elderly sometimes also asked the ground for forgiveness, invoking the biblical reference to the body's being made out of earth. In the village of Golovina, Grigorev canton, an old man had his family carry him out to the fields so that he could get down on his knees and bow to the ground in all four directions. With each genuflection he crossed himself and said, 'Damp Mother Earth, forgive me and accept

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me!'[24] In Poshekhon'e district, Iaroslavl' province, Russian peasants believed that a few days prior to death the body emitted a smell of earth and developed black spots, suggesting that 'the earth is coming out.'[25]

Dying peasants also generally made arrangements concerning the devolution of their property to relatives in mainly oral, but sometimes written, testaments. Fortunately, a few of the written testaments have survived. They reveal the peasants' concerns about death. One childless widow of Podcherkov canton, Dmitrov district, Moscow province, left an extraordinary testament dated 22 August 1871. She expressed gratitude to a large circle of kin, settling property on a brother, two nieces, a sister-in-law, two nephews, and an adopted son. She also made the following stipulations:

> I am asking my executors, named at the end of this testament, upon my death, to sell my home and yard with one cow, located in the village of Ochevo, Podcherkov canton. The net capital is to be placed in one of the credit institutions in the name of the holy Church servants of the parish Chernogriazh for the eternal memory of my and my husband's souls ... I am bequeathing two pieces of linen to the poor and miserable ... I am leaving ten measures of rye to the Nikolopestush monastery for the remembrance of my and my husband's souls.[26]

The importance of the living praying for the souls of the dead is evident from the testament. Having no children of her own and with relatives inhabiting other villages, the widow left money to servants of the church and a monastery to ensure that someone would pray for her and her husband's souls. By dispensing Christian charity and giving alms to the poor, she helped pave her way to a peaceful death.[27] In another testament of 17 March 1869, Dmitrii Andreev Skachkov, of the village of Petrov in Usman' district, Tambov province (Russia), referred to his wife's responsibility for caring for his soul: 'If there remains money after my death it is to go to my wife Mariia Ivanova on condition that she bury me and have memorial services said for me in the Christian manner.'[28] Once again the testator stressed the importance of memorial services. In a spiritual testament from a Ukrainian province, a parent warned his children that unless they lived in harmony, they would destroy his eternal peace and sully his memory. If, on the other hand, they lived according to God's commandment, 'I will pray from the grave to Our Lord on High for your happiness.'[29]

These testaments attest to a belief in a strong linkage between the

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living and the dead. The living were obliged to bury their deceased relatives in a Christian fashion. This involved arranging for a *chernichka* (a spinster who devoted her life to the work of Christ without, however, taking the vows of a nun) or literate male peasant to read the psalter over the deceased, and arrange for a funeral mass before the interment.[30] Family and community members also had to bid farewell to the deceased, absolving him or her of past sins. According to Ukrainian peasants in Starokonstantinov district, Volynia province, 'To be afraid of, to shun the dead is a sin; we will all die ... [we] will not get to heaven alive. Who knows ... what kind of death God sends each one of us.'[31] In other words, mortals were not to judge and torment the dead. God would make the final judgment.[32] After the funeral, family members were expected to arrange for the continued reading of the psalter, sometimes until the fortieth day, as well as for several memorial services.

In both the Russian and Ukrainian provinces, memorial services and repasts involving the entire community were held to honour the dead on the third, ninth (sometimes twentieth), and fortieth days after death.[33] They commemorated the resurrection of Christ on the third day, his reappearance to his disciples on the ninth day, and his wandering in the wilderness for forty days. Absorbing the church's practices, Russian and Ukrainian peasants believed that the soul wandered the earth for forty days. During that time, according to Russian peasants of Vladimir province, angels of the Lord took the soul to places where the deceased person had committed sins during his or her lifetime. On the third, ninth, twentieth, and fortieth days, the soul returned home, where it could drink from the glass of water and eat the bread left out for it. In the village of Mostki, Khar'kov province, Ukrainian peasants ascribed purificatory powers to the water left on the windowsill closest to the icon corner, believing that the deceased's soul cleansed itself of its sins by bathing in the water. On the fortieth day, the priest officiating at the memorial service released the soul from this earth and sent it on its way to 'the dark place to await Christ's judgment.'[34]

Russian and Ukrainian peasants' belief in the continued materialism of the human body after death was also expressed by the practice of burying the deceased with food as well as, in some cases, household tools and other items. While the custom began to die out by the end of the nineteenth century, it did not contradict church teachings or practices.[35] According to the Gospel of St Luke, Jesus ate grilled fish upon his resurrection.[36] On the fortieth day, a bereaved family may even

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today bring food – bread and fruit – into the church and place it on the side altar used for the postliturgy memorial service.[37]

Peasants understood the importance of prayers for the welfare of the deceased, in keeping with the teachings of the Orthodox Church. Marva Romanova of the village of Mar′ino, Riazan′ province, explained to an observer that the souls of deceased adults, both the righteous and sinners, awaited the Last Judgment in a dark, empty place. The purpose of memorial services after the fortieth day was to provide the souls with light so that they could determine whether they would live out their eternal life in heaven or hell. Relatives and close friends on earth could, however, save a soul destined for hell through their prayers, a concept that reflected Orthodox belief.[38] In the words of the Orthodox scholar Sergei Bulgakov, prayers 'can ameliorate the state of the soul of sinners, and liberate them from the place of distress, and snatch them from hell. This action of prayer, of course, supposes not only intercession before the Creator, but a direct action on the soul, an awakening of the powers of the soul, capable of making it worthy of pardon.'[39] The church's belief in the efficacy of prayer was also demonstrated in a practice during the funeral: the officiating priest placed in the hands of the deceased a letter with a prayer asking God for forgiveness for past sins.[40] According to the peasant woman Romanova, souls could not pray for themselves, but prayed for the living when the latter held commemorative services for them: 'We pray for them, and they for us – they can't be without us, we can't be without them.' Anna Domozhilova of the village of Muraevo, Dankov district, Riazan′ province, advised that memorial services for the dead should be held four times a year – on the Saturday before *maslenitsa* (Shrovetide), the Tuesday of Fomina week, the Saturday of Troitsa (Trinity), and 26 October, St Dimitrii Day, all important days in the Orthodox calendar.[41] The Orthodox Church set aside the first two dates as well as the Saturday before Troitsa and the Saturday of the first week of Lent for remembering the dead. Of these, the Tuesday of Fomina week was the most important because the Orthodox believe that during Easter week the souls of the dead are relieved of suffering, a belief to which the peasants subscribed.[42]

In addition to saying prayers for the dead, the living eased the deceased's journey to the other world and removed the threat of death from their own lives through a series of rituals. Russian and Ukrainian peasants believed that bodies continued to act after death.[43] They ascribed to the deceased's body the power to take lives in the transitional period between life on earth and life in the next world. Anthropologists

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classify this time as one of liminality, when 'the participants in rites of passage are neither in one state nor the other; they are "betwixt and between" ... The liminal period epitomizes that which is ambiguous, paradoxical, and anomalous. As a result, things associated with it are often considered unclean, polluting, and dangerous.'[44] Thus, among Russian and Ukrainian peasants only the elderly (usually women), who were close to death themselves, were permitted to wash the dead.[45] Precautions against death's claiming someone else in the household were taken with the items – comb, soapy water, and earthenware containers for the water – used to prepare the body. They had to be disposed of in a place where people did not walk, preferably a river.[46] To prevent another death in the family, the preparers of the body also closed the deceased's eyes and mouth, placing coins on the eyes and sometimes tying the head with a cloth to keep the mouth shut.[47] On the day of the funeral, a number of rituals had to be observed to ensure that the soul left the place of death and did not reanimate the body or remain in the hut to plague the living. Pallbearers carried the body out of the house feet first, in some places out of the window rather than the door. Once the funeral procession was out of the yard, a family member closed the gates and tied them with a belt. The hut was swept clean of any traces of death and holy water sprinkled along the path of the procession to neutralize the power of the dead.[48]

Through ritualized mourning, nineteenth-century Russian and Ukrainian peasants honoured and placated the dead. Grieving did not, however, allow uncontrolled passions. The peasants of Vladimir province considered it a great sin to grieve uncontrollably for the dead. God had willed the death of a loved one; it was not for mortals to question his will. Indeed, the Orthodox Church, stressing the glorious resurrection of Christ and eternal life, encouraged its followers to view death as a new birth.[49] Ukrainian peasants accordingly greeted death with the saying 'Praise be to God that he died' (*Slava Bohu, shcho vmer*).[50] An ethnographer, clearly offended by the joy that peasants expressed through song and dance at a grave site after a memorial service, was reminded by an elderly woman, 'What do you mean? We had a memorial service, remembered the deceased; now it is time to cheer them up or they will be offended if we leave sad.'[51] For a mother to mourn the death of baptized children under the age of seven was particularly egregious. Peasants believed that these sinless children were destined to go straight to heaven and become angels. If a mother cried for such a child, her tears would drown or burn the child.[52] Instead, emotions

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were to be released through laments, sung in a recitative style by the deceased's close female relatives. In some Russian villages, relatives hired professional mourners.

Through laments, wailers communicated between the worlds of the living and the dead in a public setting, before and after the church-officiated funeral. They addressed deceased persons as if they were alive, asking them for forgiveness, praising them with tender words, and identifying them with diminutives. The mourners also described the sufferings of bereaved relatives. A mother from Kamenets district in the Ukrainian province of Podol'ia addressed her deceased daughter directly and asked, 'My daughter, my dissatisfied [daughter]! Did you fear that [by living] you would deprive me of years?! Were you afraid that I would lose days?! Did you worry about interfering in my work?! Where are you going, my child? I rejoiced in you and looked after you. What will happen to you now? Why aren't you laughing ...? Why aren't you stretching out your small arms?'[53] Clearly, the mother was trying to absolve herself of guilt over the death of her daughter, pointing out to her daughter and her neighbours that she had loved and cared for her. There is also an insinuation here that children were a burden on women, who had strenuous tasks to fulfil in the home and fields in addition to looking after children. In a similar lament from the Russian province of Kaluga, the guilt of a neglectful mother is far more pronounced; the mother actually blamed herself for her children's death, agreeing with them that she had not fed them properly.[54] A daughter from Skvirsk district in the Ukrainian province of Kiev bemoaned the death of her father, noting that the entire family had depended upon his labour and guidance: 'Our father, dearest, why did you abandon us little ones? Who will look after us, who will plow for us, who will grind [the grain] for us, who will mow for us, who will give us away in marriage, and who will guide us along the path?'[55] Similarly, in Tula province (Russia), a father was described in laments as the provider of the family and head of the household. Without him, those left were destined to walk around naked, cold, and hungry. In Vladimir province, a young widow bemoaned the fact that her husband's death left her an orphan, underscoring the unenviable position of a widow in the community.[56]

While laments placated the dead and helped overcome guilt, their descriptions of the burdens carried by the living were a form of protest that women utilized to express their 'social isolation and ambiguous status' in a patriarchal society.[57] They pinpointed the stark reality of a subsistence economy and the precarious balance between survival and

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destitution. The loss of a labourer, particularly an adult male, could result in economic disaster for the remaining family members. Widows without adult male children to support them had to depend on the benevolence of in-laws and the commune. When that aid was insufficient or not forthcoming, they were forced out of the village to seek a living as wage labourers. The fact that only women served as wailers among Russian and Ukrainian peasants attests to the greater economic and social hardships that women suffered as a result of the loss of able-bodied family members.[58]

Complex laments, however, were on the wane in many parts of rural Russia by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They had disappeared from Dmitrovsk district, Orel province, and were fading from the popular memory in Ustiuzhna district, Novgorod province, by 1910.[59] In 1920 the ethnographer V. Smirnov noted that there were still some professional mourners in Varnavin and Chukhloma districts of Kostroma province, but in general they were rare in the Kostroma region. Wailers remembered only a few phrases of the stylized laments and tended to substitute hysterical sobs for songs. The disappearance of complex laments may be explained in part by the clergy's sustained attacks on the wailers.[60] Priests clearly viewed these women as a threat to their power. Simplified urban funeral rites may also have had an effect on rural practices, especially in the industrial belt of central Russia.[61] That women expressed public grief over death despite modern influences penetrating the countryside demonstrated their continuing vulnerability in a patriarchal society.

Through their mourning for the dead, women also underlined the pivotal role they played in death ritual as a whole. As givers of life, they had the added responsibility of conducting the dead along the path to the other world. Indeed, *smert'*, the word for death in Russian and Ukrainian, is feminine. In the popular mind, death could take the form of a human skeleton, a young woman, a beautiful maiden, a cripple, or an old woman carrying a scythe and sometimes a torch. The woman with a scythe symbolized an inversion of traditional agricultural practices, in which men wielded scythes and women sickles.[62] The identification of death as a woman represented the real world turned upside down. While on earth the patriarchy controlled and subordinated women, in the world beyond women were in control and took their revenge on the patriarchy by snuffing out life. As anthropologist Gail Kligman put it, 'Death does what she wants, to whom and when she pleases.'[63] Given the feminization of death, it was natural that women

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were the intercessors between the dead and the living. The lament was the medium through which they communicated with the dead. While they bemoaned the fact that the dead refused to awaken from their deep sleep, they asked them for other signs that they were well, beseeching them to send a bird from heaven down to earth with a message for them.[64] Ukrainian peasants believed that if women mourners spent the night at the grave site after memorial services, they could communicate directly with the dead, who would visit them in their sleep and thank them for their prayers.[65]

In spite of the various precautions and rituals to placate the dead and ease their journey to the other world, the dead sometimes remained in the world of the living, haunting them and causing calamities to befall them – a belief the Orthodox Church censured as superstitious. Ukrainian and Russian peasants believed in the existence of the walking dead, those souls who had died unnaturally and were therefore usually denied or deprived of a Christian burial as a sign of God's wrath. Until laid to rest, they would be tormented and seek revenge on the living. The so-called unclean dead were either victims of suicide or murder, or witches and sorcerers who during their lifetime communicated with demons and dabbled in black magic. Alcoholics were also prime candidates for revenants or ghosts, because of a belief that alcoholism was the work of the devil.[66] The *rusalki*, or water nymphs, were common to the pantheon of spirits inhabiting the worlds of Russian and Ukrainian peasants. They were believed to be the souls of unbaptized babies and young unmarried women – many of them spurned by their lovers – who ended their lives tragically by drowning.[67] Ukrainians had a special word for the walking dead – *upiry*, who were akin to bloodsucking vampires.[68] Russian and Ukrainian peasants believed that unclean bodies did not decompose and that ultimately the earth refused to accept them.[69]

It was natural for the peasants to believe that the dissatisfied dead roamed the world at night. The dead, both good and evil, were thought to communicate with the living in their sleep, when they were most vulnerable.[70] Indeed, death itself often warned people of their impending death through dreams.[71] The countryside's physical environment also played havoc with peasant imaginations. 'Forests, misty bogs and nights unilluminated by electricity were conducive to strange visions ... Furthermore, the greater prevalence of illness and delirium meant that hallucinations were probably more common in the last century than now, and they furnished people with a range of disconcerting images

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which seemed to corroborate the authenticity of traditional beliefs.'[72] While the belief in revenants was anathema to the Orthodox Church, peasants must nonetheless have been influenced by the important Christian concept of the resurrection of the dead. When they heard the reference in the Gospels to demoniacs emerging from a tomb, their suspicions about the power of the dead were confirmed.[73]

At the same time, not every unusual manifestation was a hallucination or apparition. As Paul Barber demonstrated in his recent study of vampires in European societies, unembalmed corpses undergo a great deal of physical change. Microorganisms in the intestines produce gases that cause a corpse to bloat to twice its original size. 'Eventually the abdominal cavity bursts from the pressure, like an overinflated balloon, unless the pressure is relieved.' Corpses also change colour and continue to bleed. Russian and Ukrainian peasants, like their European counterparts, were not imagining the sounds they heard from the graves. Nor were they imagining the bodies they saw uncovered by animals digging at shallow graves or the corpses that resurfaced after being buried in a swamp or drowned in water. And when they saw these bodies or heard movement in the earth, they assumed that the corpses were active, doing some harm to the living.[74]

The harm that the unclean dead visited on the living sometimes came in the form of sudden, unexplained deaths. A Ukrainian tale from Khar'kov province relates how a *rusalka* tickled a small boy to death because his father had been digging trenches on the Thursday of Troitsa week, the day set aside for the festival of the *rusalki*. The water nymph was also taking revenge on the family because she had been their stillborn child whom they had buried unbaptized under the threshold of their hut.[75] The tale helped explain the high mortality of children and advised peasants to refrain from work on the Thursday of Troitsa week as a way of placating the *rusalki*.

The walking dead could also harm the living by bringing upon them epidemics or weather disturbances, such as droughts and hailstorms. Peasants could explain these visitations as manifestations of the deceased's jealousy, anger at a living relative for not fulfilling his or her last wishes, or longing for the world of the living. Illnesses were traditionally considered to be the work of witches and sorcerers; it was only a short extension for peasants to assume that the corpses of evil-minded persons were sometimes responsible for cholera or smallpox epidemics.

During the cholera epidemics of the mid-nineteenth century, Russian peasants in some places believed that the first cholera victim was a

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vampire. To placate the deceased and end the epidemic, the unclean dead had to be disinterred, an act censured by both church and state. According to article 234 of the Russian Criminal Code, exhumation of bodies was a serious crime.[76] That law, however, was insufficient to deter peasants from acting on their impulses when cholera raised its ugly head:

> On the seventeenth of August 1848, the pastor of the Veliko-Shukhovits church informed the local district judge that the peasants, against his will, had disinterred the deceased peasant girl Iustina Iushkov, had taken her out of the coffin, and had performed on her a 'bestial operation'; and they had done this in order to end the reign of cholera among them. When an investigation was opened in this matter, the peasants admitted everything and recounted the following: Iushkov had been the first to die of cholera, but in August, when the epidemic grew in strength, the medical officer Rubtsov, who lived among them, had assured all the peasants that a dissolute girl who had died in a condition of pregnancy was the cause of the sickness. In order to drive away the cholera, it was necessary to open the grave and see what was the situation of the unborn child and whether or not the girl Iushkov's mouth was open. If the mouth was open, then a stake must be driven into it. At first the peasants had not listened to the medical officer, but when the cholera continued to increase, they had decided to take refuge in the suggested method. They had opened the grave, taken out the corpse, and cut it open. But an unborn child was not to be found in the mother's body, and so they had looked through the coffin and had found the body of a baby. Then they had thrown Iushkov back into the grave, but had first driven an aspen stake into her, since they had found her mouth open. After the peasants had done all this, they had covered up the grave and gone home in the complete expectation that the cholera had been disposed of.[77]

During another cholera epidemic in 1851, Russian peasants dug up the corpses of a couple, decapitated them, cremated the heads, and then drove ashen stakes through the bodies.[78] Before 1871, Ukrainian peasants reportedly would sometimes 'cut off the head of the corpse and place it at its feet.'[79]

As late as 1893, an entire village in Sterlitamaksk district in the Russian province of Ufa responded to a raging epidemic by participating in the unearthing of a woman they believed to have been a sorceress. Peasants had reported that at night they saw a ball of fire emanating

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from the woman's grave; it broke into smaller fires that carried the disease to various peasant huts. When the villagers dug up the unfortunate woman's grave, they drove an aspen stake into her back.[80] The Christian symbolism of the aspen stake – invoking Judas's suicide by hanging himself from an aspen tree – is evident here. There are several reports from New Russia and the Volga provinces in the last three decades of the nineteenth century about exhumation of bodies felt to be responsible for unnatural frosts or drought. According to A.A. Levenstim, a nineteenth-century observer of rural practices, peasants believed that unconfessed persons became vampires upon their death and that they had the power to 'milk the clouds and steal the dew from the ground of the village, in whose cemetery they are buried.'[81] In some cases, villagers made a connection between environmental disasters and God's ire over undeserved Christian burials. Here peasants were invoking traditional rights to bury alcoholics, murder victims, and witches and sorcerers outside the boundaries of the cemetery – rights that contravened contemporary secular law, which had overturned late seventeenth-century regulations.[82] For example, in 1890, in the midst of a drought, the Russian villagers of Usovka in Saratov district and province dug up the corpse of an alcoholic and threw it into the river Tereshka. The peasants rationalized their action by claiming, 'God is punishing [us] with drought because we buried a drunk in the cemetery.' Similar incidents were reported in May 1889 in the village of Kuromoch, Samara province, and in the village of Elshanka, Saratov province. In 1887, a correspondent from the newspaper *Khar'kovskiia gubernskiia vedomosti* related an incident in which a rumour circulated around the village of Ivanovka, Pavlograd district, Ekaterinoslav province, that their recently deceased *znakhar'* (healer) and church elder had not died naturally, but had committed suicide. If this was true, a Christian Mass should not have been said over him and he should not have been buried in consecrated ground. In 1886, a lengthy drought visited the peasants of Ivanovka, and they connected the lack of rain with the tormented soul of the *znakhar'*. They opened his grave and poured four barrels of water into it. As they went to fill the fifth barrel, the rains began. This measure, however, had only a temporary effect. In 1887, with drought in their midst, the peasants removed the stone cross from the healer's grave, broke it into several pieces, and buried the fragments out in the wild steppe. They also disinterred the *znakhar'*s body and threw it into a deep ravine far away from the village.[83]

It is difficult to estimate the number of times peasants exhumed the

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bodies of individuals believed responsible for natural disasters. However, it happened frequently enough for the bishop of Podol'ia and Bratslav in 1892 to admonish priests not to encourage peasants in their popular beliefs. Responding to an incident in which a priest had cooperated with his parishioners in digging up the body of a suicide victim, one Vasilii Shupakov, and throwing it into the forest, Bishop Dimitrii ordered the priest to serve penance at the St Troitskii Monastery in Kamenets for a month. Further, he wrote,

> It has come to the attention of the eparchial clergy that some priests, despite the archbishop's admonition, are indifferent to the popular superstition that God punishes suicide with drought and other misfortunes until the bodies of the unfortunate are unearthed from the cemetery graves and thrown in either the forest or field, after which water is poured over the bodies; and not only do they not use their pastor's influence to put a stop to this superstition, which they are obliged to do by their position and in carrying out eparchial instructions, but they also do not report such disgraceful actions (disinterring bodies, desecrating them, etc.) to their eparchial authorities.[84]

While peasants believed it necessary to unearth the bodies of the unclean and to act contrary to the church and state injunctions, they accepted the Orthodox Church's prohibition against disturbing the bodies of absolved Christians. In the early twentieth century, a priest and his parishioners, numbering almost fifteen hundred, tried to prevent legal and medical authorities from exhuming a body for an autopsy. They explained to the court investigator and *feldsher* (paramedic) 'that once the burial service (*otpevanie*) had been performed by the priest, a body could not be dug up. "It is illegal!" claimed the priest, while the crowd shouted "Why dig him up? Why disturb him? It's not allowed, *batiushka*! We also won't permit it."'[85]

The walking dead served an important function in nineteenth-century Russian and Ukrainian peasant life. Their very existence and the elaborate stories about their revenge on the living provided a mechanism of control for the elderly, who had to contend with the challenges and disrespect of the younger generation. The fear of revenants among the living provided a measure of security for the elderly when they prepared their testaments and requested that the living bury them in a Christian fashion and have commemorative services. Invoking the wrath of the deceased was also a deterrent to disobeying the other provisions

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of a testament. Rebellious youths, who might scoff at some of the beliefs of their parents and grandparents, became believers when disaster struck those around them.

In conclusion, death rituals among nineteenth-century Russian and Ukrainian peasants reveal a great deal about these societies. They were not as cut off from prescribed religion as contemporaries and historians have assumed. Peasants had absorbed the teachings of the Orthodox Church, interpreting them to fit their life's circumstances in an attempt to cope with the loss of relatives and community members. Their beliefs were complementary rather than antagonistic to Orthodoxy's conception of the universe. Easing the burdens of the soul on its journey to eternity through prayer and remembrance services was an important responsibility of the Christian community. The soul's struggle to fend off demons and cleanse itself of sin created an image in the mind of these Orthodox peasants of an earthly world inhabited by demons and unclean spirits, who periodically visited upon them epidemics and weather that harmed the agricultural economy. As a result, the dead needed to be placated, and intercessors were necessary to carry out that responsibility. It was not sufficient to read the psalter and hold funeral and memorial services. Women of the community, whether the elderly who helped prepare the deceased's body or the relatives who recited lamentations, supplemented the services of the male priesthood. Their laments and dreams in which they communicated with the dead may have taken place outside the church, but they were no less important in mediating between the worlds of the living and the dead.

Not all mediations were successful. Individuals who suffered unnatural deaths were among the restless dead, existing in limbo between the other world and the world of the living. Suffering for their unchristian actions, they tormented the living by visiting plagues and storms upon them. As peasants began to understand their universe in educated terms and embalming practices were introduced, belief in the walking dead gradually disappeared. The point at which that belief began to erode must still be determined. Ethnographers observing the peasants in the first two decades of the twentieth century noted that the belief in the unclean dead was still very strong.

Death rituals among Russian and Ukrainian peasants of the late imperial period expressed the peasants' view of the world as an unpredictable and often hostile place. To combat that world and find the strength to go on living after a death, they embraced Christian beliefs and interwove them with their other survival strategies. Community

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participation was as important in the mourning and honouring of the dead as in the other dramatic events of life (such as birth and marriage) and in agricultural tasks. Social relationships and community unity were solidified in the face of death, which disrupted the family and community by removing a loved one. The careful observance of Christian memorial rites comforted the living: they, too, would be remembered when they died. The linkage between the worlds of the living and the dead also provided some safeguards against God's wrath. The deceased joined the ranks of ancestors in heaven, who with their prayers could intercede with God on behalf of the living – as long as the living fulfilled their part of the bargain by remembering the dead. Calamities brought on by God's wrath or by the revenge of the unclean dead could not be prevented but could, nevertheless, be mitigated by human action. Even the damned could ultimately be saved by constant prayers. The living could also take action to ease the suffering of the unclean dead and neutralize their evil – a responsibility peasants felt so strongly that they broke the law to exhume and mutilate bodies. If such action protected the living against further harm, the peasants at least gained some psychological comfort in their hostile world.

Postscript

Over a decade ago, when I wrote my essay on death ritual among Russian and Ukrainian peasants in the late imperial period, I had recently embarked upon a study of the religiosity of these rural peoples. Unsure about how to broach such a large and unexplored topic, I initially hoped to follow the lead of some nineteenth-century ethnographers and folklorists in analysing the role that demonology played in the religious world view of the peasantries of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Little did I understand that in so doing I would uncover a world suffused with Orthodox beliefs. Immersing myself in the secondary literature on popular religion in Western Europe, I became deeply dissatisfied with the ahistorical concept of *dvoeverie* or dual faith that had been popular among nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals and continued to dominate Western historiography. According to that premise, nineteenth-century Orthodox peasants had only a superficial understanding of Orthodoxy; they were in essence practitioners of pre-Christian rituals and shared a world view that was more pagan than Christian. At about the same time that I wrote my critique of *dvoeverie* with regard to death ritual, Eve Levin, a specialist on medieval Russia,

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published her seminal criticism of the concept, inviting scholars of early modern Muscovy to learn from historians of medieval and early modern Western Europe in understanding the ways in which Christianity coopted and transformed paganism. Paganism certainly did not immediately disappear in ancient Rus' after the forced conversion of the Rus' people; but the new Christian religion, as it had done elsewhere in the world, was able to absorb aspects of paganism and in doing so convinced believers of the strength of its new beliefs. At the same time, not all Christian saints and holidays were merely replacements for pagan deities but had direct Christian roots.[86] Professor Levin's essay as well as subsequent works have largely succeeded in dampening enthusiasm for *dvoeverie* and have demonstrated the ways in which Christianity was actually taking root among its newly converted peoples.[87]

In addition to dismissing the concept of *dvoeverie*, historians have also begun a critical examination of church pronouncements that continually upbraided congregants for their 'superstitious' ways, charting how that rhetoric changed over time. Beginning in the mid-seventeenth century under the influence of rationalist thought, a reform movement within the Russian Orthodox Church, led by Ukrainian bishops, began to attack previously accepted popular religious practices such as the reverence for Holy Fools in Christ; 'the veneration of unidentified [and uncorrupted] bodies as saints'; and the saying of incantations.[88] Holy Fools in Christ had come under suspicion because of the support that some of them had given to the schismatic Old Believers, who rejected the Westernizing religious reforms of Patriarch Nikon and ultimately the Orthodox Muscovite state as the arbiter of correct religious beliefs. Desiring to wrest control away from popular healers, fortune-tellers, and sorcerers, the Orthodox Church hierarchs castigated their incantations over the sick as being 'superstitious' rather than 'magical' as a way of demoting 'relations with the supernatural that were outside the regular channels of the church.'[89] It did not matter to these ecclesiastics that these prayers or incantations were Christian in their content. The concern with veneration of uncorrupted bodies without proper investigation by the church had to await the Petrine church reforms.

In the early eighteenth century Feofan Prokopovich, Peter I's spiritual adviser, defined superstition in the 1721 Spiritual Regulation very broadly as 'that which is superfluous, not essential to salvation, devised by hypocrites only for their own interest, beguiling the simple people, and like snowdrifts, hindering passage along the right path of truth.' In essence, he ordered Orthodox bishops to be vigilant against aimlessly

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wandering monks, the building of unnecessary churches, false miracles before holy icons, individuals who believed themselves to be demon possessed, 'noncertified corpses, and all other suchlike.'[90] Continuing the process of the centralization of church authority, Prokopovich was wary of clerics making profits from unverified miracles and relics, the seemingly ubiquitous occurrence of miraculous cures among commoners, the shamming of individuals believed to be demon possessed, as well as wholly preserved corpses that believers automatically assumed were saints or intercessors before God. As far as Prokopovich and other bishops were concerned, popular beliefs in false miracles, the supposedly improper veneration of saints' relics, and false claims of demonic possession only encouraged the schismatic Old Belief, sectarianism, and other competing faiths.

Although saints' cults and miracles sanctioned by the ancient Rus' and Muscovite churches retained their accepted validity after 1721, the newly established Holy Synod rejected cults that were part of oral tradition alone. The discovery of new saints and the occurrence of miracles also did not receive official approval from a church bent on centralization and control of popular practices. When scrutiny of miracles had the undesirable effect by the early nineteenth century of turning the faithful away from the Orthodox Church into the hands of Old Believers and sectarians, the synodal church relaxed its scepticism towards them.[91] It nonetheless continued to be very reticent about recognizing new icons as miracle working and glorifying new saints. In the course of the eighteenth century, the church glorified only one saint, Dimitrii, former bishop of Rostov, in 1757, and then four in the nineteenth, and six (including the reglorification of Anna of Kashin) in the early twentieth centuries. Some of the late canonizations, including that of Serafim of Sarov in 1903, resulted from political pressure by the autocracy.[92]

As for the laity's own religious knowledge, oral culture was rich in religious imagery and understandings, but it too underwent change. Beginning in the early nineteenth century the Russian Orthodox Church began a concerted effort to teach parishioners the basics of the catechism as well as its evolving notions of what constituted 'superstition' through the vehicles of the sermon and formal catechesis, and in some cases extraliturgical discussions.[93] Ultimately, however, extraliturgical discussions led by priests were far more common after the emancipation of the serfs. They became regular features of Orthodox parish life by the end of the nineteenth century. Through these informal sessions, clerics were able to enrich the rural laity's religious culture.[94] Post-

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emancipation peasants in both Russia and Ukraine also enhanced their understanding of Orthodoxy through the reading of religious pamphlets and periodicals, such as *Troitskie listki* (leaflets produced by the Holy Trinity–St Sergius Monastery in Sergiev Posad) and *Russkii palomnik* (The Russian Pilgrim), which they could buy cheaply from peddlers or read in parish libraries and village reading rooms. Here they could learn about the heroic lives of saints, the tales of miracle-working icons, miracle stories, and successful battles against evil spirits. They could also read descriptions of pilgrimage sites far and near.[95] Even in regions of low literacy, the literate shared their knowledge by reading out loud and retelling the stories they had read.

It is to the subject of uncorrupted bodies that I would like to turn my attention briefly. In my essay on death ritual, I examined the Ukrainian and Russian peasants' beliefs in unclean corpses, but in doing so neglected their far more important and ubiquitous veneration of saints' relics that were preserved whole. The following comments represent an updating of my previous views, based on my own and others' research endeavours over the past decade. The famous crypts of the Pecherskaia Lavra in Kiev attest to the long-standing veneration of uncorrupted holy individuals' bodies in Eastern Slavic Orthodoxy. Although incorruptibility was not a canonical precondition for glorification of a holy person, it became a popular marker of God's grace upon an individual who through intercession with the Almighty could effect miraculous cures posthumously. In fact, late nineteenth-century clerics stressed incorruptibility as a desirable characteristic of a saint. The resplendent gold and silver reliquaries of saints in monasteries and churches gave worshipers a 'preview of what was in store for all men and women when Christ came again to judge the living and the dead, and thus served as proof of the timeless truths of the Orthodox faith against the claims of rival denominations.'[96]

The veneration of saints' relics was rampant throughout Orthodox communities in the modern Russian Empire. In the nineteenth century hundreds of thousands of pilgrims annually took advantage of cheap railway fares to traverse the empire's sacred landscape in search of miraculous cures and redemption. By the eve of the First World War thousands travelled by steamship to the Holy Land and Mount Athos (which was, of course, restricted to men). They took the advice of popular periodicals and guidebooks to monasteries in planning out their routes and times of travel, which tended to coincide with major saints' days, the glorification of new saints, and the feast days of the

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Mother of God, whose miracle-working icons were scattered at various holy sites. The most popular long-distance pilgrimage sites within the empire included the Pecherskaia Lavra and Pochaiv Lavra in Ukraine, the Holy Trinity–St Sergius Lavra outside Moscow, and Solovki on the White Sea.[97] Most pilgrims, however, gravitated towards nearby monasteries, which housed local saints who provided spiritual and physical succour for local communities.[98]

Peasants seeking cures for themselves or their relatives turned to the thaumaturgical powers of the Orthodox Church. As was the case of the faithful who converged on Lourdes, 'pilgrims were willing to risk death, and saw their audacity as a test that might hasten the "resurrections" they sought.'[99] However much in pain, humble pilgrims either walked the entire distance or the last leg of their journey to their holy destinations. Thus, for example, a thirty-year-old paralyzed unmarried woman insisted on walking the 200 versts to the cathedral of Belgorod which housed relics of St Ioasaf of the same city. She was part of a procession of the cross that left from the parish church in Senna, Bogodukhovsk uezd, Khar'kov province, in the spring of 1912, several months after the glorification of St Ioasaf. According to her fellow pilgrims, she sought ultimate redemption through death, but only after being able to visit the saint's grave and take communion there. 'I do not wish to be healed,' she is reported as saying. 'I am already old and besides will be a parasite on my parents; I would be so happy if God helped me to get to Belgorod, to prostrate myself before the relics of God's saint, [and] to sob out my grief before him, and having [the opportunity to] take communion, even if I were to die, I would be happy.' Ultimately, the pilgrim did reach the relics but died on the journey home.[100]

For those too sick to undertake pilgrimages, relatives or professional pilgrims journeyed on their behalf, carrying their donations of money, ribbons, and cloth for prayer services, and requests for healings or salvation to monastic shrines and returning with communion bread, candles, holy water and oil, and paper icons. More precious still were the mementos that pilgrims brought from the Holy Land, including pieces of candles that had been burned in Christ's tomb at Easter, crosses, and other religious paraphernalia, which they sold to villagers eager for communion with Christ's life.[101] Generally, older pilgrims travelled to the Holy Land in fulfilment of a lifetime desire and in some cases vows to visit these holy sites before they died.

The popular Orthodox veneration of the holy uncorrupted body and the long tradition of viewing a dead body at funerals meant that the

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scientific procedure of cremation made little headway in rural areas of Russia and Ukraine until after the Second World War.[102] It is little wonder that the Bolsheviks appropriated and transformed the Orthodox veneration of the body by permanently displaying Lenin's embalmed body in a new secular temple. At the same time, their assaults upon saints' relics and attempts to unmask them as fraudulent and 'corrupted' were unsuccessful in persuading the faithful that their beliefs in saints were not only superstitious, but also a result of deceitful clerics bent on keeping their flocks in thrall to an exploitative system. As Eve Levin points out with regard to early modern Muscovy, '"incorruptibility" lay, like miracles, in the desire of the beholder.'[103]

NOTES

An earlier version of this article appeared in Stephen P. Frank, ed., *Cultures in Flux: Lower-Class Values, Practices, and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1994) and is reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press. A version of this essay was originally presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies in Washington, DC, in October 1990. The comments of J. Eugene Clay, Chris Chulos, Barbara Evans Clements, Stephen Frank, and Gregory Freeze were invaluable in helping me make substantial revisions, as was a National Endowment for the Humanities 1992 Summer Stipend, which permitted me to do research in Helsinki.

1 The mortality rate in imperial Russia declined steadily from 36.9 per thousand in 1861–70 to 34.2 per thousand in 1892–1900 and 31.0 per thousand in 1901–5. See A.G. Rashin, *Naselenie Rossii za 100 let (1811–1913 gg.): Statisticheskie ocherki* (Moscow, 1956), 5. Nevertheless, these rates were extremely high and reflective of a premodern society. More than 25 per cent of infants died within the first year of life; an additional 20 per cent did not reach adulthood. See Peter Gatrell, *The Tsarist Economy, 1850–1917* (London, 1986), 31–7; and V.O. Demich, 'Pediatriia u russkago naroda,' *Vestnik obshchestvennoi gigieny, sudebnoi i prakticheskoi meditsiny* 11, no. 2 (1891), pt. 2:128.

2 Loring M. Danforth and Alexander Tsiaras, *The Death Rituals of Rural Greece* (Princeton, 1982), 31.

3 The pioneering effort in this regard is Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death,* trans. Helen Weaver (New York, 1981).

4 The notable exceptions are D.K. Zelenin, *Ocherki russkoi mifologii*, vol. 1,

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Umershie neestestvennoiu smert'iu i rusalki (Petrograd, 1916); and P.V. Ivanov, 'Ocherk vozzrenii krest'ianskago naseleniia Kupianskago uezda na dushu i na zagrobnuiu zhizn',' *Sbornik Khar'kovskago istoriko-filologicheskago obshchestva* 18 (1909): 244–55.

5 I.S. Belliustin, *Description of the Clergy in Rural Russia: The Memoir of a Nineteenth-Century Parish Priest*, trans. Gregory L. Freeze (Ithaca, NY, 1985), 35.

6 Ibid., 125.

7 G.P. Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind: Kievan Christianity, the Tenth to the Thirteenth Centuries* (New York, 1960), 3.

8 Linda J. Ivanits, *Russian Folk Belief* (Armonk, NY, 1989), 3. For another recent ahistorical approach to popular religion, see Joanna Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture* (Bloomington, IN, 1988).

9 See, for example, Ellen Badone, ed., *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society* (Princeton, 1990); William Christian, Jr, *Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain* (Princeton, 1981); idem, *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton, 1981); Natalie Zemon Davis, 'From "Popular Religion" to Religious Cultures,' in *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research*, ed. Steven Ozment (St Louis, MO, 1982), 321–42; Charles Stewart, *Demons and the Devil: Moral Imagination in Modern Greek Society* (Princeton, 1991); and Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York, 1971). Among historians of Russia, Gregory Freeze has taken the lead in challenging the notion that popular Orthodoxy in Russia was a static belief structure by looking at the ways in which the church tried to raise the level of 'spiritual literacy' among the masses between 1750 and 1850. See 'The Rechristianization of Russia: The Church and Popular Religion, 1750–1850,' *Studia Slavica Finlandensia* 7 (1990): 101–36, esp. 102.

10 Mary R. O'Neill makes this point in a review essay in response to Jean Delumeau's conclusion that the European masses were never fully Christianized. See 'From "Popular" to "Local" Religion: Issues in Early Modern European Religious History,' *Religious Studies Review* 12, nos 3–4 (1986): 222–3.

11 Badone, introduction to Badone, *Religious Orthodoxy*, 6.

12 Mary R. O'Neill reaches a similar conclusion in her examination of clerical culture and folkloric or popular culture in sixteenth-century Italy. See '*Sacerdote ovvero strione*: Ecclesiastical and Superstitious Remedies in Sixteenth-Century Italy,' in *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Steven L. Kaplan (Berlin, 1984), 75.

13 Clifford Geertz, 'Religion as a Cultural System,' in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York, 1973), 104.

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14 Ivanov, 'Ocherk vozzrenii,' 245.
15 Arthur C. Lehmann and James E. Myers, *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion: An Anthropological Study of the Supernatural* (Palo Alto, CA, 1985), 286.
16 A. Balov, S. Ia. Derunov, and Ia. Il'inskii, 'Ocherki Poshekhon'ia,' *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 10, no. 4 (1894): 88.
17 Quoted and translated in Danforth and Tsiaras, *Death Rituals*, 48.
18 M.V. Alpatov, *Drevnerusskaia ikonopis'* (Moscow, 1978), icon 52–3.
19 Volodymyr Hnatiuk, comp., 'Pokhoronni zvychai i obriady,' *Etnografichnyi zbirnyk* 31–2 (1912): 403–4. In Starokonstantinov and Zaslavl' districts, Volynia province, several old women specialized in the interpretation of dreams. See Iv. Ben'kovskii, 'Smert', pogrebenie i zagrobnaia zhizn' po poniatiiam i verovaniiu naroda,' *Kievskaia starina* 54 (September 1896): 231.
20 O.P. Semenov, 'Smert' i dusha v pover'iakh i v razskazakh krest'ian i meshchan Riazanskago, Ranenburgskago i Dankovskago uezdov Riazanskoi gubernii,' *Zhivaia starina* 8, no. 2 (1898): 228–9.
21 Judith Devlin makes this point about omens in general: 'The girl who wanted to daydream about a future husband, a man who wanted to avoid going on a journey, a woman who was anxious about the welfare of her children or about the family fortunes, all could draw on a rich set of images with which to confirm their feelings – rather in the way the ancient Greeks had procured the kind of dreams they wanted.' See *The Superstitious Mind: French Peasants and the Supernatural in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, CT, 1987), 97.
22 Ariès, *Hour of Our Death*, 8.
23 Balov, Derunov, and Il'inskii, 'Ocherki Poshekhon'ia,' 87.
24 G.K. Zavoiko, 'Verovaniia, obriady i obychai velikorossov Vladimirskoi gubernii,' *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 26, nos 3–4 (1914): 88.
25 Balov, Derunov, and Il'inskii, 'Ocherki Poshekhon'ia,' 86.
26 *Trudy Kommisii po preobrazovaniiu volostnykh sudov. Slovesnye oprosy krest'ian, pis'mennye otzyvy razlichnykh mest i lits i resheniia: volostnykh sudov, s"ezdov mirovykh posrednikov i gubernskikh po krest'ianskim delam prisutstvii*, 7 vols (St Petersburg, 1873–4), 2:525–6; translated in Christine D. Worobec, *Peasant Russia: Family and Community in the Post-Emancipation Period* (Princeton, 1991), 67.
27 Worobec, *Peasant Russia*, 68.
28 *Trudy Kommisii* 1:609–10; Worobec, *Peasant Russia*, 68.
29 P.P. Chubinskii, *Trudy etnografichesko-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii v zapadno-russkii krai*, 7 vols (St Petersburg, 1872–7), 6:310–11.
30 G.A. Kalashnikov and A.M. Kalashnikov, 'S. Nikol'skoe,' in 'Materialy dlia

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etnograficheskago izucheniia Khar'kovskoi gubernii,' part 1, 'Starobel'skii uezd,' *Khar'kovskii sbornik* 8 (1894): 234; Ben'kovskii, 'Smert',' 243.

31 Quoted in Ben'kovskii, 'Smert',' 247.

32 Ukrainian peasants believed that for forty days after death, when the deceased's soul wandered the earth, the deceased would come back at night to haunt and chase with a stick anyone who refused to forgive the dead person of a major sin. See Hnatiuk, 'Pokhoronni zvychai,' 413.

33 In the village of Nikol'skoe, Starobel' district, Khar'kov province, memorial services were also held on the twentieth day. See Kalashnikov and Kalashnikov, 'S. Nikol'skoe,' 236.

34 Zavoiko, 'Verovaniia,' 87–9; S.A. Khotiaintseva and A.A. Usikova, 'Sl. Mostki,' in 'Materialy dlia etnograficheskago izucheniia Khar'kovskoi gubernii,' part 1, 'Starobel'skii uezd,' *Khar'kovskii sbornik* 8 (1894): 63–84; Kh. Iashchurzhinskii, 'Ostatki iazychestva v pogrebal'nykh obriadakh Malorossii,' *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 10, no. 3 (1898): 93–5. Nineteenth-century French peasants also believed in the efficacy of water for guaranteeing a person's salvation. See Devlin, *Superstitious Mind*, 50.

35 By the late nineteenth century, the practice of burying the dead with food and drink was dying out in Ukrainian areas. An elderly Ukrainian peasant noted that the practice had been popular under serfdom. In Obonezhshkii krai, on the other hand, it was still common to bury the deceased with food, household tools, or other household items. See Ben'kovskii, 'Smert',' 255; Iashchurzhinskii, 'Ostatki iazychestva,' 93; and G.I. Kulikovskii, 'Pokhoronnye obriady Obonezhskago kraia,' *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 2, no. 1 (1890): 50–2.

36 Luke 24:41–3.

37 Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind*, 16–17. This practice is widespread today in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada.

38 Semenov, 'Smert' i dusha,' 230.

39 Sergius Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, revised translation by Lydia Kesich (Crestwood, NY, 1988), 182.

40 Hnatiuk, 'Pokhoronni zvychai,' 413.

41 Semenov, 'Smert' i dusha,' 230–1. In some areas, a memorial service was held every Sunday. See Kulikovskii, 'Pokhoronnye obriady,' 56. In Kostroma province, a memorial luncheon occurred also on the deceased's name day. See V. Smirnov, 'Narodnye pokhorony i prichitaniia v Kostromskom krae,' *Trudy Kostromskogo nauchnogo obshchestva po izucheniiu mestnogo kraia* 15 (1920): 41.

42 A.N. Minkh, *Narodnye obychai, obriady, sueveriia i predrazsudki krest'ian Saratovskoi gubernii, sobrany v 1861–1888 godakh*, Zapiski Imperatorskago

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russkago geograficheskago obshchestva po otdeleniiu etnografii, vol. 19, no. 2 (St Petersburg, 1890), 132.

43 Such a belief was common among peasants across premodern Europe. See Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality* (New Haven, CT, 1988), 178.

44 Danforth and Tsiaras, *Death Rituals*, 36–7.

45 In Poshekhon'e district, Iaroslavl' province, the elderly women who prepared the body of the deceased were *keleinitsy*, or lay sisters. In Vladimir province it was usual for an old man, serving two or three villages, to carry out this task. See Chubinskii, *Trudy etnografichesko-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii* 4:699–700; A. Balov, 'Ocherki Poshekhon'ia: Verovaniia,' *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 13, no. 4 (1901): 88; and Zavoiko, 'Verovaniia,' 90.

46 Semenov, 'Smert' i dusha,' 228; Zavoiko, 'Verovaniia,' 92.

47 Ben'kovskii, 'Smert',' 244.

48 Balov, 'Ocherki Poshekhon'ia,' 89; Kulikovskii, 'Pokhoronnye obriady,' 53; Kalashnikov and Kalashnikov, 'S. Nikol'skoe,' 235.

49 The same was true of the Catholic Church. See Ariès, *Hour of Our Death*, 13.

50 Zavoiko, 'Verovaniia,' 97; Chubinskii, *Trudy etnografichesko-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii*, 4:699.

51 N. Ivanenko, 'Etnograficheskie materialy iz Orlovskoi gubernii,' *Zhivaia starina* 19, no. 4 (1910), pt. 2:326.

52 Zavoiko, 'Verovaniia,' 97; Smirnov, 'Narodnye pokhorony,' 54.

53 Recorded in Hnatiuk, 'Pokhoronni zvychai,' 388.

54 Quoted in V.N. Dobrovol'skii, 'Smert', pokhorony i prichitaniia (Etnograficheskii material Kaluzhskoi gubernii),' *Zhivaia starina* 10, nos 1–2 (1900): 292–5.

55 Quoted in Hnatiuk, 'Pokhoronni zvychai,' 391.

56 Quoted in A. Sobelev, 'Prichitaniia nad umershimi Vladimirskoi gubernii,' *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 23, nos 3–4 (1911): 194.

57 Anna Caraveli makes a similar point about Greek peasant women in 'The Bitter Wounding: The Lament as Social Protest in Rural Greece,' in *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*, ed. Jill Dubisch (Princeton, 1986), 181.

58 V.M. Sokolov, *Russian Folklore*, trans. Catherine Ruth Smith (New York, 1950), 226.

59 Ivanenko, 'Etnograficheskie materialy,' 326; A. Malinovskii, 'Pokhoronnye prichety v Perskoi volosti Ustiuzhenskago uezda, Novgorodskoi gubernii,' *Zhivaia starina* 18, no. 1 (1909): 70–9.

60 Smirnov, 'Narodnye pokhorony,' 55.

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61 Malinovskii, 'Pokhoronnye prichety,' 71.

62 Ia. Generozov, *Russkie narodnye predstavleniia o zagrobnoi zhizni na osnovanii zaplachek, prichitanii, dukhovnykh stikhov, i t. p.* (Saratov, 1883), 17; L. Lenchevskii, 'Pokhoronnye obriady i pover'ia v Starokonstantinovskom u., Volynskoi gub.,' *Kievskaia starina* 66 (July 1899): 70. Death also appears to Romanian peasants as a woman with a scythe. See Gail Kligman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1988), 64. In Kostroma province, peasants often described death as a long-haired woman holding a cup of green liquor, presumably poison. See Smirnov, 'Narodnye pokhorony,' 50.

63 Kligman, *Wedding of the Dead*, 176.

64 S. Brailovskii, 'Malorusskaia pokhoronnaia prichet' i mificheskoe eia znachenie,' *Kievskaia starina* 13 (September 1885): 76–7.

65 Chubinskii, *Trudy etnograficheskо-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii* 4:711–12.

66 A Ukrainian legend provides an explanation for the connection between alcoholics and evil. According to the tale, the devil first introduced liquor by treating the apostles Peter and Paul to several glasses when they and Christ wandered the earth. When St Paul asked for a third glass and had no money to compensate the devil, Christ announced to the devil that his payment would come in the form of deceased alcoholics. Recorded in D. Zelenin, 'K voprosu o rusalkakh (Kul't pokoinikov, umershikh neestestvennoiu smert'iu, u russkikh i u finnov),' *Kievskaia starina*, nos 3–4 (1911): 365. The story is a fascinating illustration of the way in which peasants used Christian characters to help explain life's realities. Their world view was permeated with Christian symbols and personages, if not always doctrine. David Christian points out that alcoholics 'who died in a tavern could be denied Christian burial.' See '*Living Water*'*: Vodka and Russian Society on the Eve of Emancipation* (Oxford, 1990), 106.

67 Ukrainian peasants viewed the death of young men and women of marriageable age as particularly tragic. If the individuals died of natural causes, they were not unclean. Nevertheless, their souls had to be placated by combining wedding with funeral ritual and creating the illusion that they had married in the world beyond. The deceased were dressed in their wedding finery, while their friends stood vigil over the bodies as bridesmaids and attendants. A wedding bread was baked and distributed among the mourners at the grave site after the funeral. These measures were to prevent the deceased from returning to earth and seeking to avenge their unfulfilment of life's responsibilities. See Iashchurzhinskii, "Ostatki iazychestva,' 94; Ben'kovskii, 'Smert',' 249–50; and Chubinskii, *Trudy*

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etnograficheskо-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii 4:708–9. The mixing of marriage and funeral customs was common among other Eastern European peasant societies, including those of Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, and Hungary. See Kligman, *Wedding of the Dead*; and Margaret Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* (Cambridge, 1974), 230 n. 64. I have not come across accounts of any similar practices among Russian peasants. According to D.I. Uspenskii, mothers in Tula and Venev districts, Tula province, did not lament the death of unmarried daughters, especially if the family had several daughters. See D.I. Uspenskii, 'Pokhoronnyia prichitaniia,' *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 4, nos 2–3 (1892): 102. Russian peasants viewed daughters as a drain on the household economy; no sooner did they grow up and start contributing their labours to the household than they married and departed the parental home with dowry in hand.

68 For an excellent discussion of the unclean dead and popular beliefs about them, see Zelenin, 'K voprosu o rusalkakh,' 357–424.

69 Balov, 'Ocherki Poshekhon'ia,' 91.

71 Marva Romanova of the village of Mar'ino, Riazan' district, told the story of a merchant who had committed suicide. The merchant appeared before his wife every night with a noose around his neck. The wife, being a very pious woman, prayed to God day and night and went on several pilgrimages, but the husband kept appearing. Finally, an elderly monk with one foot in the grave advised her to have a bell cast. The monk told her that every time the bell rang, thousands of Christians would cross themselves and appeal to God. With each ring of the bell, it would become easier for her deceased husband's soul. The wife did what the monk told her, and as a result the nightly visits stopped four years later. A half year later, the husband again appeared before his wife, but this time without the noose around his neck and with a joyous face. Now she knew that her husband's sins had been forgiven. The story is recorded in Semenov, 'Smert' i dusha,' 233. In Poshekhon'e district, laroslavl' province, the ringing of bells was also thought to rescue souls from hell. See Balov, 'Ocherki Poshekhon'ia,' 92.

71 Hnatiuk, 'Pokhoronni zvychai,' 403.

72 Devlin, *Superstitious Mind*, 80.

73 Matt. 8:28–34.

74 Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death*, 90–1, 141, 165, 169. Russian and Ukrainian peasants usually buried suicides in unconsecrated ground, often at crossroads. Murderers out of haste often left their victims in fairly shallow ground; and it was not uncommon for peasants to throw the bodies of the unclean dead into water, believing that it served as an obstacle to their roaming the earth. See Zelenin, 'K voprosu o rusalkakh,' 394–5.

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75 Translated in Ivanits, *Russian Folk Belief*, 186. Burial of unbaptized children under the threshold of a hut was a common practice among Ukrainian peasants. Persons entering the hut normally made a sign of the cross, which had the added benefit of speeding up the time when the soul would be freed from its state as a *rusalka*. See Ivanov, 'Ocherk vozzrenii,' 247.

76 Stephen P. Frank, 'Cultural Conflict and Criminality in Rural Russia, 1861–1900' (PhD dissertation, Brown University, 1987), 339. Many thanks to Professor Frank for providing me with a copy of the relevant chapter.

77 Aug. Lowenstimm, *Aberglaube und Strafrecht* (Berlin, 1897), 98–100, translated in Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death*, 35–6.

78 Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death*, 75.

79 Frank, 'Cultural Conflict,' 340.

80 A.A. Levenstim, 'Sueverie i ego otnoshenie k ugolovnomu pravu,' *Zhurnal Ministerstva iustitsii* 1 (January 1897): 215; also cited in Frank, 'Cultural Conflict,' 340.

81 Levenstim, 'Sueverie,' 216; also cited in Frank, 'Cultural Conflict,' 341.

82 The ethnographer D.K. Zelenin cites a ruling of 26 December 1697 by the Moscow patriarch Adrian whereby suicides, persons murdered or drowned, and those who died from alcohol poisoning were denied a Christian funeral and were to be buried in forests or in fields outside the boundaries of cemeteries. See *Ocherki russkoi mifologii*, 56.

83 Zelenin cites several examples in the second half of the nineteenth century of peasants in the Volga region and New Russia opening graves and pouring water on the corpses. In Sergach district, Nizhnii Novgorod province, peasants normally poured water into fresh graves before and after bodies were laid in them as a precaution against summer droughts. See Zelenin, 'K voprosu o rusalkakh,' 383–6, 390–1; *Ocherki russkoi mifologii*, 66–73, 81–2.

84 The bishop's admonition first appeared in *Podol'skie eparkhial'nye vedomosti* and was reprinted in *Smolenskii vestnik* 15, 2 October 1892, no. 115, 1.

85 Frank, 'Cultural Conflict,' 352.

86 Eve Levin, '*Dvoeverie* and Popular Religion,' in *Seeking God: The Recovery of Religious Identity in Orthodox Russia*, ed. Stephen K. Batalden (DeKalb, IL, 1993), 29–52.

87 See in particular Eve Levin's *Dvoeverie i narodnaia religiia v istorii Rossii* (Moscow, 2004). A recent exception to the abandonment of the notion of *dvoeverie* may be found in Elizabeth A. Warner, 'Russian Peasant Beliefs and Practices Concerning Death and the Supernatural Collected in Novosokol'niki Region, Pskov Province, Russia, 1995,' *Folklore* 111, nos 1–2 (2000): 67–90; 255–81.

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88 Eve Levin, ‘From Corpse to Cult in Early Modern Russia,’ in *Orthodox Russia: Belief and Practice under the Tsars*, ed. Valerie A. Kivelson and Robert H. Greene (University Park, PA, 2003), 81–104 (quote on 84); and idem., ‘Supplicatory Prayers as a Source for Popular Religious Culture in Muscovite Russia,’ in *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Russia and Ukraine*, ed. Samuel H. Baron and Nancy Shields Kollmann (DeKalb, IL, 1997), 96–114.

89 Henry Maguire, “Magic and the Christian Image,” in *Byzantine Magic,* ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, DC, 1995), 51.

90 Alexander V. Muller, ed. and trans., *The Spiritual Regulation of Peter the Great* (Seattle, 1972), 15, 19–20.

91 Christine D. Worobec, *Possessed: Women, Witches, and Demons in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb, IL, 2001), 25.

92 For a list of the canonizations, see Nadieszda Kizenko, ‘Protectors of Women and the Lower Orders: Constructing Sainthood in Modern Russia,’ in *Orthodox Russia*, ed. Kivelson and Greene, 105 n. 4. For information about the late canonizations, see Gregory L. Freeze, ‘Subversive Piety: Religion and the Political Crisis in Late Imperial Russia,’ *Journal of Modern History* 68 (June 1996): 308–50; and Robert H. Greene, ‘“Bodies Like Bright Stars”: Saints and Relics in Orthodox Russia, 1860s–1920s’ (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2004). For a discussion of the Holy Synod’s attempt to control the veneration of miracle-working icons, see Vera Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of the Revolution* (Oxford, 2004), chapter 5.

93 Gregory L. Freeze, ‘The Rechristianization of Russia: The Church and Popular Religion, 1750–1850,’ *Studia Slavica Finlandensia* 7 (1990): 101–36.

94 Shevzov, *Russian Orthodoxy*, 79.

95 Chris J. Chulos, *Converging Worlds: Religion and Community in Peasant Russia, 1861–1917* (DeKalb, IL, 2003), 84.

96 Greene, ‘“Bodies Like Bright Stars,”’ 73–4.

97 Both the Holy Trinity–St Sergius Lavra and Solovki have recently been the subject of scholarly work. See Scott M. Kenworthy, “The Revival of Monasticism in Modern Russia: The Trinity-Sergius Lavra, 1825–1921 (PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 2002); and Roy R. Robson, *Solovki: The Story of Russia Told Through Its Most Remarkable Islands* (New Haven, 2004).

98 For discussions of Russian Orthodox pilgrimages, see Chulos, *Converging Worlds*, chapter 5; Greene, ‘“Bodies Like Bright Stars,”’ chap. 2; Kh. V. Poplavskaia, *Palomnichestvo, strannopriimstvo i pochitanie sviatyn’ v Riazanskom krae, XIX–XX vv.* (Riazan, 1998); Robson, *Solovki*, chap. 13; and Christine D. Worobec, ‘Miraculous Healings,’ in *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russian Culture*, ed. Mark Steinberg and Heather Coleman (Bloomington, IN, 2006).

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99 Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (New York, 1999), 261.

100 A. Goncharev, "Palomnichestvo v gor. Belgorod prichta i prikhozhan Rozhdestvo-Bogorodichnoi tserkvi sl. Sennoi, Bogodukhovskago uezda, 27 maia–2 iiunia 1912 goda," *Vera i razum* 20 (October 1912): 279; (December 1912): 793–4.

101 M.M. Gromyko and A.V. Buganov, *O vozzreniiakh russkogo naroda* (Moscow, 2000), 49–50.

102 Thomas Reed Trice, '"The 'Body Politic": Russian Funerals and the Politics of Representation, 1841–1921' (PhD dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1998), 16.

103 Levin, 'From Corpse to Cult,' 103.

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Folk Orthodoxy: Popular Religion in Contemporary Ukraine

NATALIE KONONENKO

Ukraine today is experiencing a spiritual renaissance. Religion was officially banned for the seventy years of Soviet rule. As a result, current interest in organized religion is intense. Everywhere there are cathedrals and monasteries under construction or reconstruction. In Central Ukraine, most villages, even small ones, have opened up places of worship either by building new churches, restoring old ones, or converting existing structures that were not houses of worship into churches. The villages that I regularly visit are good examples. Ploske has built a new church on the site of an old, demolished one. Nearby Mryn has converted a private home near the centre of town into a chapel. Dobranychivka has taken an old schoolhouse and turned it into a church. Iavorivka is working on restoring a gorgeous two-century-old brick church that was used as a grain warehouse during the Soviet period.[1] On a more personal level, people have pulled out crosses and old icons. They have donated old ritual towels (*rushnyky*) to churches and started making new ones with specifically religious content, and even the smallest churches are a feast for the eye.[2] Villagers donate not only their possessions but also their time, doing almost all of the church repair and remodelling work themselves and building homes for the clergy that they hope to attract.[3] The church hierarchy has helped with construction and repairs. Other professionals contribute also. New icons have been painted. In Dobranychivka there are two magnificent new iconostasis paintings with human height depictions of the archangels Gabriel and Michael.

Part of the appeal of religion lies in the fact that it is seen as formerly forbidden fruit, and people want to taste that which was once denied. People have genuine spiritual needs. Unless one views communism as

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itself a religion, then the Soviet era can be seen as a religious vacuum that needed to be filled. And fill it people did. In the absence of clergy and canonical texts, they used what they had: folk belief spread through oral transmission and through custom and practice. The very people who are the purveyors of folk belief and their many clients are the ones who want to find out about church religion, now that it is available. A great deal of my work has been with people interested in all things of the spirit: religion, history, culture, and lore. They are what I call culture keepers. They write down songs and stories. Some run small museums to preserve everything from embroidery to pottery to photographs.[4] Many, during the Soviet period, performed services in lieu of the non-existent church, such as taking care of the deceased. Now that organized religion is available, they often work with and for the newly assigned priests, singing in the church choir or *pevcha*. As aficionados in things of the spirit, they are very curious to see what has been missing these last seventy years. The people served by culture keepers are, of course, also interested. Whether directed to organized religion by their culture-keeper neighbours or their own spiritual needs, most ordinary villagers support the drive towards the restoration of Orthodoxy.

A great deal of the interest in religion is fuelled by fear. People feel that the lack of religious observance during the Soviet period was a violation of a strong ritual obligation. Furthermore, this violation has threatened their well-being and that of their villages, and the damage needs to be undone as quickly as possible. The most striking manifestation of this phenomenon that I witnessed was in Lytviaky where many residents felt that the destruction of the local church during the Soviet era doomed the village. I was told: 'Our village is cursed because we toppled the church.'[5] Work on a new church had not yet begun, but there was already talk of going to a larger village, or even a city or a monastery, and getting a priest to lift the curse so that the village could begin church construction and spiritual recovery.

The concern with protection, ritual obligation, and taboo is not new, and fear of the consequences of violation prompted substitute religious activity during the Soviet period. A concrete, practical, action-oriented component of religious faith is always present, even when organized religion is strong. In the absence of a functioning church it becomes especially powerful. This is certainly what happened under Soviet rule. Because lack of religious objects was seen as dangerous, substitute objects, usually of folk provenance, were used. Thus, if a church was destroyed and there was no sacred place, a well or a spring was chosen

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instead.[6] If icons could not be kept in the home, then a ritual towel, or *rushnyk,* with representations of the Trinity was hung instead.[7] Prior to Soviet rule folk places and objects were used together with religious objects. During the Soviet period, in at least some places, they were used in lieu of religious paraphernalia and acted as talismans, providing needed protection and comfort.

The extensive use of folk materials encouraged folk Orthodoxy, and the phenomenon flourished. This system of folk belief was not seen as antithetic to church teaching, at least not by the folk themselves. If it was not canonical – and there was little opportunity to check if it was – then it was viewed as an elaboration of church religious teaching, a way to make it more accessible or understandable, a way to help people remember what they were supposed to do.[8] In the Soviet period, people hid folk Orthodoxy from authorities as much as they hid any allegiance to the organized church, and one big change that came with the fall of the Soviet Union is people's willingness to discuss their faith.

Folk Orthodoxy flourished not only because the absence of organized religion provided an empty, fertile field where it could grow, but also because it was much harder to persecute than organized religion. Folk beliefs blend with the environment. They are reinforced by everything from embroidery to stories and songs. Calendary holidays celebrate crops and the agricultural year as much as they honour Christian saints. It is difficult to isolate those aspects of folk religion that are tied to Orthodoxy specifically from those that are truly folk and may predate Christianity. Furthermore, even under Soviet rule, villages, unlike urban centres, were left to go their own way. Unless the village head was a particularly ardent communist, private religious activities were not targeted. In many villages, people could and did keep icons in the home, for example.[9] Crosses were erected over graves.[10] Religious activity, especially by older women who could be labelled unenlightened, was tolerated.

Religious activity by older women is an interesting issue. Older women were seen as outside Soviet control. To a certain extent they were 'expendable.' They could no longer contribute as workers and so they were immune to the pressures that applied to those who wanted to succeed and advance in their jobs. And the women's position outside the workforce, combined with their age, could be used by others, their relatives for example, to excuse them and to explain why they did not grasp Soviet efforts at building the workers' paradise. Having older women assume religious functions also fit folk belief. In folk terms,

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because clergy are male, a woman performing a religious service has to be postmenopausal, in other words, not fully feminine. The combination of political reality and folk belief led to a feminization of religious activity. This has had important consequences in today's religious revival. Village priests are young, recent graduates of seminaries. While there seems to be an abundance of young men willing to enter the priesthood, not all are equally dedicated to or suited for a religious vocation. Several of the villages I visit regularly have had problems with the clergy assigned to them. Some priests found village life difficult and the remuneration insufficient and simply left their posts. Some, unfortunately, did worse and left with the money that had been collected by their parishioners to support the church. One even seduced a member of his congregation and eloped with her.[11] Because the dedication to Orthodoxy among some of the priests is questionable and because these same clergymen now exercise authority over the women who had performed religious services during the Soviet period, there is tension between some of the priests and their most devoted parishioners.

One response of the women themselves has been the revival of a folk legend that addresses the issue of male/female dominance. In this legend, God and Saint Peter argue about who should be the head of the household. Saint Peter says that women should tell men what to do because women bear children and they are responsible for ritual. God disagrees and says that women should be subordinate to men in all things. When Saint Peter fails to understand God's viewpoint, God decides to show Peter that he is right. God and Saint Peter set out to walk the earth. They stop at the home of a woman and ask her for lodging for the night. The woman refuses because she does not want to share anything with others. Many versions of the legend stop at this point and say that it is the woman's interest in material things that disqualifies her from leadership, an interesting articulation of folk Orthodoxy's tendency to speak in concrete, material terms. Some versions go on to say that God finally convinced the woman to let him and Peter stay, telling her that they would take up no room at all. In this version, Peter lies down on a bench in the entryway and God goes to sleep under the bench. The two of them leave their walking staffs by the door. In the morning, their hostess goes to milk the cow. When she comes back with the milk, she trips over one of the staffs and spills the milk. Furious, she pulls Saint Peter off the bench, beats him up, and leaves to get a cloth to wipe up the mess. Saint Peter begs God to trade places with him, saying that he could not withstand another beating.

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Thus Peter lies down under the bench and God on top of it. When the woman returns and kneels to wipe the floor, she sees Peter and exclaims, 'I thought there were two of you!' pulls him out from under the bench, and administers another thrashing. At this point Peter agrees with God that women need to be controlled by men. This second version allows women to articulate their own might while trying to come to terms with the need for male domination.[12]

Independent of the issue of feminization, folk Orthodoxy, especially as it developed during the Soviet era, is obligation- and taboo-fuelled to a considerable degree. It is action-driven so that what is done, or not done, such as providing the deceased with a 'passport' to the other world, is deemed to matter a great deal. Anthropomorphization is common, and abstract concepts like death are rendered in human form. The soul itself is seen as a shadow body, closely connected to the corporeal body it once inhabited. Even where anthropomorphization is not used, things are presented in concrete, tactile form so that the passage of the soul into the hereafter is seen as a journey that requires comfortable shoes. It is an interesting belief system and a very important one, as it sustained people for some seventy years. Understanding it is crucial to understanding contemporary Ukraine. Fortunately, culture keepers are willing and eager to discuss their beliefs. They want to share their religious knowledge and they want their actions on behalf of religion to now be made public. My informants were quite anxious to have me record what they had to say. This situation is changing. As organized religion becomes more firmly established, the discrepancy between folk and canonical Orthodoxy is becoming more apparent. In 2005, the priest in Ploske, formerly very chatty, felt that he had to go to Nizhen to consult with his superior before he would grant me an interview.[13] He was afraid, I was told, that he might voice some folk views instead of being the spokesman for the Orthodox Church. Some of the older women who, in the past, were not merely chatty but quite insistent that I record what they had to say about religion, were now a bit more reluctant. Their clergy had led them to doubt some of the religious information that they had passed on from one to the other in true folk fashion – by word of mouth. They, too, were afraid that they might say something that was not quite right.

The period between the collapse of the Soviet system and the reestablishment of the Orthodox Church provided, and still provides, a unique opportunity to study the important phenomenon of folk Orthodoxy. What follows is a description of folk religious belief taken from inter-

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views conducted in Central Ukraine in the period 1998-2005. Because folk Orthodoxy is difficult to isolate from the huge category of general folk belief, I will define it as those religious beliefs that pertain to the soul. The care of the soul is vital to religious observance. A great deal of the work done by culture keepers to maintain the faith under Soviet rule had to do with the departure of the soul from this life and its entry into the hereafter. Thus, funerary customs and beliefs can serve as a key to the system of folk Orthodoxy. The focal point of this description will be an account of the journey of the soul after death recorded on the outskirts of Iahotyn in 2000.[14] There were two main speakers in Iahotyn, Nina Dziuba and Hanna Khodorivs'ka. Both are women deeply interested in religion. They wanted their views to be made public through my writings.

Images of the afterlife are central to folk belief. Life in this world is typically seen as transitory, while afterlife is eternal. It is in the afterlife that God's divine plan will become apparent, and it is at the Last Judgment that ultimate justice will triumph. In the afterlife the travails of this life will be explained and good deeds rewarded; there will be compensation for earthly suffering. Similarly, bad deeds will be punished and all those who prospered at the expense of others in this world will get their due. To make sure that passage into the hereafter occurs smoothly, people prepare for death. Although the soul is ephemeral, its well-being requires a great deal of physical preparation and the procurement of objects to accompany the body. Women aged fifty and over make what I term funeral bundles (see pp. 52–3). These include all the clothing that a person will need for burial, cloth to cover the coffin, and towels and kerchiefs to be given as gifts to those who help with the funeral. Religious items include two crosses, one to wear around the neck and a larger one to be placed in the hands, and the *provodnychok* or *prokhidna*. This is a piece of paper purchased in church which consists of a 'wreath,' a strip cut off and placed on the forehead of the deceased, and a prayer, folded and placed next to the dead person or in his or her pocket. Items of possible religious significance are candles, now used during the funeral service. Funeral bundles were made during the Soviet period. How often people included crosses, the *prokhidna*, and candles is hard to say. People I interviewed felt that this was done on a regular basis. However, they may well be projecting current standard practice into the past rather than giving an accurate account of actual behaviour. Certainly crosses and the *prokhidna* were not used in the funerals of people who were communists. Candles are questionable.

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Photo taken 10 November 1998 in Korolivka, Makariv raion, Kyiv oblast. Maria Petrivna Onykienko, born 1930, shows her funeral bundle. Photo courtesy of the author.

While part of a religious service now, they could be viewed as an item not connected to the church. Folk Orthodoxy presents the afterlife in tactile terms and one view of the soul is as a shadow body that literally walks to the other world. On its way, it needs light, which the candles are supposed to provide. The concrete nature of the soul journey is most apparent from the emphasis on footwear. Many informants say that, while the dead person needs new shoes to look good in the afterlife, they have to be comfortable shoes as well. 'You need to put slippers (on the deceased) or shoes that won't pinch.'[15] One woman said that she buried her daughter in high-heeled shoes and the daughter came back in dreams to complain about the discomfort that the high heels caused. According to the mother, her daughter requested flat shoes and instructed the woman to bring them to a certain house. It turned out that a man had recently died at that location and so the low-heeled shoes were

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Photo taken 10 November 1998 in Korolivka, Makariv raion, Kyiv oblast. Tetiana Oksentivna Levchenko, born 1923, is showing some of the contents of her funeral bundle. On display is a plastic cross that she will hold in her hands when she is buried and the *provodnychok* or passport. Photo courtesy of the author.

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placed in his coffin for him to give to the daughter in the world of the dead.[16]

While everyone agreed that a funeral bundle should be put together well ahead of the time of death, preparing the coffin in advance was a more controversial issue. Some people said that making the coffin was routine. This work was seen as complementary to the preparation of the funeral bundle. The bundle was women's work and they made their own and the bundles of their husbands and widowed brothers. Men made coffins, their own and those of their spouses. But many said that making the coffin ahead of time was a sin. Beliefs about the preparation of the coffin are not directly tied to religion, but they do show that death, in folk belief, is often treated as a physical entity rather than an abstract concept. Furthermore, they articulate the widespread idea that nothing should be done in anticipation of an event, lest human action upset the natural order.[17] A legend tells that a man was in the forest making his coffin when along came Death and asked what he was doing. When he told her he was making his own coffin, she observed that it looked much too small. The man denied Death's assertion and pointed out that the coffin would fit her, too. Death decided to see if the man was right and lay down in the coffin. Immediately he put on the lid and nailed the coffin shut. The man trapped Death and people did stop dying. However, this was not good because people continued to grow old and decrepit, to the point of becoming overgrown with moss. The man then realized that he needed to set things right. He found Death in the forest and let her out, restoring order to the world.[18] The legend is a clear example of the tactile representation of an abstract concept, and death is anthropomorphized as a woman with a physical body that can be acted upon. In addition to knowing and repeating this legend, many people claim to have personally seen Death. Again, they picture her as a woman who walks the village, usually in dark robes or loose, dark clothing. The most common account tells of catching a glimpse of a strange, dark female figure and then finding out that someone in the house near which the figure appeared had died.[19]

When the hour of death approaches, the dying person and his or her relatives sense that death is near. Interestingly, in this case death is not anthropomorphized, but perceived in the abstract. Also, the idea of a soul and heaven and hell are important. According to the women I interviewed in Iahotyn, a person about to die senses the realm he is about to enter. Thus, in most cases, 'the soul sees angels.'[20] If the person has been bad, however, the soul is tormented, sees evil spirits, and

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becomes frightened. As a result, the person will be reluctant to die. In such a case, the priest should be called for confession and the person will usually die right after receiving absolution. 'Sometimes people suffer for a long time. But when they receive confession, they die ... a person sees evil spirits and they frighten the soul. Then it is necessary to call the priest for a confession; that helps.'[21] In folk Orthodoxy, the relationship between the body and the soul is a very close one. Thus, as the soul sees that which awaits it, so the body yearns for the place where it is about to go and a person who is near death may ask to be placed on the ground, to be near the earth.[22]

What happens to the physical body indicates the condition of the soul and a prolonged death is a sign that the person committed a grave sin in his or her lifetime. While the people I interviewed in Iahotyn did not mention witches or sorcerers, the usual explanation for an extended death agony is that the person was a witch or a sorcerer in life.[23] If a person is thought to be a witch or a sorcerer, the way to help them die is to break a hole in the ceiling above their deathbeds. This allows the soul to escape more readily and curtails a person's death agony. The belief in witchcraft is very real and part of the urban, as well as the rural, environment. Witchcraft is also a complex issue. No person claims to be a witch, yet many are accused of witchcraft and the method of liberating the soul by breaking open the ceiling is widely attested.[24]

When a close relative such as a parent dies, you can bodily sense the moment of death or the person may appear to you right after he or she dies. It is the soul or spirit that appears to the living, though it seems to have corporeal form and the sensation of the passing of a loved one is often physically experienced. Dziuba told how her mother died. The old woman, according to my informant, left the world peacefully. Dziuba visited her mother at her home and prepared her for the evening. In the morning, when she went to check on her mother again, she found her dead, lying in her bed as if still asleep. During the night, at the very hour when her mother must have died, Dziuba felt something in her body. It was five o'clock in the morning and she awoke to hear a knock on the door. She opened the door and saw 'a woman in black; she was like an Uzbek, covered with a black mantle.' Dziuba now understands that this must have been her mother at the hour of death, leaving on her journey to the spirit realm.[25]

Once a person dies, the soul remains near the body for three days, or for however long the deceased lies in state. The deceased must spend at least one night in the home, everyone agreed, and three nights is ideal.

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The women in Iahotyn were particularly insistent on the three nights and described at length various techniques to deter decay.[26] It is easy, my informants said, to know that the soul of the deceased is nearby because the living can interact with it, even address it and ask it to help them in the preparation of the body. According to Dziuba, if the body is in rigor mortis when women come to wash it and prepare it to be laid out, all one needs to do is talk to the soul and ask for help: 'You need to say, "give me your hand" and the deceased will hear you and give you his hand.'[27] The soul can be tormented during this period and that is why the reading of the psalter is obligatory while the body lies in the home. 'The psalter must be read at night, between the hours of eleven at night and four in the morning because spirits come to the soul and torment it, but if the psalter is being read, they leave the soul alone.'[28]

The psalter is an interesting issue in terms of Soviet-era religious practice (see p. 57). As a concrete item it was considered important to have as part of the funeral process. But its physical reality also meant that, if an authority figure like a village head wanted to enforce a Soviet stance against religion, a psalter was easy proof of religious activity. One effect of this situation was placing psalters and psalter reading in the hands of the 'expendable' older women already discussed. The other consequence was the production of substitute psalters. In many villages, old psalters were hidden and even destroyed. Because new psalters were being printed in small numbers only, yet people still wanted one, the women who read over the deceased started making copies by hand.[29] How hand-copying may have affected the texts and what elements may have been introduced or omitted are yet to be investigated.

Returning to the burial process, after the vigil in the home and the reading of the psalter, the next important event in terms of folk Orthodoxy is interment.[30] Burial takes place in the afternoon. There is a taboo against being in the cemetery after dark, especially on the day that someone is buried. Thus custom allows the morning for cooking and other preparations for the wake. Interment then occurs in early afternoon with family and friends gathering at the home of the deceased for a farewell meal afterwards. Today, now that religion is back, the funeral begins with a religious service conducted by a priest in the home. It is during this service that the candles prepared in the funeral bundle are lit and held by those in front as the service begins and gradually passed to the back of the room. Candle stubs are tossed into the coffin to light the way for the deceased on the journey into the afterlife.[31] After the

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Photo taken 11 November 1998 in Iablunivka, Bila Tserkva raion, Kyiv oblast. The home of Antonina Mykolaivna Shtyka, born 1927. Pictured is the table in her icon corner showing some family and religious pictures. The bread is a special one which she received in payment for reading the psalter over a deceased person in the village. Also on the table is a large-print psalter. She also owns a hand-written psalter which is what she used during the Soviet period. Photo courtesy of the author.

service, the relatives are left alone with the deceased to say goodbye. Then the coffin is removed from the home, blessed in the yard, and carried in a procession through the streets of the village (see p. 58).[32] There is a specific order to the funeral procession and, now that religion is back, an icon draped in a *rushnyk* or a cross leads the way. The procession must stop at all crossroads for the singing of the Our Father and for lamentation, and there must be a minimum of three such stops between the home and the cemetery (see p. 58). Viewing the funeral procession through a window is prohibited, as this will cause the viewer to sicken and possibly even die.[33] If the family wishes and has the money, a service at the church by the cemetery is possible (see p. 59). This can be in addition to or in place of the service in the home. Afterwards, the deceased is taken to the graveyard (see p. 60), the grave is blessed, the lid is placed on the coffin, and the coffin lowered. To bless the grave, the priest seals it by making a cut with a shovel on each of the

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Photo taken 25 May 2000 in Mryn, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast. Funeral of Ivan Zapharovych Dolych. Men carry the coffin since the deceased is male. The group of women walking in front are the pevcha. Photo courtesy of the author.

Photo taken 6 June 2000 in Iavorivka, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast. Funeral of Hryhorii Pylypovych Novak. Lament at the crossroads. The funeral procession must stop at all crossroads and must make a minimum of three stops between the home and the cemetery. Photo courtesy of the author.

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Photo taken 23 May 2000 in Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast. Funeral of Hanna Petrivna Mateiko. This is the service in church. After the service in church, women carry the coffin of the deceased around the tetrapod. Photo courtesy of the author.

four sides of the burial pit, forming a cross. He then throws in ashes from the incense burner.[34] The sealing of the grave (*zapechatuvannia*) is considered essential for the repose of the soul (see p. 61). Priests refuse to 'seal' the graves of those who have not died properly, meaning suicides.[35] Furthermore, during the Soviet period, the same 'expendable' women who read the psalter would perform an alternative sealing. They would take dirt from the grave and travel to a church, the only churches at that time being in urban centres. They would then return with the blessed soil and sprinkle it in the shape of a cross on the grave of the newly deceased.[36] To continue with the contemporary burial, after the grave is sealed, relatives and all those especially close to the deceased throw in three handfuls of dirt each. The grave diggers then cover the grave completely, and all go to the wake.

A great many superstitions surround the funeral. Whether they should be seen as folk Orthodoxy or folk belief is debatable. Many do have to

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Photo taken 11 June 2000 in Pluzhnyky, Iahotyn raion, Kyiv oblast. Funeral of Mykola Romanovych Shekenia. The open coffin in the graveyard, right before interment. On the head of the deceased is the *vinok* or *venets*, the 'wreath' which comes on the same piece of paper as the 'passport' to heaven or *provodnychok*. The 'passport' itself is in the pocket of the deceased. I should note that one of the relatives of the deceased lifted me up so that I could take a better photograph. Photo courtesy of the author.

do with the repose of the soul and fit the definition of folk Orthodoxy used here, but many have more to do with the effect of the soul on the living. The coffin is often knocked three times against the doorway as it exits the home. This is supposed to help the deceased say goodbye. Rye (*zhyto*) is thrown in the wake of the coffin as it exits the gate to the farmstead. Some say that this is to ensure the eternal life of the soul because the word *zhyto* has the same root as *zhyty*, to live. Others say that it is to protect the living from the dead. Similarly, it is not clear whether it is the dead person or death itself that might adversely affect anyone viewing the funeral procession through a window.

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Photo taken 23 May 2000 in Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast. Funeral of Hanna Petrivna Mateiko. This is the *zapechatuvannia*. The priest makes four cuts on the sides of the grave in the form of a cross: top, bottom, right, and left. Photo courtesy of the author.

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Interment separates body and soul, and the soul begins a tour of the other world: 'On the third day, the soul appears before God's throne. Prior to that, it is near the body.'[37] At this point 'God gives the soul a guardian angel and the angel takes the soul on a tour of all of the places where the soul had been on Sundays while alive.'[38] The angel apparently also shows the soul heaven and hell.[39] Heaven, as the soul sees it during its tour, is so wonderful that one must endure all suffering in this world just to get into heaven. 'You have to endure all earthly misfortune just to get into the Heavenly Kingdom. It is so wonderful there that, even if this room were full of worms and even if a worm was eating you, you should still put up with this to get into the Heavenly Kingdom.'[40] Unfortunately, by the time the angel takes the soul on its cosmic tour, it is too late to affect the ultimate destination of one's soul. God has a book in which all of one's deeds are recorded, and there is nothing we can do to change what is in the book. The book is 'the book of one's life (and everything is there), the good deeds and the bad.'[41] Therefore, a person has to do his or her utmost in this world to secure the blessing of heaven.

With the folk emphasis on the tangible, body-soul relations are problematic. Although body and soul are said to separate and the soul is pictured as independent of the body, travelling on its own in the spirit world, what had been done to the body affects the soul in many ways. The need for comfortable shoes on the body so that the soul can travel easily in the other world has already been mentioned. Great care must also be taken with the cords that are used to tie the body down as it lies in state in the home. During rigor mortis, the body may move as it stiffens. To prevent movement, the limbs are tied down with cords or ropes called *puty*. These must be removed and placed in the coffin and, at several funerals that I attended, I heard people checking with each other to make sure that *puty* had been properly removed and disposed of. *Puty* must be removed, it is said, so that the soul can travel freely in the afterlife. If this is not done, the body will have trouble getting to the other world. 'You have to remember to remove the *puty*. Otherwise he will be bound up; he won't be able to go.'[42] The reason that *puty* must be placed in the coffin, along with the deceased, is that witches and others will try to steal them and use them for magic. *Puty* and 'dead' water, meaning the water used to wash the deceased, can be used for good purposes, such as to deaden and thus alleviate pain. But they can also be used for evil – to cause paralysis and the deadening of limbs and other body parts. Even if *puty* are used to help people, there are bad

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consequences. According to Dziuba, the illness that the *puty* alleviate will pass to the deceased and affect him in the afterlife; the deceased will be in pain. We know this, Dziuba said, because the dead come back to their relatives in dreams and deliver this information.[43]

As the relationship between body and soul is pictured in a number of ways, so are the activities of the soul after death. According to one line of reasoning, the soul moves to the icon corner where it resides for forty days.[44] The women in Iahotyn said that the soul remains in the home and that the psalter has to be read for this entire period to fulfil the needs of the soul. 'You have to read the psalter for forty days because the soul yearns for prayer.'[45] The same informants consistently give another account of the activities of the soul during this forty-day period. This latter account was the one presented more expansively by the women in Iahotyn and it describes a purgatory of sorts, a period of the testing of the soul at the *mytarstva*. *Mytarstva*, as the women said, are like tollbooths or customs checkpoints at a border crossing.[46] There are either twenty or forty of them. According to Orthodox canon, the number is twenty or twenty-one, and Khodorivs'ka, one of my Iahotyn informants, insisted that twenty was the true count. However, Khodorivs'ka was the only one of the people I interviewed who held this to be the correct number. The usual folk interpretation is that there are forty, presumably one for each day of the forty days of the soul's journey. There is a *mytarstvo* for each sin, and at each tollbooth the person's guilt in relationship to that sin is checked and determined and permission to proceed is granted or denied. As Khodorivs'ka emphasized, 'there are demons at every single one of these checkpoints,' and they are the best of bureaucrats. Their bookkeeping is completely accurate and contains the most detailed record of every sin, down to the hour of its commission. 'They have everything written down: the time and the hour and the day. Everything, everything, everything!' It is these demons that hinder the sinful soul's progress towards heaven.[47]

After the completion of the forty-day period and presumably the examination at the *mytarstva*, the soul goes before God, and he determines whether to send it to heaven or to hell.[48] The soul must present a document to get into heaven. The document is the prayer part of the *prokhidna*, the piece of paper bought in church and stored in the funeral bundle. Many people, the women in Iahotyn included, explicitly compare it to the Soviet internal passport.[49] It is not clear whether this piece of paper is presented to God or at the gates of heaven, once God has determined that that is the ultimate destination of the soul. The formal-

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ity and document consciousness of heaven can be extreme and even innocent children can be affected. Thus, children who die unbaptized, even though they be without sin, are never allowed to see God. Because they are pure, they are in God's hands, but are denied ever actually seeing him. 'Unbaptized children do not see God. It (the soul) sits on God's palm, but it does not see (him).'[50]

The record keeping of the *mytarstva* demons is impeccable and there is no way that their books or the person-specific book of life which is in God's possession can be changed. Furthermore, once a person is dead, the soul can do nothing to aid its own cause. Still, there is hope. Some relief is offered by luck and happenstance. A person who has the good fortune to die during the period between Easter and Provody, a holiday commemorating the dead that comes on the Tuesday after Doubting Thomas Sunday, will go straight to heaven. 'Between Easter and Provody the gates of heaven are open. If a person dies at this time, then the soul goes straight to Heaven. It does not have to go through the *mytarstva* because the gates of heaven are open.'[51] Certain actions are also possible. The dead retain an intimate connection to the living and the prayers of the living for the dead can ease their suffering and improve their lot. 'The soul itself can't pray for itself and it can't change anything. But if people pray for it on earth, then things can improve and it (the soul) can move from a worse condition to a better one.'[52] Giving money to a monastery or a nunnery is good because there people pray constantly and the abundance of their prayers can help the sinful soul. Because the living are their only hope, sinful souls often come back home and try to get the attention of their relatives. Most people simply banish these restless souls, however. 'If a soul committed sins, then, after death, it walks around and knocks and makes noise; then they sprinkle poppy seeds that have been blessed (in church) around the house to stop it from wandering.'[53]

The actions of the living can harm the deceased as well as help them. In many villages I was told that it is bad to cry excessively when someone dies because then the dead person will be forced to lie in water.[54] Here the relationship between the body and soul of the deceased and their friends and relatives in this world is especially complex. Crying to excess is an action performed by people who are alive. Yet it affects the body of the deceased, causing the grave and the coffin to fill with water. Although the body is without a soul and thus insensate, it experiences discomfort, which affects the soul and makes it restless. Too much crying can even bring the deceased back instead of

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allowing them to make the proper transition into the world of the dead.[55]

In Iahotyn, informants focused on bad actions that were related to religious doctrine. They offered the story of a girl who died at age fourteen. As such, she should have been an innocent and should have gone to heaven. Unfortunately, her father, who was grief-stricken by her loss, chose to commemorate her with vodka and with rich food. He would summon his friends and offer them alcohol and say, 'Eat, drink, and remember my daughter.' As a result, the girl ended up in hell. The Mother of God came by, saw the plight of the girl, and took pity. The girl asked the Mother of God to be allowed to appear to her father in a dream and to beg him to change his ways. The Mother of God granted the girl's wish. The girl appeared to her father and accused him of not loving her. He protested that, on the contrary, he loved her very much. When she explained the consequences of his actions, he stopped commemorating her with vodka.[56]

From the interviews, we get a very tactile presentation of the afterlife. A person's behaviour while alive and in the body is important – and so is what happens to the body after death. The body must be properly clothed and comfortable shoes must be put on the feet. The deceased must be given a passport to the afterlife which, while it is a physical object placed in the coffin, is used by the disembodied soul when it arrives in heaven. The soul leaves the body, but retains an intimate connection to it, remaining in its physical proximity until burial. The tendency to anthropomorphize means that the soul itself is pictured as a shadow body, an entity that retains the appearance of the deceased and walks and sits in the afterlife as if it had physical substance. When it comes to the Last Judgment, the connection between body and soul is less problematic. Orthodoxy believes in the resurrection of the body and so the various concrete acts that the women in Iahotyn advised in connection with the Last Judgment were more in line with Orthodox theology. As they explained, the Last Judgment is a time when all will arise, including those who had suffered bad deaths such as drownings or executions. To insure a good outcome at the Last Judgment, it was necessary to have led a pious and righteous life. A proper funeral and the prayers of relatives and friends after death are essential. It is also important to remove all physical impediments to the resurrection. Just as *puty* are to be removed at burial, so the gates of burial plots must be left open. In Central Ukraine, all family plots are surrounded by a fence and each such fence has a gate. Most people close these gates after they

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are done visiting their deceased relatives or working on the family plot. Closing the gates is bad, the women in Iahotyn said, because one never knows when the Last Judgment will come. When it does, nothing should hinder the soul as it rises from the coffin to follow the Lord. The gates of all burial plots should be open so that the deceased does not have to take time struggling with locks and latches on Judgment Day. Similarly, people place the cross at the head of the grave. This is unwise because, when one rises up from the grave, it is difficult to reach back and grab the cross. 'Closing the gate at the graveyard is not permitted. In these parts they put the cross at the head, but you should really put the cross at the feet. That way when he (the dead person) gets up for the Last Judgment, he can just take it and go; he can take the cross and go.'[57]

Folk Orthodoxy sees a link between body and soul and so, since the soul is both ethereal and anthropomorphic, the body has both concrete and abstract qualities. The body is buried in soil, and it is believed to be transformed by the soil, becoming more a spirit than a physical entity. As such, it is reborn in crops, most notably grain. Dziuba and Khodorivs'ka voiced this idea almost literally. They said, 'You throw rye kernels (*zhyto*) after the deceased (when the coffin is carried out of the yard) because these grains are life (*zhyttia*). It (the rye) is sown and it sprouts and it delivers a new crop.'[58] To them, throwing this symbol of life in the wake of the coffin meant ensuring new life, presumably both a new life for the soul in the hereafter and new life on earth. Similar sentiments were voiced elsewhere, as at the funeral I attended in Iavorivka.[59] Also in Iavorivka, *zhyto* was believed to counteract the 'killing' effects of death upon human reproduction. One of the women in the house where I was living was having her menstrual period and her mother did not want her to go to the funeral because the presence of death would 'deaden her womanly capacities.'[60] By the same token, everyone felt that the woman was obliged to be present because the deceased was a relative. The solution was to have her protect herself by wearing *zhyto* in her bosom, in this case inside her brassiere, until she left the graveyard.

Grain has symbolic power in connection with human death because it is itself a substance that undergoes transformation and transubstantiation. Not only does it grow out of the soil in which ancestors lie, it becomes the food, and thus the flesh, of the next generation. The stove is also important for it is in the stove that baking, that magical process by which grain becomes bread, takes place. The symbolic power of the stove, too, is considerable and it is still used for things that go wrong

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with the human body, such as childhood illnesses. A sickly child, for example, can be 'rebaked' if he is believed to have been improperly formed in the process of pregnancy.[61] Pregnancy, too, is a process of transubstantiation, which is why it can be affected by death and aided by grain. In folk belief, a woman, when she is pregnant, eats the bread that grew out of ancestral soil and was transformed by the stove and makes new human flesh – her baby.[62] There is an interesting take on the Eucharist in this system. The bread of the Eucharist is not transubstantiated into the body of Christ and the body of Christ, because it is not human, is not grain transformed. Rather, the body of Christ is literally made of bread. Dziuba and Khodorivs'ka both stated this explicitly.[63] As a result, bread must be treated with respect. You should not put it upside down. You should not walk on breadcrumbs. Rather, you need to gather up the crumbs and feed them to animals. When you sweep up crumbs, you should not sweep towards the door because you will sweep both good and evil outside and the evil will affect other people. You need to sweep towards the inside, towards the stove, and then pick up the crumbs and carry them out. When you die, the breadcrumbs that you wasted will be weighed in heaven, in front of God. If they weigh more than you do, your soul will be condemned.[64]

Bread may be connected to the human body, but it is flesh transformed. Because it is transubstantiated, bread is pure. There is some sense that flesh untransformed by the soil, be it the human body once the soul has separated from it or the meat of animals, is impure. The path towards spiritual purity, therefore, is through a meatless diet. According to Dziuba and Khodorivs'ka, God himself commanded people to avoid meat. 'God said: Eat that which comes out of the earth (plants) and not that which is on the earth (animals).'[65] People are weak and have a hard time being vegetarians, but they should keep Lent. In addition to observing the regular fasts, the ones that come at certain times in the year, people can fast at other times to please God. For example, you can use fasting to aid someone's health; a mother can fast to cure a sick child.[66]

Perhaps the most striking evidence that the human body is seen as flesh and that there is an association between it and food comes in the strict prohibition on eating meat in the presence of the dead body.[67] Meat should even be avoided at the wake. Most people do not know this, the women in Iahotyn said, and, like the father who offered vodka in remembrance of his daughter, they offer meat to their guests at the wake. But this is wrong. 'Only Lenten dishes should be served at a wake.'[68]

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According to contemporary folk Orthodoxy, especially as expressed by the women in Iahotyn, the cosmos is complex and interconnected. The body and the soul are both separate and one. What is done to the body of the deceased influences the afterlife in both its spiritual and corporeal aspects. The soul retains a connection to the body and is aware of what others do for the deceased. Both the soul and the body journey to another world after death and this other world is both spiritual and tangible. In folk Orthodoxy, there is a connection between the body and food, especially grain, and a sense that the body undergoes an almost spiritual transubstantiation to become food. Although there is belief in the Last Judgment, human life is seen as cyclical rather than linear, with one generation connected to the next through the medium of native soil.

Folk Orthodoxy was in many ways a reaction against the Soviet system, a way to keep religious belief alive in a state that considered religion the opiate of the unenlightened. Interestingly, the Soviet system provided some of the images used in folk Orthodoxy. Because the experiences of the soul are anthropomorphic and have a concrete aspect, they are often presented through experiences from earthly life. It is quite intriguing that images from Soviet bureaucracy have entered folk religious beliefs and that the *prokhidna* is compared to a passport while *mytarstva* are compared to border control stations. Using everyday experience, folk legends, and ideas passed on through custom and practice, the women in Iahotyn, like other culture keepers, maintained their faith through the Soviet period and helped meet the spiritual needs of others. They are proud of their religious service. While they may have been expendable from the Soviet point of view, it is they who laid the groundwork for the current religious revival.

NOTES

1 I thank the University of Virginia for funding my research in Ukraine in summer 2000, the University of Alberta for purchasing photographic, sound recording, and other field equipment, and the Kule Endowment for funding my travel in 2005. Please see http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/uvp/ for models of four church types from Central Ukraine, including ones in the villages mentioned above.

2 The church in Dobranychivka has a towel on which the Lord’s Prayer is embroidered.

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3 The priest in Dobranychivka, Iahotyn raion, Kyiv oblast, received first free lodging, then minimally priced accommodations. Villagers worked on land assigned to this priest gratis to help him earn enough money to keep the church going.

4 A good example is Mykola Mykhailovych Iakimenko in the village of Moshny, Cherkasy raion, Cherkasy oblast. He was interviewed 19 August 1998. He runs a small local museum with both objects and photographs. He works with a group of women who fit my culture-keeper category. They are Hanna Filipivna Levchenko, Evdokiia Filipivna Tesla, Mariia Filipivna Prudenko, Ol'ha Mykolaivna Nemirska, Hanna Oleksandrivna Rohova, and Tetiana Oleksandrivna Sapronova. The women collect songs which they perform at weddings and in the village club for the entertainment of their neighbours.

5 Âè çíàåòå, ùî íàøå ñåëî ïðîêëÿòå, áî ìè çâàëèëè öåðê³â. Recorded in the village of Lytviaky, Lubny raion, Poltava oblast, 14 June 2000 from Z.Z. I am omitting the full name of the informant here and will do so in subsequent cases where I feel that the person might suffer repercussions if his or her identity were made known. A full record of informants is available in my private archives.

6 Some of the wells and springs used as sacred places have now been recognized by the church, for example, the well at Turbivshchyna. Wells associated with monasteries and churches were often covered over during the Soviet period. This happened at the Lavra in Kyiv, and as early as 1987 there were rumours that people had tapped into the holy water at places further down the mountain, out of public view. The wells at the nunnery near Berlozy were covered over when the grounds were converted into an old-age facility in the Soviet era. When the place was turned over to the church, ardent prayer helped the residents discover the location where the wells should be dug anew. Interview with a novice, 7 July 2005.

7 Êîæíî¿ õàò³ òðåáà îáåðåãè. Ó ëþäåé áóëî ïî÷óòòÿ, ùî òðåáà õàòó áåðåãòè. ² òàê ëþäè âèøèâàëè îáåðåãè. Îñü öå òóò ... öå º Òðî¿öÿ, à òóò àíãåëè, àíãåëè õðàíèòåë³ – öå Ãàâðè¿ë, àðõàíãåë-õðàíèòåëü, à öå Ìèõà¿ë, àðõàíãåë ³ ñòðàòèã. Recorded from Halyna Vasylivna Kapas', age 36, village of Iavorivka, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast, 2 June 2000. Kapas' embroiders herself and collects old embroidery.

8 For example, Ol'ha Ivanivna Iarosh, talking about funeral psalms, village of Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast, 14 July 2005. According to Nina Antonivna Dziuba, born 1938 and interviewed on 5 and 6 June 2000 in the city of Iahotyn, 'Öå äëÿ ëþäåé, ùîá ¿ì çðîçóì³ëî áóëî.' She was also talking about funeral psalms.

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9 I interviewed Zina Ivanivna Litovka, a person who supported the communist system and who still works as the head of the local club, an institution built during the Soviet era, on 22 May 2000, village of Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast. When I asked where she kept her icons during the Soviet period, she said, 'Right here.' Thus, the icons had hung on her wall through the Soviet period and had not affected her position as club worker.

10 In the cemeteries of the villages I regularly visit, metal crosses predominate. An economic motive may be at work here because the metal crosses popular in villages are cheaper than the stone slabs that were introduced during Soviet times. A specifically Soviet grave marker was the *tumbochka*, an obelisk, often made of metal in villages, again for reasons of cost, with a red star on top. Rumour has it that people would secretly stand crosses inside the metal *tumbochky*. Interview with Polina Iakivna Latysh, village of Iavorivka, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast, 3 June 2000. Certainly now, with the return of religion, the red stars on many *tumbochky* have been replaced by crosses.

11 All the incidents listed here were either witnessed by me or reported to me. I will not name the villages in which they happened to protect those involved. With the permission of my informants, recorded 21 July 2005, I can state that Iavorivka, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast, has been particularly unlucky with the clergy assigned to its church.

12 Recorded from Evdokiia Fedosivna Krasovs'ka, born 1931, village of Svidivok, Cherkasy raion, Cherkasy oblast, 16 August 1998.

13 Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast, 12–15 July 2005.

14 The women interviewed were Liubov Prokopivna Naida, born 1947, and Nina Antonivna Dziuba, born 1938, interviewed on 5 June 2000. Both are from the village of Dobranychivka, Iahotyn raion, Kyiv oblast, located approximately forty kilometres from Iahotyn. The interview began on 5 June and continued on 6 June with Dziuba and Hanna Arsentivna Khodorivs'ka, born 1936 in Rovens'k. Also present on both days was Halyna Vasylivna Kapas' from the village of Iavorivka, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast. Because Dziuba and Khodorivs'ka will be quoted extensively below, I will not give full field information every time they are cited. Thus, citations where the date alone appears refer to the Iahotyn interview.

15 5 June. Òðåáà îäÿãíóòü òàï î÷êè àáî òóôë³, ùîá íå äàâèëî.

16 Anne Marie Ingram, 'The Dearly Not-Quite Departed: Funerary Rituals and Beliefs about the Dead in Ukrainian Culture' (PhD dissertation, University of Virginia, 1998), 24–5.

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17 The belief that something will be spoiled if one anticipates it and behaves as if he or she is sure it will come to pass is most apparent in connection with birth customs. In Ukraine, gift giving prior to the birth of a child is prohibited. The baby showers typical of North American practice are taboo. Oksana Fedirivna Kryvorit, born 1918, gave me an example of the misfortune that baby gifts can bring. A couple in her village, Velykyi Khutir, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast, was getting married and she was shopping for a wedding gift. Since the couple had everything, she asked the local store owner for a suggestion and he recommended a baby blanket. Without thinking, she went ahead and made the purchase. About a year later, she ran into the groom and he made reference to her gift. He said, 'Âàø ïîäàðóíîê íå ïðèéøîâ íàì íà êîð³ñòü. Õëîïèê íàðîäèâñÿ òà ïîìåð' (Your present wasn't beneficial. A boy was born and he died). It was only then that, with horror, she realized what she had done. Recorded 3 June 2000.

18 Recorded from Olena Ivanivna Zaiets, born 1938, village of Lytviaky, Lubny raion, Poltava oblast, 13 June 2000.

19 For example, interview with Nadiia Vasylivna Kuksa, village of Subotiv, Chyhyryn raion, Cherkasy oblast, 19 August 1998.

20 5 June. Âîíà (the soul) àíãåë³â áà÷èòü.

21 5 June. Áóâàº, ùî ëþäè äîâãî ìó÷àþòüñÿ, òî êîëè âîíè ³ñïîâ³äîâàíè, âîíè ïîìèðàþòü ... ëþäèíà áà÷èòü çëè äóõè ³ âîíè äóøó ëÿêàþòü. Òî ä³ òðåáà ïîçâàòè áàòþøêó íà ³ñïîâ³ä; âîíî äîïîìîãàº.

22 5 June. Ëþäèíà ïðîñèòüñÿ íà çåìëþ.

23 For example, interview with Nadiia Ivanivna Buchma, born 1928, village of Hrechkivka, Smila raion, Cherkasy oblast, 22 August 1998. The folk make a distinction between born witches and learned witches. Born witches are without sin. They usually serve as healers and do harm inadvertently. Unless they intentionally harmed someone or committed other sins, they have no trouble dying. Learned witches and sorcerers made a pact with the devil to secure their power. They are the ones who take a long time to die. See D.K. Zelenin, *Ocherki russkoi mifologii. Umershie neistestvennoiu smert'iu i rusalki* (1916, reprint Moscow: Indrik, 1995).

24 Interview with Halyna Vasylivna Kapas', Kyiv, 27 July 2005. The interview recounted various acts of witchcraft in the city of Kyiv.

25 5 June. Ó ïÿòü ãîäèí, õòî ñü â äâåð³ ñòóêàº; ÿê óçáå÷êà íàêðèòà ÷îðíèì.

26 Dziuba and Khodorivs'ka, 6 June. Techniques included placing a bag of salt on the stomach and the use of fragrant herbs.

27 Dziuba, 5 June. Òðåáà ñêàçàòè, 'Äàé ðóêó,' ³ â³í ïî÷óº òà äàñòü.

28 6 June. Òðåáà ÷èòàòè ïñàëòèð òîìó, ùî äóõè õîäÿòü äî äóøè ³ ³¿

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³ñòåçàþòü, à ÿêùî ÷èòàòè ïñàëòèð òî çàëèøàþòü¿¿ ... Ï ñàëòèð ÷èòàþòü ó íî÷³, â³ä 11 äî 4.

29 Antonina Mykolaivna Shtyka, born 1927 and interviewed 11 November 1998, village of Iablunivka, Bila Tserkva raion, Kyiv oblast, reads the psalter on a regular basis and receives bread for her efforts. She has a hand-written psalter and has recently purchased a new, large-print one.

30 For a full description of the steps of the funeral see, Natalia Havryliuk, 'The Structure and Function of Funeral Rituals and Customs in Ukraine,' *Folklorica* 8, no. 2 (fall, 2003): 7–23.

31 6 June 2000 from Dziuba. Candles were passed back in this fashion at the funeral of Ivan Zakharovych Dolych that I attended in the village of Mryn, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast, on 25 May 2000. This was not always done, however. At a funeral in Ploske, just a few miles from Mryn, the candles were mounted on a frame placed over the coffin. I believe they were placed in the coffin when they burned down and were probably also seen as a means for lighting the way of the deceased.

32 Funeral of Mykola Romanovych Shekenia in Pluzhnyky, Iahotyn raion, Kyiv oblast, 8 June 2000. A very beautiful and elaborate procession took place in Iavorivka, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast, 6 June 2000 at the funeral of Hryhorii Fylypovych Novak.

33 For example, Polina Iakivna Latysh, speaking during the Novak funeral cited above.

34 The funeral of Hanna Petrivna Mateiko, village of Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast, 23 May 2000 had a church service and a sealing of the grave by the priest. During the Soviet period, the substitute 'service' in the graveyard was an oration about the deceased by a funeral worker trained in one of the ritual schools established by the Commission for Soviet Traditions, Holidays, and Rituals at the Ukrainian Council of Ministers. Relatives, friends, and coworkers were then allowed to speak about the deceased. The speeches by the relatives and friends can be seen as substitute laments. Interview with Liubov Petrivna Tomazova, a ritual specialist working in a funeral home, city of Cherkasy, 17 August 1998. In connection with the feminization of religious observance, it should be noted that the majority of Soviet trained ritual workers were female like Tomazova. I have met only women ritual workers during my collection trips. Thus Soviet ritual was also feminine, if not feminized; it was certainly conducted by women.

35 For example, Mykhailo Dmytrovych Koval' describing a suicide in his village, Velykyi Khutir, Drabiv raion, Cherkasy oblast, in an interview conducted 3 June 2000 said that the priest allowed the young man to be

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buried in the cemetery, but would not seal the grave until a year had passed after the date of death.

36 For example, the interview with Shtyka in 1998, cited above.

37 6 June. Íà òðåò³é äåíü äóøà ³äå äî ïðåñòîëà Ãîñïîäíüîãî. Äî òîãî âîíà á³ëÿ ò³ëà.

38 6 June. Äóøà ³äå äî Ãîñïîäà. Ãîñïîä äàº àíãåëà õðàíèòåëÿ ³ àíãåë äóøó âîäèòü ïî òèõ ì³ñöÿõ äå âîíà áóëà â æèòò³ ó íåä³ëüí³ äí³.

39 6 June. Àíãåë ïîêàçóº ³ ïåêëî ³ ðàé.

40 6 June. Íà çåìë³ òðåáà ïðîéòè âñ³ íåâçãîäè ëèøå ùîáè ïîïàñòè â öàðñòâî íåáåñíå. Òàì òàê ãàðíî, ùî íàâ³òü ÿêîáè öÿ ê³ìíàòà áóëà ïîâíà ÷åðâÿê³â ³ íàâ³òü ÿê ùîáè ÷åðâÿê òåáå ¿â, âñåæ òàêè òðåáà òåðï³òè ùîáè ïîïàñòè â öàðñòâî íåáåñíå.

41 6 June. Òàì êíèãà æ³çí³; ³ äîáðè äåëà ³ ïîãàí³.

42 5 June. Òðåáà íå çàáóòè óíÿòè ïóòè. À òî â³í áóäå ñïóòàíèé; íå çìîæå ä³éòè. When I attended the funeral of Hanna Petrivna Mateiko in Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast, on 23 May 2000, several people at the burial asked to make sure that the *puty* had been removed before the coffin was sealed.

43 5 June. The use of 'dead' water, or items that have been in contact with the dead, to 'deaden' pain by sympathetic magic is widespread. It appears in incantations where an island is conjured. On the island sits a dead person. The sufferer then compares his aching body part to that of the dead person and says something like: 'As the dead person's (teeth) do not hurt, so may my (toothache) go away.'

44 This was a common image. In Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast, Hanna Serhiivna Litovka told me on 22 May 2000 that the soul sits on the *rushnyk* draped over the icons and that you can see the soul's shadow in the light of the icon lamp. Many people leave out a glass of water for forty days so that the soul can drink when it needs to. Others leave water and a towel so that the soul can wash.

45 6 June. Òðåáà ÷èòàòè ïñàëòèð ñîðîê äí³â, áî äóøà ìîëèòâè ÷eêàº.

46 6 June. Ìè òàðñòâà ÿê íà êîðäîí³ ìèòíèö³. See also David M. Goldfrank, 'Who Put the Snake on the Icon and the Tollbooths on the Snake? A Problem of Last Judgment Iconography,' *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 19 (1995): 180–99.

47 6 June. Á³ñè íà êîæíîìó ìèòàðñòâ³. Êîëè äóøà ïðîãð³øèëàñÿ, òî âîíè äî íå¿ ïðèñòóïàþòü ³ íå äàþòü âîñõîäó íà íåáî. Ó íèõ âñå íàïèñàíî, ³ ãîäèíà, ³ ÷àñ, ³ äåíü. Âñå, âñå, âñå.

48 6 June. Íà ñîðîêîâèé äåíü (äóøà) ³äå äî Ãîñïîäà Áîãà ³ â³í ð³øàº êóäè.

49 Dziuba, 5 June. Ïðîâ³äíè÷îê ÿê ïàñïîðò â íàø ÷àñ.

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50 6 June. Í åõðåùåí³ ä³òè Áîãà íå áà÷àòü. Ñèäèòü ó Áîãà íà ëàäîí³, àëå íå áà÷èòü.
51 6 June. Ï îì³æ Ïàñõîþ òà Ïðîâîäè, öàðñüêè âðàòà â³ä÷èíåíè. ßê ùî ë þäèíà ïîìèðàº ó ö³é ÷àñ, òî äóøà ³äå ïðÿìî íà íåáî. Íå òðåáà ïðîõîäèòè ìèòàðñòâà òîìó, ùî öàðñüêè âîðîòà â³ä÷èíåíè.
52 6 June. Âîíà (äóøà) ñà ìà çà ñåáå ïîì îëèòèñÿ íå ìîæå ³ íå ìîæå í³÷îãî çì³íèòè. À ÿê ùî çà íå¿ ìîëÿòüñÿ íà çåìë³, òî ä³ áóâàº êðàùå ³ âîíà ìîæå ïåðåäâèãíóòèñÿ ç ãð³øíîãî ñòàíó ó êðàù³é.
53 6 June. Êîëè äóøà ãð³øèëà, òî ï³ñëÿ ñìåðò³ õîäèòü òà ñòóêàº, ãðþêàº, òî õàòó ïîñèïàþòü ñâÿ ùåííèì ìàêîì, ùîá íå õîäèëà. Although Dziuba and Khodorivs'ka did not explain the purpose of the poppy seeds, we know from other sources like Zelenin and Linda Ivanits, *Russian Folk Belief* (Armonk, NY and London, 1989), that the unquiet dead are compulsive. If they see poppy seeds, they experience an overwhelming urge to count them all. This keeps the unquiet dead busy until the break of dawn and offers relief to the living whom the unquiet dead torment.
54 For example, Ploske, Nosivka raion, Chernihiv oblast, 22 May 2000, Hanna Serhiivna Litovka: He ìîæíî ïëàêàòè áî ìåðòâÿê áóäå ó âîä³ ëåæàòè.
55 See, for example, the sections on the unquiet dead (*mertviaky*) in Volodymyr Hnatiuk, *Znadoby do ukrains'koi demonologii*, vols 33 and 34 of *Etnografichnyi zbirnyk Naukovoho tovarystva im. Shevchenka* (L'viv, 1912).
56 Khodorivs'ka, 6 June.
57 6 June. Êàëèòî÷êó íà êëàäáèù³ çàêðèâàòè íå ìîæíî. Õðåñò òóò ñòàâëÿòü ó ãîëîâàõ, àëå òðåáà ùîáè â³í áóâ ó íîãàõ. Êîëè âñòàº íà Ñòðàøíèé Ñóä, òî â³í áåðå ³ ³äå. Â³í õðåñò âçÿâ ³ ï³éøîâ.
58 6 June. Æèòî êèäàþò çà ïîìåðëèì áî æèòî åòî æèòòÿ. ªãî ñ³þòü ³ âîíî ïðîðîñòàº ³ âèíîñèòü íîâèé ïëîä.
59 6 June 2000. Funeral of Hryhorii Pylypovych Novak, age 72.
60 6 June 2000. According to Polina Iakivna Latysh, 'æèíî÷å ïîâìåðòâëÿº.'
61 For a discussion of stove and bread beliefs, see Snejana Tempest, 'Stovelore in Russian Folklife,' in *Food in Russian History and Culture*, ed. Musya Glants and Joyce Toomre (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN, 1997), 1–14. While rebaking may sound bizarre, it is actually medicinally effective. The child is coated with dough and placed in a warm oven. The fumes from the dough likely clear the respiratory track and alleviate colds and other respiratory problems. The dough may also help skin ailments.
62 Olena Boriak, 'The Midwife in Traditional Ukrainian Culture: Ritual, Folklore, and Mythology,' *SEEFA, The Journal of the Slavic and East European Folklore Association* 7, no. 2 (2002): 29–49. Boriak gives examples of the use

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of bread in the delivery of a child. She also talks about various grain rituals performed to ensure that the baby will have a sound body.

63 6 June. Ò³ëî Õðèñòî âå ç õë³áà.

64 5 and 6 June. The breadcrumbs belief is widespread. It was voiced by a number of informants.

65 6 June. Áîã ñêàçàâ: âàì ¿ñòè òå, ùî ³ç çåìë³, à íå òå ùî, íà çåìë³.

66 June 6. Màòè ìîæå öå äëÿ äèòèíè çðîáèòè.

67 The food eaten in conjunction with death is called *kolivo* or *kanun*. When someone enters the home where the body lies in state, he or she is supposed to eat three spoonsful of *kolivo* before doing anything else. The same is true of the wake: each person must begin the meal with three spoonsful of *kolivo*. Only then can other dishes be eaten. *Kolivo* is a grain dish. It was once made out of boiled wheat berries lightly sweetened with honey. During the Second World War, it was bread in sweetened water. Today it tends to be cookies broken into pieces and mixed with water.

68 5 June. Ò³ëêè ïîñòíè ñòðàâè íà ïîìèíêè.

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The Miracle as Sign and Proof: 'Miraculous Semiotics' in the Medieval and Early Modern Ukrainian Mentality

ROMAN HOLYK

Case and Text

The *Teraturgema*, a collection of 'miracles' compiled by Afanasii Kal'nofois'kyi, includes under the year 1636 the striking story of the cure of a blacksmith from Boryspil', a certain Andrii Nahnoinychenko, who was possessed by a frightful demon.[1] At first the blacksmith was kept in prison, because he was such a pest to all about him, but later relatives brought him to the Kyiv Caves Monastery. He arrived with 'face, hands, and whole body' very scratched and lacerated, and he was bleeding from bouncing on the bare boards of the wagon that brought him – he had thrown out all the hay. In addition, 'the possessed man' yelled terribly and cursed everyone 'with diabolical words.' With difficulty they brought him to the lavra cave of St Anthony and bound him with a chain to the pillar 'that drives out devils.' On the next day, after a morning service for the healing of this 'patient,' monks came to him 'with instruction' on how to behave in order to get rid of his illness. The possessed man, however, began to drive away the 'respectable and pious brothers,' digging up the ground and breaking the chain by which he was held; he so frightened everyone present that they fled from the cave. Towards evening on the same day they let the unfortunate, in the company of his wife, loose on the hill by the monastery, but after a short interval of tranquility he again began to do the same 'strange things' as previously, so they isolated him in what served as a prison cell. Here the madman began to rip pieces of wood and bricks from the walls and throw them at people through the window. He 'roared like a lion from hell,' feeling no pain in his bound hands, not even noticing the wounds from the rope, which cut 'to the bone'; he tore

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off his clothing and again scratched his face, 'or rather denuded it of skin.' Furthermore, the stone broken off from the wall scraped his body so much that 'there was not an undamaged spot left on him.' In order to avoid the death of the 'patient,' they again tied his hands and took him from the prison cell into the cemetery, and then to the church, but, aware of this, the sick man tried to flee, because 'the tempter called forth anger.' Then the possessed man completely degenerated; it was 'a matter worthy of tears, for the offences on account of which the Lord so afflicts us ... to look at a man who is not a man, cattle that is not cattle, an animal that is not an animal, at a wonder surpassing the power of nature, at the stature and figure of a man, but not actually on the man himself.' In this state they again took the sick man to the caves, where they bound him to the same pillar as before, and they performed special supplications over him that he might be healed. Finally, the blacksmith fell asleep and unexpectedly 'returned to understanding and began to speak well, because God's invisible power had invisibly healed him.' Then, after a week of prayers to God, 'who deigned to free this man from the yoke of this cruel Pharaoh' (i.e., the devil), they sent the formerly possessed man home, with scars on his body, but healthy in his soul.

At this point the narrative comes to an end, and the commentary, the 'Paraenesis,' begins, which is supposed to analyse the miraculous event from the moral-theological point of view.[2] The leitmotiv of the Paraenesis is, above all, the glorification of the Kyiv Caves Monastery as a holy place, a centre of various miracles. Along with the epigraph in verse that precedes the narrative and the basic text, the commentary constitutes, as it were, the third, final link of a kind of mystico-logical syllogism, namely, its conclusion. The point of the argument is rather transparent. All the signs by which the event described in the text are marked, the central and decisive of which is the miracle, are meant to lead the reader to conclude that the lavra heals. The prayers and binding to the magic pillar, by means of which one can expel an unclean spirit, remove, to begin with, a whole series of external, physical anomalies of the human organism – various 'paralyses, dropsies, blindnesses, mutenesses, deafnesses, lamenesses, stupefactions, fevers, diabolisms.' The rituals of exorcism straighten out the most horrible bodies, even those 'coiled up in a ball,' with twisted and unnaturally bent heads. And most important, 'the cave miracles' eliminate 'anomalies of the soul' – drunkenness, anger, sadness, gluttony, vanity, envy, and thievery, all of which, of course, have sin hidden in them. In some way all

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these sick people are analogies of the biblical Job: first God took away their health, but later gave it back to them. In time, the miraculous metamorphoses would lead to the creation of an ideal reality, in which 'gluttony is to change to moderation, anger to kindness, sadness to joy, vainglory into good reputation, and pride into humility.' Moreover, all the miracles clearly show that the best model for the world and society is the monastery, and the good monk, who daily struggles against the passions and repulses the attacks of the evil one, should be the ideal for everyone. Only by taking the path of consistent asceticism, secular or clerical, can a person receive 'the wreath of unwilting joy' – this more or less sums up the general idea of the commentator (Kal'nofois'kyi).

This narrative, where the rationality and rhetorical imagery of the early modern age is united with the imaginings of the Middle Ages, allows us to see a whole series of diverse problems that excited the early modern and medieval person. But in order to analyse them, we must go beyond the bounds of the text cited, that is, in the final analysis, beyond the bounds of the paradigm in which it was organically inscribed. From this point of view, the present article is a sort of commentary on the margins of another commentary, one possible interpretation of a work that is almost four centuries old.

Semiotics and the History of Ideas

To understand today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, what people thought in the middle of the seventeenth century, and even more so in earlier epochs, is not such a simple thing as it appears at first glance. After three or four centuries not only did words change, as well as their superficial content, but the very realities – whether imagined or real – to which the systems of signs of those times refer have become different.

The concept of history has also undergone change. In our present understanding history is the rise and fall of states and civilizations, the basis of which is the transformation of relations between people, the construction or destruction of certain political, economic, and cultural systems. In the medieval and early modern scheme of things, the motive forces of the world historical process were not so much the rational efforts of discrete individuals or nations, but the miraculous realization of God's original intention. Sacralized history begins with the creation of the world and man, and then goes through radical changes: the expulsion from paradise, the construction of the Tower of Babel and the

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mixing of tongues, the presentation of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, the birth of Christ, his death on Golgotha and resurrection, and the descent of the Holy Spirt and glossolalia, whose purpose was to reunite humanity's systems of signs into a single whole. The last change is to be the Apocalypse and Last Judgment, after which earthly time will be transformed into a heavenly or, for others, hellish eternity. From the sacral history derives also a profane history which encompasses, aside from the biblical tales about Israel, Babylon, and Egypt, an adapted image of ancient civilization and, finally, events of a regional, national, and local character. However, within religious thinking the two parts of history constitute, as it were, a bilingual dictionary, in the sense that in every event one is able to see the equivalent of the other. Just as the Old Testament is a prefiguring of the New, so secular history is a metaphor of sacred history, its hermeneutics and semiology.

If we imagine contemporary semiotics – the science about signs and their meaning – in the form of a picture, then in this picture we can see several basic components. In the centre we can notice the certainty of the power of scientific knowledge that we have inherited from the end of the nineteenth century. As a rule, it is precisely this certainty that pushes into the background the retouched scepticism and plurality of meaning created by the postmodern world view. At the very end, far on the periphery, we see the hidden mystical apophatism borrowed from the sphere of religious thought. In this connection, when it is a matter of faith, science is obliged to refrain from direct formulations; as Wittgenstein said: 'Whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent.' And similarly, mysticism is called upon to keep its distance from scientific cognition.

The Ukrainian medieval and early modern paradigm of religious thought is constructed in reverse order. Its summit, its centre, is mysticism and ascetic practice on the Byzantine model. Gradually this original centre is absorbed by rationalism of the Western type. At first rationalism drifts slowly from the periphery to the centre of the mentality, and then unexpectedly becomes its main, determinative ideal. It is understood, of course, that there is at best a great distance and at worst a break or an abyss between this way of thinking, in which humankind, along with icons, plants, and animals, is an image of God, and the map of the world that we have today, in which the human being as an individual is imagined if not as the subject or object of contemporary science, then as an existence and a project of modern literature.

There are two possibilities for describing the Ukrainian presecular

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civilization of the Middle Ages and early modern era. The first demands that we recognize the religious culture of that time to be a system of views different from modern rationality, but such that we can translate them into the categories of contemporary science and scholarship. The second, by contrast, affirms that such a translation is almost impossible and that both cultures are divided by breaks in the civilizational chain, that they are constructed on totally different principles, that they are worlds of human thought completely separated one from another. Both points of view have their strong and weak sides. Therefore a compromise position seems attractive, one that allows us to see in the presecular culture a half-open as well as half-closed phenomenon. It is half-closed inasmuch as in many ways that culture is truly Other for us. Its texts, in relation to ours, are, in Umberto Eco's formulation, 'closed' to a multiplicity of meanings and express 'a different vision of the world.'[3] It is, though, also half-open, because of the role postulated by the *Annales* school of great continuities which form an extended, very long Middle Ages in the history of European civilization, and also from the point of view of universal models of human actions, emotions, and thoughts that are relatively independent of the historical context.

In addition, Ukrainian medieval and early modern religious culture can itself be understood as a combination of several styles of thought. First we have to make a distinction between what we call today a religiously informed mentality and what we call spirituality. The first encompasses all manifestations of religion, including its quotidian-emotional perception, while the second refers, most of the time, to theological and mystical-ascetical treatment and the experience of the problems of faith. One can also distinguish between the book and icon form of presecular culture. The signs-letters of the book have to be read, deciphered, and on this basis one can create an imagined 'picture' of what the text is saying. Although the icon also functioned as a book for the illiterate, its text is the antipode, and not the analogue, of the latter. Here the images are given first, and then one has not so much to read them as to translate them in words and emotions. The categorial apparatus used by people of the Middle Ages and early modern era also appears to have been stratified. Noteworthy among the concepts they employed are those that safeguarded the wholeness and systematic quality of their view of the world and also those that made the mentality of that time diverse, variegated, and contrastive. To the first set of concepts one could, for example, assign the ideology of a sharp contra-

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diction between sin and righteousness, imagination and reality, body and soul, sacred and profane, spirit and letter, truth and falsehood, knowable and unknowable, earthly and heavenly. In the second set a particulary apt example is what G.G. Coulton (referring to medieval England) noted as the 'childlike' mixing of the sacred and the profane in the everyday perception of the world and, connected with that, the vagueness of concepts, the fuzziness of the borders between many of the categories mentioned above.[4]

Today we imagine what we call culture in different ways. Some, adhering to the principles of structuralism, see in it the interaction of signs and their meanings. Others, guided by the concepts of psychoanalysis, view it as the opposition of the conscious and unconscious, the rational and intuitive, thought and instinct. Others still, professing Marxism in one of its modifications, stress the continuous struggle between classes and their ideological systems. From the point of view of empiricism cultural reality is perceived as the set of works of art and scientific conceptions. Even though for people four hundred years older than us culture was derivative from religion, nonetheless one could notice differences in the understanding of it. With some caution one can speak, for example, about the dualism of religiosity at that time. In it were united elements of folk and official dogmatics, and the imagination of earthly reality as a mirror that reflects the invisible heavenly reality was connected with an almost magical imagining of nature and man as secret signs or hints, in which with some difficulty one could divine the past and the future. Indeed, Ukrainian presecular culture included the logically ordered system of terms and concepts borrowed from West European scholasticism, the harmonious image of the universe which C.S. Lewis once called the 'model of the universe of medieval learning.'[5] Yet much closer to the mark, it seems, is another picture of the world, the elements of which were, in Jacques Le Goff's phrase, trees in the forest of symbols.[6] Therefore it is not possible to say what exactly was dominant in the medieval and early modern world view: optimism or pessimism, laughter or tears, symbolism or, on the contrary, an excessively down-to-earth attitude. It would be naive to consider the people of that time to be atheists or pluralists and of the same mind as Giordano Bruno with his multitude of worlds and truths. And it is also understood that one cannot, notwithstanding the well-known works of Mikhail Bakhtin, recognize as the model of all popular medieval culture the grotesquerie and licence of carnivals, the internal meaning of which is often very distant from today's humour or satire. On the

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other hand, it would perhaps be reckless to imagine all presecular culture only as a golden age in the development of Christian spirituality and all life of that era as a road that led to heaven, although Etienne Gilson was in many respects right about this as well. Rather one must speak of a difficult search for paths to the heavenly kingdom, one of the points of orientation of which was miracles. Today we often analyse the miracle tales contained in saints' lives, sermon collections, and special miracle collections through the prism of their structure, thematic principles, the logic of their images, or the real events in the context of which the miracles occurred. From the point of view of linguistics, folklore studies, or the study of historical sources, these texts appear to be something intermediate between fable, utopia, legend, or simply discourses that belong to the sphere of fictional literature or mythology. But then, in thinking that was permeated with sharp contrasts, with a hyperrealism that was turning into a desire to discern signs everywhere, the narratives of miracles were received precisely as narratives of miracles; although improbable and illogical, they were genuine, real phenomena. It was a different matter when the paradigm of the Middle Ages and early modern era changed, when icons, already filled with symbols, were supplemented by allegorical illustrations and emblems, and when the moral-theological treatment of religious texts appeared along with the poetico-rhetorical 'decorating' of them; then the reception of these texts underwent change.

Miracles were understood in different ways. The theology of that time, we know, divided all extraordinary phenomena into miracles proper (*miracula*), signs of a supernatural character, and anomalies of nature (*prodigia*) on the order of freaks or strange plants. On the level of popular (nonbook) understanding, however, the division was not so refined, and in many cases it did not exist at all. From the simple point of view, a miracle could be all these things: a healing, an eclipse of the sun, and Siamese twins. At the same time all three phenomena were considered to be signs – harbingers of God's will. There was some difficulty in establishing how anomalous such unusual events were. On the one hand, they indeed contradict ordinary natural processes, and precisely for that reason awaken wonder. On the other hand, if nature is guided by God's laws, and God is almighty, and his ways are past finding out, then there is no particular cause for wonder in miracles. After all, the very existence of the world is the result of the miracle of Creation. The narratives about miracles are pervaded with the dichotomy of the naturalness/unnaturalness, expectedness/unexpectedness of the

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events which they recount. One thing that did not provoke major disputes among the majority of medieval and early modern authors was the question of the justice or injustice, the regularity or contingency of the miracle. It was always not contingent and always just.

It seems, then, that the circle of miraculous phenomena was much wider in popular theology than in professional theology. Le Goff had already pointed out this aspect of the problem in his attempt to compile a sort of catalogue of phenomena and imaginings that appeared unusual from the point of view of the European Middle Ages. His classification is quite multidimensional.[7] Thus in his inventory of *mirabilia* Le Goff includes, in the first place, marvellous lands and sites, extraordinary human, anthropomorphic and mixed beings, legendary heroes, and fantastic animals and objects. They, in turn, are distinguished from various techniques of expressing the marvellous (e.g., dreams, visions, metamorphoses, or magic) and diverse functions which the Unusual performs in the culture of the medieval West (compensation, challenges to Christian ideology, and the realization of dreams). Le Goff's scheme in some ways consciously or unconsciously realizes the very method of the Middle Ages of systematizing things and concepts and partially reflects the complicated network of associations that gave unity to the whole culture of that time. Yet there is also here a different principle at work – what for the medieval and later for the early modern scientific and everyday mentality was an invisible reality is in Le Goff's scheme, in spite of many qualifications, relegated to the fantastic world of the imagination. Moreover, in narratives about miracles the functional, instrumental, and material aspects of the marvellous are presented, as a rule, in an unsegregated, synthesized perspective, in which they complement one another; and this too has to be taken into consideration. For this very reason we shall try to examine the understanding of miracles from the standpoint of a mixed classification, which, like Le Goff's, would partially take into account both the numerous medieval treatments of thaumaturgical problems and contemporary views on the medieval and early modern mentality. The basis of such a synthesis is the idea that in the miracle narratives is reflected a significant portion of the categories of the religious and secular mentality of Ukrainian society of the Middle Ages and early modern era. In the ways they imagined the miracle are engaged overtly or covertly the structures of everyday life – the concepts and images of body and soul, sickness and health, the permissible and prohibited. At the same time we can also see in a miraculous perspective the professional, elite culture of the time in

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the form of examples of scientific and artistic thinking. Finally, notions about miracles in large measure influenced the formation of the style of thinking and of the emotional mood of the people of that era. They disciplined and they limited choices, sometimes they frightened, but they also provoked and reinforced an interest in the world, its problems and secrets. Therefore, although with a large dose of conditionality, we can speak of miraculous medicine, geography, zoology, didactics, or jurisprudence – that is, we can speak of the role that the argument of the miracle played not only in religious polemics, but also in scientific and artistic discussions. Let us look in more detail at some of these questions.

Body, Soul, and Illness

In the story from Kal'nofois'kyi's collection, the leitmotif is, as we see, the problem of forms and methods of miraculous medicine and, connected with this, the dilemma of body and soul. The central category in this case is the category of illness as punishment for sin committed by a person or his/her ancestors. Medicine in this instance was considered to be an integral part of saving a person from this sin and from the one who stood behind it – 'the eternal enemy of the human race,' 'the hellish Moor or rider,' 'the invisible tempter.' Thus illnesses of the body were like a reflection of illnesses of the soul. Therefore, although the visible objects of miracles are wounds, paralyses, and epilepsies, the final goal of sacred healing was the removal, for example, of the inclination to steal, of aggression, and of hostility to other people, in general, of deeds and actions that break God's laws. To be sure, the treatment of bodily diseases as well as the understanding of the construction and functions of the human organism in medieval and early modern thought was not uniform and changed several times. Thus in the elite culture of Kyivan Rus' the image of the real body was in fact pushed to the background by the 'canonical body' constructed according to the laws of Byzantine hagiography. The best perspective for the earthly body, subject to sinful instincts and condemned to decompose, is to neglect completely its needs already in this world in order to acquire a crown of glory in the future life beyond the grave. Only such a tamed body can be made if not perfect, then at least a tolerable element of human existence. For example, the saints among the monks of the Kyiv Caves Monastery fasted, often living on only bread and water, and they put on hair shirts, and so later from their relics, racked by difficult ascetic practices, flowed

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myrrh; thus they became a source of healing for the souls and bodies of other people. Aside from monastic bodies, the bodies of princes were also for an extended time within the purview of medieval society. They too, ideally, were called upon to serve as models of asceticism – but secular, military asceticism. There are also substantive differences here. While the model monk should have been emaciated, the ideal warrior, on the contrary, was supposed to be in the bloom of his powers, and his body from head to toe should contain no imperfection. Wounds acquired in battle do not disturb this ideal and even appear to be permanent attributes of the militarized body. On the other hand, it is difficult to say with certainty how the corporal images of the princes were perceived in the old Ukrainian environment because the descriptions in the chronicles and lives of the period are, as a rule, void of individual physical characteristics. If in Western Europe there was the well-known phenomenon of 'wonder-working kings,' to whom Marc Bloch dedicated his now classic work,[8] in the culture of Kyivan Rus' the situation was somewhat more complicated. The prince was at best considered a semisacred being, but his body, by contrast with the bodies of French or English monarchs, could not be a source of miracles while he was alive. It could only be granted this, if at all, after death, as in the case of the very popular holy martyrs Borys and Hlib, who healed the blind, lame, and dumb, or in the episode of the incorruptible body of the uncanonized Volhynian prince Volodymyr Vasyl'kovych related in the Galician-Volhynian chronicle. Of course, both the descriptions of the bodies of holy men who were regarded from birth as heavenly people endowed with unusual properties and the images of the bodies of totally earthly rulers were only schemata. Here the biological person is transformed into a mystical symbol-sign, and in their place appears that *homo quadratus* about whom Umberto Eco writes in his work on medieval aesthetics.[9] This being is born not by the laws of nature, but by precise aesthetic, ethical, and theological canons of the correspondence of the depiction and the depicted. Seen against this background, what is really extraordinary is, for example, the detailed description of the illness of the aforementioned Volodymyr Vasyl'kovych in the Galician-Volhynian chronicle – the first brief history of the bodily sufferings of a fatally ill person in presecular Ukrainian literature. Only here can one speak of the fragmentary appearance of the earthly body, parallel with an attempt to create a portrait in words of a real person and a type of anamnesis of a real illness with its symptoms and syndromes. Nonetheless, even later, when under the influence of West European science

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Ukrainian culture adopted some notions of the Vesalian human as a physiological-anatomical mechanism directed by the four humours (phlegm, choler, blood, and melancholy), the old views did not disappear. Indeed, the bodies of the prophets, saints, and sinners on the icons of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries embody the same conception of the biblical person as the figures of the mosaics in St Sophia's in Kyiv. This person lives in a marvellous allegorical one-dimensional world, supplemented by elements of earthly reality. The person's body, deformed from the point of view of today's aesthetics, is in fact limited to the role of bearer of the soul. This tendency is most strikingly evident in the apocalyptic drama that takes place on icons of the Last Judgment. Here the corporeal shells of souls, whether tormented or, on the contrary, endowed with God's grace, become signs of sins and blessings, symbols of memory in the visual narrative of the Last Day. Of course, in the early modern era humans and their diseases were imagined with more clarity than in the preceding epoch. It is no accident that the narratives of miraculous cures become full of very detailed descriptions of 'personified' bodies, subject, as we see in Kal'nofois'kyi's text, to disintegration and therefore to various diseases. Some of these are specified, terminologized, more or less explained and understandable, while others (and there are quite a few of them) are left at the level of vague descriptions as phenomena without distinct names and thus without obvious and logical causes, as varieties of God's anger.

Insanity, the Human and the Animal

The varieties of God's anger included the psychosomatic disorders mentioned in Kal'nofois'kyi's narrative and particularly various types of insanity. One can distinguish several aspects of the medieval and early modern view of this problem. At their basis lies an understanding of madness as one of the manifestations of otherness, chaos, and destruction. First, madness approximated wildness, and it undermined the boundary between nature and culture, as when a person, such as our blacksmith from Boryspil, became like a terrible beast. Furthermore, in the mentality of the seventeenth century, as in preceding epochs, one can discern a different way of looking at animals, especially at undomesticated ones and at the surrounding environment in general. Manifestations of present-day ecologism in the religious and quotidian mentality of that time were hardly the rule, but constituted unusual exceptions. Even in the early modern period – at least as far as

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Ukraine and Central Europe are concerned – it is difficult to find some new Francis of Assissi. In his love for animals, celestial bodies, and plants, the Italian saint and his followers were long not understood here to be examples worth following. In the Eastern tradition too, of course, only saints could understand 'our little brothers,' but we cannot find here stories of the miraculously Christianized wolf or of sermons to fishes, let alone of the linguistic assimilation to doves and lambs. In everyday culture, of course, only domesticated animals were considered to be one's own, and alien, wild beasts were considered to be objects for hunting and potential food. This antithesis was somewhat softened in religious zoosemiotics, where animals became symbols and allegories of human faults and virtues. Some of them, such as the phoenix, lion, or antelope, functioned in texts as signs of the church and the righteous life, while others, such as the woodpecker, viper, or vixen represented the peril of diabolical temptation. And fantastic or semifantastic beasts, various monsters such as the medieval versions of ancient gorgons, gryphons, dragons, sirens, cynocephali, and basilisks always produced ambivalent emotions. Creatures that lived beyond the bounds of the known world excited curiosity, and also terror. These monsters were completely Other, unnatural, not normal, and therefore, as Michel Foucault noted, they truly seemed to be the products of nightmare or the hallucinations of madness.[10] A person could meet such beasts in the next life. Worms tortured sinners in hell, which was depicted on the icons of that time as the all-devouring jaws of Hades or a double-headed monster upon which sat the devil. The intimacy of human with animal was also shown in the perception of various physical deviations from the norm, which were often endowed with an allegorical meaning. Thus freaks, as half human and half animal, were considered significations, harbingers of unusual events (as a rule, of a negative type – wars, fires, famine, etc.). Philippe Ariès has formulated a well-known thesis on the complete or partial absence of the category of childhood in medieval culture.[11] Leaving for another occasion a more extensive discussion of this theme, let us note that with regards to children a matter of particular attention in the chronicles was precisely newborns with some kind of birth defects. It was not just by chance that the author of the seventeenth-century Lviv chronicle made a note of such micromiracles as the birth of Siamese twins, who were attached *mytus*', i.e., their heads grew out in different directions, and the Ostroh chronicle of the same era recorded for posterity the existence of 'a human wonder' – a half-infant/half-lion who roared and gnashed his

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teeth, lived eight hours, and then died.[12] A similar curiosity was awakened also by adults who were endowed, for example, with unusually large (or small) stature and extraordinary strength – all of them existed on the border between the human and nonhuman world.

The Wild and the Tame, Nature and Civilization

The problem of animals and people is part of another, also little researched, question, that of the opposition nature/culture and its role in the formation of the presecular, particularly religious, Ukrainian mentality. Of course, in everyday life nature was perceived empirically as a concrete field, forest, or river. At the same time there existed a half mystical, half magical understanding of nature's rhythm as a 'megalanguage' or pansemiosis (Umberto Eco's term) by means of which God informs people of his will. Various signs in the form, for example, of solar eclipses were generally understood to be evil portents, while various elemental catastrophes – hurricanes, earthquakes, locusts – were unequivocally perceived as the scourge of God. Sometimes incomprehensible phenomena were understood to be the action of some indefinite powers. For example, the Lviv burgher of the seventeenth century in his chronicle recorded (clearly at second hand) that in 1598 'something wrote on the roofs of houses and something fell on the earth, so that people heard something hitting the earth, and thereafter many cattle died.' A contemporary, however, the Ostroh chronicler, spoke not of some indefinite 'something,' but of miraculous letters that no one could read appearing on Roman Catholic churches and Jewish synagogues and homes.[13] Sometimes natural marvels were considered proof of one's position in religious or political polemics. Therefore the author of the Lviv chronicle, who had no sympathy for the Union of Brest and Catholicism in general, noted with evident satisfaction under the year 1637 a piece of 'news' brought from Rome, that there 'a bloody rain was falling and hail as large as a pound and a half of lead, and a bolt of lightning struck the chapel where the pope's crown is kept.' And to confirm that this was a bad sign, a miraculous monk flew above the city and cried, 'Woe to you, Rome, woe!'[14] Of course, things were not totally unequivocal, especially if one looks at the problem of nature and culture diachronically. On the one hand, the environment in which people lived was a lot more clearly divided than it is today between the untamed, uninhabited, and inaccessible sphere of the wild and the

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space of civilization, between the forest and desert and the network of cities and villages and roads linking them. This was supplemented by the corporate distinction between ours and the others', which began at the level of individual communities and ended at the level of whole peoples. The reasons for going over to the wild state could vary greatly. Among them were the marginalized situation of an individual in society and the crimes often connected with this; insanity, which by definition impels a person to unconsidered actions; and a desire for the ascetic desert life, which also required isolation from society, although, to be sure, this was for one's spiritual perfection. On the other hand, it should be understood that the boundaries between the natural and the cultural were quite fluid. Between the city, which appeared as the embodiment of civilization and tameness, and the forest, which represented the opposite, lay the space of the village, with its specific semi-cultural rhythm of life, in which the time of people's labour merged with the cycle of natural vegetation. Aside from this, there was also the phenomenon of the monastery with its natural simplicity, city book-learning, and liturgical time.

Madness went outside all these frameworks. Of interest in this context is one of the miracles described in Ioanykii Haliatovs'kyi's *Skarbnytsa potrebnaia*. The object of a miraculous healing here was a monk of the Uhornyky Monastery, Parfenii, who 'went out of his mind and walked about crazy.' In this state he arrived at Chernihiv. Here he took off his clothes and walked through the monastery; he tried to go into the city, but the local archimandrite ordered him to be clothed and brought to him. The behaviour of this unfortunate broke all the written and unwritten rules. He rolled his eyes, sang, and jumped before the archimandrite and the brotherhood, and then again tried to take off his clothes. When they locked him into a separate chamber, the 'demoniac' began to beat his head against the door. They then tied him up, frightened lest he 'break open his head to the brain and die.' Tied up, the monk abandoned his resistance, but he spent the whole day yelling 'hoo' in a terrible, 'almost diabolical' voice. Only after special services to the icon of the Yelets'kyi Mother of God, held in that monastery, did the miracle take place. Parfenii 'returned to reason,' and later to the monastic life.[15] One way or another, possession erased the boundaries between the cultured and the wild, and along with this between the sacred and profane, the moral and amoral, the permitted and prohibited. It broke social and natural laws, and therefore it frightened people away.

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Insanity and Death

Another category that borders on the fear of psychic destruction, as we see from the analysed text, is the terror of physical destruction. It remains an open question whether it is more appropriate to consider the emotional make-up of presecular culture as a civilization of joy and laughter, embodied in various celebrations, an epoch of fear and weeping, which accompanied numerous funeral processions, or bipolar, which is probably the most likely. In any case, the category of death, as Philippe Ariès and later Michel Vovelle have shown, occupied one of the central positions.[16] It is possible to distinguish different aspects in the understanding of death of that era, and these distinctions have been made one way or another in the works of both scholars. Thus 'epic' death was, as a rule, close and familiar, peaceful, regulated by the prescriptions of the *ars moriendi*, but along with it we also encounter frightening pictures of destruction in which man meets death as a tragedy and catastrophe. Individual, natural, foreseen death coexisted with collective death induced by war, pestilence, or famine. Honourable death, the death of a martyr or hero, which was considered to be a blessing from God, existed along with shameful death, death as a punishment, execution, all of which were preceded by refined tortures. One could embellish it or even carnivalize it in the form of the danse macabre, but in the end no aesthetic framework could eliminate the disagreeable naturalism of the inevitable end. The unattractive image of death as an act of unexpected agression and death luminous with holiness, the blessed image of eternal repose in God, preceded by the ritual of saying farewell to the world – these two tendencies accompany the whole of Ukrainian presecular culture, from the Testament of Volodymyr Monomakh, written 'as [he] sat upon [his] sledge,'[17] to baroque poetry and drama in which even that which is most terrible becomes part of the game. In sum, death is a many-faced horror, which in diverse ways strives to separate the soul from the body. This is exactly how death was depicted by the beds of sinners on icons of the Last Judgment. As a rule, Death was an ungainly, unseemly creature, disproportionately large compared to other personages in the composition. Only in one instance, on a sixteenth-century icon from Dolyna, Death is transformed into a knight, who slays the dying man with a great sword. Nonetheless, in its hands too is the traditional scythe, and other attribute tools (lance, saw, ax, and even a musket) are signs not only of the author's sense of humour, but also symbols of fear and pessimism. They point to the starting

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conception of these depictions – Death is ugly, but ubiquitous, one can laugh at it, but the human confronting it is powerless.

In relation to death and illness the miracle fulfilled a double role. Thus the relics of saints, when called upon by the righteous, can heal or postpone a fatal end to an indefinite time, but when sinners lacking faith try to steal or profane them, they can cause grave disease or even unexpected death. Kal'nofois'kyi's *Teraturgema* relates a story, for example, about a certain Martin, a Calvinist, who 'blasphemed against icons in a base manner'[18] and ridiculed the life of the holy fathers and the incorruptibility of their remains; as punishment he fell blind and was forced to have recourse to the aid of St Anthony of the Caves, in order to regain his sight by a miracle in the opposite direction, a miracle of forgiveness. In another case described in the collection, a certain nobleman fell from a bridge into the water and drowned. They tried by all sorts of methods to reanimate him, but even after rolling him on a barrel (which was considered a very effective method), his body remained immobile and only prayer to the holy fathers of the Caves returned the poor fellow to life.

The hour of death was also considered a time of signs of the Other reality beyond – signs that were tranquil or terrifying, veracious or deceptive. Sometimes the interpretations of visions on the eve of death were diametrically opposed. The author of the Lviv chronicle particularly emphasized that Tomasz Zamoyski, as an enemy of Orthodoxy, saw 'hell open and the fire of gehenna,' but Catholic priests reassured him, saying 'that it is only purgatory, fear not.'[19]

Imagination and Reality

The problem of truth and illusion was very much an issue for the medieval and early modern mentality in general and for their religious mentality in particular. Someone possessed by a demon, as, for example, our blacksmith, lived in the external, real world open to all, but submitted himself to the laws of his own reality closed to others. Therefore his actions, although perhaps filled with some subjective sense, were accessible only to the sick person; they were deprived of any objective sense for society. They were perceived as signs without meaning. Thus madness could not be cured as long as the semiotics of the individual fantasy by which a person was guided was cut off from the intersubjective semiotics by which his contemporaries were guided. The best illustration of how medieval and early modern culture under-

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stood the relation between imagination and reality was the concept of the dream as an oneiric reality, in some measure supplementing visible reality and in some measure opposing it. In the classification of that age, dreams were divided into those from God, which were prophetic, capable of foreseeing some events in the future, those from the devil, which were capable of arousing fear and temptation, and those that might be called everyday dreams, which reflected things and structures with which a person came into contact in day-to-day existence. Under the influence of West European scholastic theories, dreams were also interpreted as natural indications of the character of their owner. It was thought that sad dreams were dominant among melancholics, that cholerics dreamed of fights, the sanguine of bright colours, while among phlegmatics the appearance of images connected with the element of water was characteristic.[20] The religious, mystical dream was easily transformed into something close to it by nature – the vision, which was a miracle. The models for this were, in the first place, the dream of Jacob in the Bible who saw angelic orders going up and down the heavenly ladder and the prophetic dreams of Pharaoh that Joseph interpreted. The structure and plot of medieval miraculous dreams were quite varied, but mainly in this other, oneiric reality, the saints, led by the Mother of God or even by Christ himself, appeared to people; they often gave advice or issued warnings or commands or else they said nothing. Often these dream visions contained fairly striking mystical-everyday pictures of an invisible miracle. For example, Ioanykii Haliatovs'kyi's *Nebo novoie* describes three dreams of 'the hieromonk Ioanykii from the Halych district.' The first time, having fallen asleep in a cell in the skete, he saw the Virgin Mary as she walked in heaven from the east to the south, dressed 'in a silk green garment in the shape of a saccos,' and in front of her and behind her were two assemblies of angels 'in white clothes.' When the Mother of God came up to the monk, he began with compunction to ask forgiveness for his sins, so much so that he could not see her face through his tears. A second time, in Lviv, Ioanykii again dreamed about the Mother of God, but now in black garments, and she even spoke with him in a symbolic style about John Damascene, whom she called an angel 'on account of ... his pure life'; once again the monk begged her forgiveness. The third time, again in Lviv, the vision became more substantial and more dynamic. This time the monk had an apparition of an icon of the Mother of God, 'who gazed at him with an angry face and angry eyes,' and later began to move and flew to him 'like a bird.' Ioanykii fell on the ground, his arms

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spread out into a cross, and began to pray, in fact so loud that he woke himself up. For the author of the collection, Ioanykii Haliatovs'kyi, these dreams, especially the last one, the most frightening one, were an expression of a coherent 'divine pedagogy.' 'The Mother of God,' he remarked, 'punished her servant and client [*sic*], with her anger ... with temporal punishment, in order to relieve him of eternal punishment.'[21] But for the medieval and early modern person, visions were not always good; often their meaning could be ominous or even pernicious. It is no accident that in the religious culture of that time narratives about the struggle of ascetics with persistent demons, who tried to lure the monks off the correct path, were quite popular. Already the patericon of the Kyiv Caves Monastery described in detail, for example, the temptations of St Feodosii, for whom the demons organized a regular concert in his cell – they yelled, played on various instruments, and rode about on carts. Another of the brothers was prevented from making food by 'the evil spirits' – they spilled the flour and the kvass for bread. To another monk appeared an entire procession of radiant figures with Christ at their head; in this case the demons succeeded in deceiving him, so that later it took a long time to free him from the demons' authority.[22] Evil visions disorient and lead to perdition: only the sign of the cross or special church services could put an end to their illusory action and aim a person in the correct direction. The invisible world with its demons was considered just as dangerous as wild nature with its elements. If we consider the folk mythology of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century to be a vestige of the non-elite mentality of the Middle Ages and early modern era, then the number of imaginary-real worlds of that time (and at the same time the problems associated with them) becomes larger. So, in addition to the traditional saints and demons, there appear various intermediate forms, which C.S. Lewis, having in mind West European culture, called 'longlivers' (*longaevi*).[23] According to folk belief, various *netlenni, neprosti, aridnyky, shcheznyky, upyri, mavky, rusalky, rakhmany, chuhaistry*, and *vovkuny* not only filled the space between heaven, earth, and hell, but also were to be found alongside people, limiting their freedom of action.[24] Their presence in nature and their pseudomiraculous (according to official doctrine) power, for example, the ability to transform themselves, naturally frightened people and did not instil optimism. Of course, this was not a matter of *dvoievir'ia*, the 'dual faith' that some scholars think they have found traces of in the world view of Kyivan Rus'. Rather, we should be speaking about a tripartite structure of popular religious notions of the

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Ukrainian Middle Ages and early modern period. In the culture of that era we can distinguish a sphere composed of the categories of official theology, supplemented by a sphere of 'folklorized' interpretations of these concepts and, finally, a level that had no relation to Christianity, but existed parallel to it, not as an alternative, but as a supplement. It is another matter to what extent our ideas about folk mythology, taken from rather late materials, can be transferred to earlier periods. If over the centuries the linguistic, esthetic, and ideological system within the framework of literate culture underwent change, then we can assume the same to be true of other cultural levels. The boundary between appearance and reality in the medieval and early modern mentality seems to us today very indistinct – a symptom of this is the existence of two contradictory points of view on the problem. Some medievalists are emphatic that there existed in the culture of that time a clear separation of the visible and invisible, the earthly and heavenly, this world and the next. Others, on the contrary, insist on the absence of such a delimitation. It is altogether possible that in the Middle Ages and early modern times there also was not a unified point of view on this issue. On the one hand, the narratives about miracles speak for the absence of some insurmountable barrier between the earthly and higher (or, more generally, other) reality: the saints and their antagonists interfere in human affairs without hindrance. On the other hand, hell, heaven, and earth remained separated from one another since, as the forefather Abraham said in the Gospel parable of the rich man and Lazarus, 'they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us' (Lk 16:26): This naturally posed the problem of illusion – not everything that appeared to be a miracle really was one, not all that was perceived in the course of ecstatic prayer was the work of heavenly powers, not every dream was a genuine vision. The theme of true and false miracles acquired particular importance during the religious polemics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Throughout this very heated discussion between Orthodox, Uniates, and 'Latins,' each side tried to find 'miraculous signs' that would expose the falsehood of the opponents' position. The logic was like this – if during the liturgy of one of the confessions, for example, wine turned into water (and this theme was repeated several times), then all theological and nontheological arguments in favour of that doctrine did not proceed from God, but were made up (at best) by people.

The disputations of that time over the role and meaning of fantasy, truth, and deceit lead us one way or another to the same problem to

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which the logic of the present article also conducts us: to the question of the ideal and real nature of texts and of systems of signs in general.

Spirit, Letter, Symbol, and Sign

The division into literal, allegorical, and mystical exegesis of sacred texts, introduced already by Origen and later transferred also beyond the boundaries of language, underwent various modifications in later times. In the most complex theological systems the number of various meanings of one and the same biblical narrative could reach several dozen (as in the teaching of the famous Calabrian abbot Joachim of Fiore), but on the mundane level it was even hard to differentiate the two basic ones: the 'lower,' relatively comprehensible, direct, and the 'higher,' less accessible, symbolic. Inasmuch as the early modern and medieval religious mentality was fairly stratified and multivectorial, it was not rare for there to emerge (to use the expression of Paul Ricoeur) a 'conflict of interpretations,' which often became a real conflict between people.[25] Thus the biblical (analogic, mystical or spiritual-pneumatic) understanding of language as a miracle in the spirit of the beginning of the Gospel of John or of the hesychast model was known primarily in theological circles and among the ascetics in monasteries. But even in this environment the ideas – borrowed from Byzantium via Bulgaria – of mental prayer, the renunciation of words and thoughts in favour of religious emotions and the mystical 'light of Tabor,' found little resonance and less development. The rhetorical-logical understanding of texts as syllogisms or theorems, or, on the contrary, as emblems, symbols, and metaphors also only interested a limited circle of intellectuals, even though they tried by all sorts of means to simplify and popularize these approaches. In spite of the relative closedness of this style of thought, a good portion of the presecular Ukrainian literature of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries was composed precisely on its basis. The most accessible for the simple people, from this point of view, aside from the everyday, practical understanding of words and things, was, of course, their poetical-magical treatment, in which stereotypes of the learned culture became overgrown with semifolkloric images. Unfortunately, though, we have too little material to speak with certainty about the mechanisms and dimensions of such transformations in medieval and early modern culture. Miracle collections, with which this study is concerned, represent in fact the central, the widest (in terms of the number of preserved texts) layer of the interpretations

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of religious ideas. Therefore mystical phenomena here are often subject to rational analysis, and miraculous signs, along with others, become elements of baroque games of the intellect, for which all culture is a plaiting together of various analogies, a system of distorting mirrors, in each of which one and the same phenomenon is reflected differently. Kal'nofois'kyi's *Teraturgema* also reflects this conscious or subconscious tendency. Divided into numerous chapters, the book on miracles is precisely a congeries of various systems of signs, called upon to explain, complement, and simply embellish one another. At the same time all these signs – emblems and emblematic verses, symbolic engravings and topographical maps, catalogues, lists, and indexes of sources, together with their forewords, treatises, epigraphs in verse, miracles and paraeneses/conclusions, are letters of one single Text, which is supposed to indicate and name, judge and teach. Only thus can it achieve its final goal and, together with other pious texts, improve the imperfect popular religiosity, bringing it closer to the elite version.

Indeed, the time has come to say a few words about the spirit and letter of this article itself and to answer the question: To what extent do such texts of the book culture of the Middle Ages and early modern period, in the manner of various miracles, reflect the religious thinking of the society as a whole, and not just of some particular group? In my opinion, religion and mentality should be understood not just from the point of view of their stratification, but also from the point of view of the whole. In other words, we can think about the spirituality of that era as a continuum that unites all the highest achievements of the mystical-theological experience of the intellectual elites as well as the most primitive popular religious experiences of the lower classes and the marginalized. Often the low religion is sharply distinguished from the high religion as something naive from the serious or simply complicated. Yet it is important to remember that today's standards of naivety or simplicity do not entirely correspond to those of that time. Notices about miracles and unusual events are the best examples. Wonders and anomalies caused confusion among both the illiterate and barely literate and refined rationalists. Obviously, we cannot say with certainty how great was the faith that one or the other group put in various miraculous rumours as compared to our own time. But one must not forget that the structure of knowledge about the world was different then than it is now, so that many of today's axioms were not even considered back then; on the other hand, many things that were completely obvious to the medieval or early modern observer have become

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invisible or absurd from the standpoint of our own thought. It is doubtful that the foundation of today's mentality is, for example, Newtonian physics, not to mention Einstein's theory of relativity. In a certain sense our day-to-day semiotics do not differ much from that of the Middle Ages or even antiquity. We still observe that every morning the sun 'rises' and later 'sets,' and along with the sun appear or disappear the 'morning' or 'evening' 'star' – just as our ancestors did before the Copernican revolution. In general, from the point of view of the study of culture, what is important is not just the fact that two or more subcultures exist within one so that there is a social differentiation and imprinting of thought; their interaction, their synthesis in a single system is also important.

We began this work using a model analogous to that which Michel Foucault once used to begin his now classic work on the history of the prison system, *Discipline and Punish*.[26] In the first few pages he tries with the help of (perhaps all too naturalistic) citations from the French press of the eighteenth century to show how a normal person on the scaffold becomes a tortured body, upon which the authorities by violence inscribe their horrible signs as proofs of social justice. But the extract from Kal'nofois'kyi's *Teraturgema*, on which the beginning of this article was based, demonstrates something completely opposite. Here a miracle, as a sign and proof of divine justice transforms the body tortured by 'the infernal horseman' into an ordinary person, as he was before his illness. In spite of all the dissimilarity between the two approaches, there is in them a common object – the human person, punished or, on the contrary, pardoned.

In conclusion, we must turn for an analogy to another well-known work of the French philosopher, on the archeology of the human sciences, *The Order of Things*.[27] In the conclusion to this work Foucault put forward his paradoxical thesis on the death of Man, who, from the standpoint of scientific thought, should be transformed into a series of structures just like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea becomes, as the waves erase it, merely the grains of the sand. What then is the phenomenon of the religious person from the point of view of Ukrainian medieval and early modern culture? Summarizing, we can say that he or she is not something uniform. At the level of elite scientific and artistic conceptions, alongside the image of the mystical person there gradually appears the figure of the biological being, who in turn begins to be treated as *homo ludens*. On the level of the traditional, everyday notions, dominating, most likely, was the iconic image of the

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person as a sign, composed of a corruptible body and an immortal soul: the image of a small person praying on his knees before the face of the great God, the image of the humble, mortal servant, dependent on the mercy of the Eternal Master of Souls and Bodies, the image of the sinner, who trembles before the Terrible Judge and hopes for the miracle of forgiveness.

NOTES

1 *Seventeenth-Century Writings on the Kievan Caves Monastery*, ed, with an introduction by Paulina Lewin, Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature, Texts, vol. 4 (Cambridge, MA, 1987), 284–7. All subsequent quotes are from this account.
2 Ibid., 286–7.
3 Umberto Eco, *The Open Work*, trans. Anna Cancogni (Cambridge, MA, 1989), 7.
4 G.G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama: The English Scene from Conquest to Reformation* (Cambridge and New York, 1946), 187.
5 C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge, 1964), 11.
6 Jacques Le Goff, *Medieval Civilization 400–1500*, trans. Julia Barrow (Oxford, 1988), 332.
7 Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago and London, 1988), 34–40.
8 Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. J.E. Anderson (London and Montreal, 1973).
9 Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, trans. Hugh Bredin (New Haven and London, 1986), 35–6.
10 Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York, 1965), 20.
11 Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick (New York, 1962).
12 O.A. Bevzo, ed., *L'vivs'kyi litopys i Ostroz'kyi litopysets'. Dzhereloznavche doslidzhennia*, 2nd ed. (Kyiv, 1971), 104, 126.
13 Ibid., 102, 130.
14 Ibid., 116–17.
15 Ioanykii Haliatovs'kyi, *Kliuch Rozuminnia*, ed. I.P. Chepiha (Kyiv, 1985), 363.
16 See Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York,

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1981); and Michel Vovelle, *La Mort et l'Occidente de 1300 à nos jours* (Paris, 1983).

17 Samuel Hazzard Cross, trans. and ed., *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian Text*, The Mediaeval Academy of America 60 (Cambridge, MA, 1973), 206.

18 *Seventeenth-Century Writings*, 245.

19 Bevzo, *L'vivs'kyi litopys i Ostroz'kyi litopysets'*, 118.

20 V.I. Shynkaruk, et al., eds, *Pam"iatky brats'kykh shkil na Ukraini kinets' XVI–pochatok XVII st. Teksty i doslidzhennia*, Pam"iatky filosofs'koi kul'tury ukrains'koho narodu (Kyiv, 1988), 415.

21 Haliatovs'kyi, *Kliuch Rozuminnia*, 312.

22 *The* Paterik *of the Kievan Caves Monastery*, trans. Muriel Heppell, Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature 1 (Cambridge, MA, 1989), 46 (concert and prevention of food preparation), 206–7 (radiant figures).

23 Lewis, *Discarded Image*, 122–38.

24 N. Khobzei, 'Mizh svitom i antysvitom: cholovik, shcho mozhe peremitu-vatysia na vovka,' in *Hutsul's'ki hovirky. Linhvistychni ta etnolinhvistychni doslidzhennia* (Lviv, 2000), 179–91.

25 Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation,* trans. Denis Savage (New Haven and London, 1970), 20–36.

26 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, 1995), 3–6.

27 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York, 1994), 385–7.

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Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Russian Orthodoxy: Sin and Virtue in Cultural Context

VALERIE A. KIVELSON

What is more evil than a lion among four-legged beasts and than a serpent ... slithering along the ground? An evil woman is more evil than all of these. There is nothing on earth greater than a woman's evil. Through a woman, our first forefather, Adam, was driven out of paradise ... O sharp, evil weapon of the devil!

From a seventeenth-century manuscript of the 'Slovo' of Daniil Zatochnik[1]

As a rule, gender studies and Orthodox religious history have had little to say to one another over the years. Gender studies has not received a warm welcome in Orthodox circles, and historians of women, sexuality, and the body have had little positive to say about the strictures of official Orthodoxy.[2] Thus, it is difficult to get a clear sense of what the official Russian Orthodox line on gender and sexuality was during the early modern period, much less to hazard a guess at what popular religious notions might have been or how they affected lived experience. The task of this paper is to explore ideas about gender and sexuality as expressed in a number of ecclesiastical and more 'popular' texts produced in the Muscovite era. After reconstructing the ideas presented in these literary texts, we will assess the relevance of religiously inspired textual images by comparing them to Muscovite practice. This excursus through Muscovite sources ultimately offers a rather new perspective for assessing the relative weight of sexual as opposed to other forms of sin, and the manner in which Muscovites thought about gender, sexuality, and virtue.

According to most scholars who have devoted any thought to the subject, Orthodox Russian culture associated women with sin, particu-

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larly with sexual sin, and cautioned men of good faith to avoid them as much as possible. Certainly, there is plenty of evidence to support this interpretation. Clerical writers, repeating the wise words of the church fathers, secured a place in the literary annals for an ugly Christian misogyny, based on antipathy for females in general and for the sexual danger that they posed in particular. While making the occasional nod to 'the good wife,' 'a husband's crown and consolation,' Orthodox authors left a more exuberant record of condemnation of the female sex.[3] Carrying this hostile logic to its extreme, church writers concluded that not only evil women, but even good women threatened the purity and salvation of the vulnerable men who ogled them:

> Do not look at virgins lest you be tempted. Avert your eyes from a beautiful woman and do not glance at another's beauty. From a woman's goodness many have perished, and from her friendship a fire flares up. Do not speak with a woman at a feast, lest your soul become inclined toward her.[4]

In her pioneering book on the subject, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs*, Eve Levin explains that, 'Slavic clerical writers ... explicitly accept[ed] the notion that the Devil was the source of sexual desire (*blud*).'[5] Women were viewed as particularly susceptible to this particular form of temptation, giving in to the devil's whispered advice and leading males astray. As Levin points out, the connection between sexual sin and the female sex is illustrated by the depiction of the lewd and the debauched, whether human or diabolical, male or female, with pendulous breasts.[6] Women, sex, and sin, then, went hand-in-hand, with one evoking the other two.

The same invidious association of women, sex, and sin surfaces in a number of nonecclesiastical sources, suggesting that it crossed over into a popular, or secular, milieu. By innuendo, Daniil Zatochnik places sexual sin squarely in the female camp, attributing other kinds of sins to men: 'A maiden ruins by her beauty; and a man by his thievery.'[7] 'The Tale of Savva Grudtsyn,' a seventeenth-century narrative aimed at a secular, urban audience, deals explicitly with issues of sexuality and sin, and so allows us to examine the two within a more popular religious framework.[8] This tale confirms the impression that Muscovites saw women as acting to corrupt men and lead them into sexual sin. The seductress in the tale leads the innocent young Savva into fornication and adultery. Initially, the tale places the blame on the devil: 'The

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enemy, the devil, hates all things good; having seen this man's virtuous way of life, he decided to upset his household by inducing Bazhen's wife to the vile sinfulness of fornication with the young man to corrupt her with love of Savva.' However, corruption appears to be particularly easy where a woman is concerned. 'Woman's nature' gives her an intuitive sense of how to ensnare the innocent young man. 'Woman's nature (*zhenskoe estestvo*) knows how to lead the minds of young men to fornication. And thus Savva, through the perfidy of this woman, or, better to say, by the devil's envy, stumbled and fell into the trap of fornication.'[9] Lest we miss the point, or somehow misunderstand the nature of their sin, the author provides us with overwrought, repetitive descriptions of exactly what it was that they did: 'They sinned endlessly, and constantly, but still they were unable to satiate their desires. And for a long time they remained in filthy sin. Even on Sundays and on the Lord's holy days and, having forgotten their fear of God and the hour of their deaths, they kept fornicating, wallowing like swine in excrement.'[10] The unpleasant 'Tale of the Merchant Grigorii and How His Wife and a Jew Wanted to Kill Him' echoes these themes. The young and beautiful wife 'through the machinations of the devil, fell into adultery with a Jew,' and the narrative unravels from there.[11]

These passages and the general tone of the scholarly literature produce a convincing impression of a Russian Orthodoxy that shared many features with the more familiar teachings of Western Christianity: susceptible to the devil's enticement, inherently lecherous and prone to inordinate desire, pernicious to the souls of the males of the species, women were true daughters of Eve. These and many other sources illustrate the persistent association made between women and sexual sin in Russian Orthodox thought, both official and popular, in the early modern period. This summary, indeed, reflects the general consensus of the scholarly literature on the topic.

However, a consistent methodological problem haunts this work, both in Russian and in Western variants. The source base thoughtfully and deliberately selected to reveal Muscovite (or Western) ideas about sexuality and gender necessarily foregrounds issues of sexuality and gender. A collection of penitentials devoted to eking out confessions of specifically sexual transgressions, when paired with the few spicy sexual escapades in Muscovite secular literary works, and their most highly sexualized iconography, inevitably gives an impression of a religious culture preoccupied with sexual sin and dedicated to its eradication. Methodologically, this presents problems. A study of late-twentieth-

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century pamphlets and publications on Dutch Elm Disease might convey the impression of a society obsessed with Dutch elms, if those publications were not situated in a broader context of other concerns. In European historiography, studies that focus on denunciations of women as susceptible to the devil's seductions because of their insatiable lust similarly reach foreordained and rather exaggerated conclusions about the salience of the linkage of women, sex, and sin in the early modern West.[12] In order to assess how sexual sin fit into a broader vision of sin and virtue, one needs to view a wider range of sources.

While Orthodox Muscovites of varying degrees appear to have understood that sexual transgression was sinful, was to be avoided, and often could be blamed on women, they also had plenty of other vices and transgressions to preoccupy them. The danger of analysing isolated passages apart from the broader context is that such analysis removes ideas about women and notions of sexuality from the world in which they were situated. Deprived of cultural context, their significance is rendered unintelligible. In the following pages, I will attempt to return these isolated insights into a more complete survey of sources on men as well as women, and on sin more broadly conceived. Lust, after all, is just one of the seven deadly sins, and while it may be a favourite in the Western canon, thanks in large part to St Augustine, it need not take pride of place universally. After considering the implications of a two-gendered tour through Muscovite proscriptive sources, and exploring the relative weight of sexual sin as opposed to other sins in the Muscovite pantheon, this essay will turn in its final pages to an examination of the impact of Orthodox visions of sex and gender in Muscovites' lived experience.

Orthodox theologians writing in the nineteenth and twentieth century tend to express minimal concern about women's sexuality, but they consistently emphasize the religious importance of the corporeal humanity of both Mary and Jesus. The brilliantly insightful historian of Russian Orthodoxy, George Fedotov, explained that the Russian Orthodox tradition found the condition of motherhood far more arresting than the condition of virginity of the Mother of God. Not only was she consistently called 'the Mother of God,' but Orthodoxy stressed the physical pain and emotional suffering that she endured as a mother. Never endorsing the concept of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin either, the Orthodox Church stresses the complete humanity of the birth process as a positive good, a feature to be celebrated as a link between the Mother of God and ordinary mortals, just as the humanity

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of Christ is held up as an irreducible element of the miracle of the Incarnation.[13] Fedotov draws our attention to the tenderness and pain simultaneously characterizing the face of the Mother of God in Russian iconography. Rather than the youth and beauty that raise her above other women in many Western renditions, it is her maternal love and suffering that identify her in the Russian tradition. It is her humanity, and in particular her maternal, that is, female, physiology, that authorize her claims on human reverence and devotion (see p. 105).[14]

Physicality, the body, is itself a site of suspicion in much Western theology, and the body merits its share of suspicion in Orthodoxy as well (as dramatically demonstrated by that most extreme off-shoot of Russian Orthodoxy, the self-castrating sect of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries).[15] Hair-shirts, heavy chains, and mortification of the flesh were not unknown in the Russian tradition, but the more mainstream tradition emphasized moderation over mortification. As Horace W. Dewey and Natalia Challis point out, extremes of pious virtuosity were viewed with suspicion and were often greeted with censure rather than with awe in early Russia. The commitment to moderation continued to dominate in the religious teachings of the Muscovite period as well, where the extremes of ascetic self-deprivation never gained much popularity.[16] Orthodoxy in its Muscovite guise accepted the miracle of creation as a gift from God, to be glorified and celebrated. In Russian portrayals of nature in the seventeenth century, the physical world itself retained the glow of God's handiwork. God's immanence bestowed a wonder and glory upon the material world.[17] The human body, as a part of divine creation, deserved respect. The human body was further ennobled by the Incarnation, when God himself assumed human form. St Athanasius wrote of this mystical moment that 'God became human that we might be made god.'[18] Orthodox teaching took a surprisingly positive attitude towards the physical world, including a vision of the body, the realm of the flesh, as not only something to tolerate, but as a vehicle for the divine. Created in the image of God himself, the human body, male or female, could not occupy a fully negative theological space.

The intertwined themes of sex, sin, and gender in a Christian cosmology hark back, inevitably, to Adam and Eve and original sin. Since the fifth century, original sin has been strongly identified with sexual sin in the Western tradition, thanks in large part to the influence of St Augustine. Peter Brown explains that for Augustine, 'the way that sexual drives escaped the control of the will was a peculiarly resonant symptom of the frailty inherited by mankind from Adam's first act of disobe-

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Tikhvin Mother of God, ca. 1600, Moscow. Ikonen-Museum Recklinghausen.

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dience.' While other sins might bring more immediate devastation on mankind, 'sexuality and the grave stood one at each end of the life of every human being. Like two iron clamps, they delineated inexorably mankind's loss of the primal harmony of body and soul.'[19] As Elaine Pagels writes, 'By the beginning of the fifth century, Augustine had actually declared that spontaneous sexual desire is the proof of – and penalty for – universal original sin ... Augustine, one of the greatest teachers of western Christianity, derived many of these attitudes from the story of Adam and Eve: that sexual desire [Brown would add, disconnected from the will] is sinful; that infants are infected from the moment of conception with the disease of original sin; and that Adam's sin corrupted the whole of nature itself.'[20]

The Eastern Orthodox Church preserved a different image of the meaning of the Fall. In both Orthodox and Western Christian teaching, the actual sin committed in the Garden of Eden was defiance of God's command, not sex. In Orthodoxy, however, the consequences, though painful and deadly, were not congenital. In other words, because of Adam's fall, mankind became mortal and subject to a host of ills, but the sin itself was Adam's, and future generations do not bear the burden of his sin from birth. Instead, Orthodox Christians are born to a world already doubly redeemed by the Mother of God and then by the Incarnation. They are further cleansed by the sacrament of baptism, and they are then free to accumulate their own record of piety or sin. The sexual taint of the Garden of Eden does not hover over each new baby, nor does the sexual genesis of life count against the newborn coming into the world.[21] Such at least is the theology presented by modern theologians and historians of the church, but it is borne out in sources of the early modern period as well. 'Adam's Fall,' not Eve's, is most often commemorated in Muscovite writings, although an apocryphal tradition preserved 'Eve's Confession.'[22] 'Adam's Lament,' preserved in texts from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries and presumably sung during Lent, gives voice to Adam's regret for the loss of paradise, 'created for me and for Eve,' which he lost through his own unspecified sinfulness.[23] When the sin is named, it is the pair's refusal to follow God's explicit orders, not their sexual transgression. Eve occasionally takes the blame, as in the epigraph above from Daniil Zatochnik, or in a widely copied passage from John Chrysostom, but more generally Adam or both take centre stage.[24] When the original couple is depicted in icons or miniatures, their often strikingly sexless bodies seem to emphasize the asexual essence of their transgression (see p. 107).[25]

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Adam and Eve in paradise, 16th-century miniature. From L.A. Dmitriev and D.S. Likhachev, eds., *Pamiatniki literatury Drevnei Rusi. XVII vek. Kniga pervaia* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1988), unnumbered plate.

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One would not want to go too far with this line of argumentation. The human form may have basked in the reflected glory of the Incarnation, but sexuality did not. Like any Christian variant, Russian Orthodoxy condemned sexual sin and placed chastity above any form of sexually active life. The monastic life was the ideal; abstinence within marriage was second best. Levin writes, 'Sexuality was evidence of the imperfection of the world. Consequently, the closer human beings came to reflecting the perfection of heaven, the less sexuality would be in evidence.' In paradise, the resurrected dead would enjoy sexless and ungendered bodies.[26] Nonetheless, as Levin's work has so clearly demonstrated, the church took a wonderfully practical approach towards sex and sexuality in this world. Acknowledging that humans were sexual beings, the church required its parish priests to marry and to stay married. Church penitentials listed dozens of imaginative forms of sexual deviance worthy of investigation, but prescribed remarkably minimal forms of penance, particularly for what we might term 'victimless sins.' The church, according to Levin, reserved its harshest condemnation and punishment for sexual crimes that threatened to disrupt community and social order, rather than pegging the response to the actual nature of the acts committed. This pragmatic accommodation is seen most clearly in ecclesiastical responses to infanticide: where the child was killed according to an economic calculation, in order to preserve a marginally subsisting family unit, the church took a lenient stance; where the child was killed to hide adultery, which could have disrupted legitimate marriages, the response proved far fiercer.[27] As the allusion to infanticide suggests, sexual sins were more easily pinned on women, who carried the fruit of their transgressions to term, but male sexual sins garnered strong and equally pragmatic responses from the church. As Nancy Kollmann's work on prosecution for rape demonstrates, male sexual misconduct met with harsh condemnation, from both ecclesiastical and secular authorities.[28]

A number of 'popular texts,' written in the late seventeenth century, presumably by secular authors or at least for secular audiences, contain valuable information on the ways that gender and sexuality were lived or viewed in a Muscovite context. These tales provide an important link between prescriptive ecclesiastical sources and the evidence of lived, secular experience that we glimpse in trial records. Secular literature was a newly evolving concept in seventeenth-century Russia, and these texts reveal a lay culture still fully integrated with religious ways of thinking. The works examined here – 'The Tale of Savva Grudtsyn,'

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'The Tale of Misery Luckless Plight,' 'Uliana Osor'ina,' and *Domostroi* – are among those most frequently quoted in studies of women and gender in Muscovite society. They dwell on matters of domestic relations and familial morality, and some explore issues of sexual conduct and misconduct at length. They do not, however, speak in a unified voice. Unlike Savva Grudtsyn, the others do not express a blanket condemnation or even any conceptual linkage of sexuality and female sinfulness. Read more contextually, they offer quite a different vantage point, giving us an opportunity for measuring the relative salience of various sins in the popular Orthodox Rolodex.

Sex does not even enter in the litany of sins and lures enumerated in the evocatively titled 'Tale of Misery Luckless Plight.' Instead, the spotlight falls directly on the mortal sin of disobedience. The tale begins, conveniently for us, with a recap of the Creation and the Fall, which spells out a gratifyingly explicit moral message:

> In the beginning of this mortal age
> God created heaven and earth,
> God created Adam and Eve.
> He ordered them to live in holy paradise,
> and gave them this divine command:
> He told them not to eat the fruit of the grapevine
> from the great tree of Eden.
> The human heart is unthinking and fractious,
> and Adam and Eve were tempted.
> They forgot God's command,
> tasted the fruit of the grapevine,
> from the great, marvellous tree,
> and for that great transgression,
> God became enraged at Adam and Eve.[29]

Adam and Eve's sin, then, is explicitly identified as their disobedience to God's command. Spinning out this point, the tale continues to underscore the essence of the problem. Having cast the pair out of Eden, 'God gave them this commandment: there should be weddings and marriages for the propagation of the race of men, and for having beloved children.' The tale thus presents sexual activity within marriage as not only tolerable, but as in accordance with God's direct command, and as resulting in 'beloved children.' Far from the cause of their disgrace, conjugal activity is described as Adam and Eve's obligation. But, given

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the 'unthinking and fractious' nature of man, things continue to decline: 'Human kind from the very beginning acted insubordinately, looked with disdain at the father's teaching, acted defiantly towards the mother, was duplicitous about the advice of friends.' The introduction sets up the moral premise of the tale: Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden for their unruliness and for defying the Lord's command; subsequent generations were disobedient and insubordinate, defying their parents – mothers as well as fathers – and their friends. Disobedience to one's elders and superiors towers over all other sins, and sexual transgression does not merit even an innuendo in this prologue.[30]

The rest of the tale fulfils the promise and continues the moral message of the opening passage. The story starts mid-stream, with the unnamed youth receiving the advice and instruction of his pious parents, again, mother as well as father. Given what the prologue told us about human nature, we are not surprised to find him soon defying his parents' admonitions.

> The youth was then young and foolish,
> not in his full sense, and imperfect in mind;
> he was ashamed to submit to his father
> and bow to his mother
> but wanted to live as he pleased.

His recklessness rapidly brings him into bad company. He is hounded by Misery Luckless Plight, who poses as a friend, and induces him to throw aside family, wealth, friendship, and a potential bride. Things go from bad to worse until finally, in a rather unmotivated plot twist, 'the youth recalled the path to salvation and at once he went to a monastery to be shorn a monk, and Misery stopped at the holy gates.'[31] 'Misery Luckless Plight' makes its moral message extremely clear. The ultimate sin, both in the Garden of Eden and in this mortal world, consists of disobedience. Although along his path to perdition the young man indulges in a host of physical sins – intemperance, greed, gluttony – it is unquestionably the act of disobedience that earns him God's wrath and from which he needs to be saved at the end.

'Misery Luckless Plight' articulates a set of priorities in which disobedience, defiance of authority, ranks as the most egregious of sins, with other, merely physical sins, cascading below in no particular order. True to the same moral order, Uliana Osor'ina, embodying Christian moral perfection as envisioned by her devout son, manifested her piety through

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obedience. 'She humbly obeyed [her in-laws] in all things, never disobeying them, never contradicting them, but respecting them and carrying out their wishes without fail, so that all were amazed by her.'[32] Although late in life she convinced her husband to live with her in sexual abstinence, her earlier life was demonstrably characterized by an actively sexual marriage, as the births of her many children attest. In the tale, her participation in conjugal life only augments her virtue, because she obeyed the instructions of priest and husband in carrying out her marital obligations. Even in the Savva Grudtsyn tale, obedience and humility prove the most important of virtues, miraculously bringing salvation to the penitent sinner. The humbled protagonist gains redemption by tearfully swearing obedience to the Mother of God, promising to fulfil her injunctions unquestioningly. These seventeenth-century tales present a moral universe in which obedience towards authorities, whether male or female, formed the most pressing moral imperative, and where concerns about sexuality, if present at all, occupied a distinctly second tier.

Marriage and sexual reproduction within marriage figure in many secular and quasi-religious sources as constituting a positive good. Uliana's willingness to fulfil her marital obligations and produce a pious family testify to her obedience to God's command as well as to her husband's. In his explanation of Siberia's exemplary role in a divine plan to spread Christian glory to the ends of the earth, cartographer-geographer Semen Remezov echoed this theme in his atlases at the end of the seventeenth century, depicting marital relations and reproduction as directly linked to Christian enlightenment: 'Evangelical wisdom touches Siberia and results in peaceful familial relations with spouses and children,' as well as 'plentiful harvests, fruitful livestock, and the restful well-being of satisfaction.'[33]

If physicality and sexuality were not the fundamental preoccupations of early modern Russian Orthodoxy, then it makes sense that gender itself might be a lesser preoccupation and the position of women vis-à-vis men would be less differentiated than in Catholic or Protestant cultures. Some visual evidence would suggest that men and women were viewed more as a unit than as polar opposites. In perhaps the most poignant woodblock print from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, an elderly, careworn husband and wife occupy separate squares, each attending to his or her separate but interconnected task: 'The husband weaves bast shoes with skill; the wife spins flax with a will.'[34] Neither their somber, creased faces nor their shape-

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less robes betray any gender; only their headdresses and their tasks, and of course the beard, differentiate man from wife. Where the honest Muscovite couple is swathed in all-concealing robes, the Adam and Eve depicted above, by contrast, reveal all, but there is precious little difference to reveal. Scenes of the Fall emphasize neither their sexuality nor their sexual difference; instead they depict them equally chastened, sharing the mortal consequences of their disobedience. Compare these images with a luscious, lascivious Eve by Lucas Cranach, for instance, or with one of the many prints produced in the German lands at the same time, in which gender reversal formed the core focus of interest, aiming to provoke both anxiety and laughter.[35]

While Muscovite culture certainly noted sexual difference and indulged in its share of gender typing, there is good reason to believe that gender difference and hierarchy preoccupied Muscovites less than other kinds of social differentiation. Not only in painting and in tales, but also in a variety of lived practices, Muscovites structured their society to emphasize the mutuality and completeness of the married pair, rather than the antagonism of male and female. They channelled their concerns about social order more into maintaining social hierarchies than gender divisions. As Elise Wirtschafter notes in her book on imperial Russian society, 'However unequal the mutual obligations of husbands, wives, and children may appear from the perspective of the late twentieth century, in the official family, duty was a reciprocal concept that set a moral standard and implied interdependence rather than difference ... Where survival depended upon direct farming or daily earnings, husbands and wives were so materially interdependent and the fruits of their labor so inextricably intertwined that notions of gender difference and equality held little meaning.'[36] Underscoring the extent to which husband and wife were understood as a single, functioning unit in the official institutional structures of imperial Russia as well as among the labouring peasants, the unit of taxation was calculated according to the number of married couples in a village. Where European tax registers frequently listed only male heads of household in the early modern period, in Muscovite and imperial Russia such registers more commonly listed both spouses and all family members.[37]

Witchcraft litigation exposes another area in which the sharp gender differentiation familiar from Western European trials and witch-lore evaporates in the Muscovite case. Where Western witchcraft beliefs identified witches firmly with the female sex, and associated women's

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sexuality specifically with their proclivity for satanic temptations, in Muscovy, witchcraft was largely an ungendered activity, and not a sexualized one either.[38] More men than women were charged with witchcraft in Muscovite trials, but the grounds for accusation were largely indistinguishable for male and female suspects, and the most common characteristic of those accused of witchcraft in Muscovite courts was that they were disobedient in one way or another: they had defied the law, their masters, their betters, their husbands, or their uncles. That most of the disobedient people charged with witchcraft happened to be male appears to have been what I have described elsewhere as a 'second-order' phenomenon, indicative of the greater possibilities for defiance structured into a Muscovite male's experience.[39] Other forms of litigation similarly reveal less sharply distinguished male and female experiences than one might expect. Honour, property regimes, inheritance, all allowed agency and voice to women on similar grounds to those allowed to men.[40]

Domostroi, the popular household handbook found in prosperous urban households in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, provides another textual way to explore the meaning of gender difference in Muscovy. *Domostroi* generally enjoys the reputation of providing a blueprint for patriarchal oppression of women. It preaches that husbands must instruct their wives in everything, and wives must consult their husbands in everything and must obey them in everything. It teaches that husbands should beat their wives for serious infractions, although adding the caveats that husbands should beat wives only within measure, without inflicting physical harm, and the beatings should be carried out in private. Daughters also need close supervision, lest they bring shame and dishonour. These are the passages that are most frequently quoted, but they tell only part of the story. Less often noted are the passages that explain that sons too should be beaten lest *they* bring shame and dishonour, that *wives* should order servants around and beat them (male and female), lest they bring shame and dishonour: 'A husband must teach his wife how to please God and her husband, arrange her home well, and know all that is necessary for domestic order and every kind of handicraft, so that she may teach and supervise the servants ... If someone fails to heed her scoldings, she must strike him.'[41] By far the majority of the chapters deal with sex-blind admonitions to humility, piety, and obedience. Chapter titles offer helpful hints such as:

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One should revere bishops, priests, and monks.
One should honour tsars and princes, obey them in everything, and serve faithfully.
How men and women should pray in church, preserve their chastity, and do no evil.
Instruction to a husband and wife, their servants and children, on how they must live well.

The master of the house, while at the top of the pecking order, is himself subject to the strict rules of order, with dire consequences if he violates them: 'If a man does not teach his household himself, he will receive judgment from God. If he acts well himself and teaches his wife and servants, he will receive mercy from God.'[42] Viewed as a whole, *Domostroi* can certainly be seen as a patriarchal manual, but one concerned with maintaining social hierarchy across the board, and not simply with upholding male supremacy.

Domostroi, presumably written by a cleric, interweaves religious precepts with daily life concerns about how to run a household, store food supplies, and patch old clothing.[43] Because of its heavy dose of religious moralizing and because of questions about limited readership, some historians have been tempted to ignore its teachings as merely prescriptive, having little bearing on the way that Muscovites actually lived their lives. The admixture of religious and hierarchical concerns, however, and the overriding preoccupation with maintaining social order and dignity, along with piety and frugality, ring true to other sources produced by that society. Gender differentiation and gender hierarchy figure into the concerns of *Domostroi*'s author as integral parts of a more complete vision of ordered social hierarchy, in which children obey and serve their parents, servants obey and serve their masters, prosperous homeowners obey and serve their princes and bishops, and all obey and serve God with humility and deference. Social, gender, political, and religious order figure as part and parcel of a single, hierarchical world of domination and submission.

Popular religion, if it has any significant purchase on people's minds and behaviours, should affect and colour actions and words outside of explicitly religious settings. The crucial question in exploring popular religion is not only what did people do when they were at church, but also what did they do when they fed their chickens or disciplined their children. In what ways were their lives shaped or affected by religious sensibilities? Like the secular tales, *Domostroi* provides a superb ex-

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ample of a text that is simultaneously religious and not, directed towards the habits of daily life and yet fully imbued with a religious framework of understanding. If *Domostroi* and its teachings had any resonance in Muscovy, whether formative or merely reflective of norms and practices, it would show us a view of popular religion at its most practical level.

In pursuing this problem, and testing the relevance of the images of religion, sexuality, and gender in literary and prescriptive texts, let us now turn to some even less explicitly religious texts, to see how these issues were played out in real world settings. When Muscovites of any degree wished to solve a problem or seek redress for a grievance, they drafted a petition, with or without the help of a professional scribe. While the format of the petition was formulaic and generic, the content was not. Moreover, the form itself can be extremely significant. In the case of the Muscovite petition, the language of the petition stressed the petitioners' obedience and humility. Aside from minor terminological differences, the language of pathos and supplication was the same whether employed by men or women. Male petitioners made no effort to present strong, muscular, manly independence, as a reader schooled in Western notions of masculinity might anticipate. The male petitionary language in Muscovite petitions sounds strikingly similar to the particularly female, supplicatory voice identified by Natalie Zemon Davis in her study of 'fiction in the archives.'[44] Meekness and subservience, like pious and repentant tears, carry a positive valence in Muscovite political culture, as in Orthodox Christianity, for men and women alike. Just as Savva Grudtsyn finally achieved redemption by falling on his knees and weeping in all humility before the icon of the Mother of God, Muscovite men routinely employed abject, lachrymose phrases in presenting themselves to their elders, superiors, or potential patrons. A few examples from Muscovite petitions illustrate the potency of this language of self-mortification and pathos. In making a plea for governmental assistance, a state official wrote in January 1642:

> To Tsar, Sovereign, and Grand Prince Mikhail Fedorovich of All Russia and Sovereign-Lady, tsaritsa and Grand Princess Evdokiia Luk'ianovna! Your poor and helpless slave ... Lukashka Onikeev, clerk of the Grain Bureau, petitions you! Officer Ivan ... Tekutev, agreed with me, your slave, to marry my daughter, and their little wedding is supposed to take place this month, but I, poor one, have nothing to give for a dowry, and I have nothing to give for the wedding. Merciful sovereigns ... grant me, your

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poor and defenceless slave, whatever God tells you to give for my little daughter and her little wedding.[45]

Making no excuses for his own inability as pater familias and head of household to provide for his daughter, Lukashka deploys the language of humility as his most effective strategy. Similarly, Vaska Krechatnikov wailed, in a 1646 petition to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich:

> This year I was ordered to serve in your service as a dragoon in Kursk, but while I, your slave, was getting ready to go to your service with everyone else, for my sins ... a fire started and my humble little house burned with everything in it. The fire spread outwards from my house, taking four other houses with it; I was able to save nothing from the fire, and all my supplies that I had prepared for service, and my service equipment and saddles and all kinds of gear burned up without a trace ... I have nothing to bring [to support myself in] your service, but I couldn't fail to go, so I went to serve with the dragoons, but my little children remain in Moscow and wander from house to house, drifting among other people's homes. Merciful sovereign ...! Favour me, your poor and helpless slave, burned out of house and home. Give me whatever support God suggests, so that I will have some means or other to support myself in your sovereign service and so that I won't be in disgrace among my brothers and so that my little children, wandering from house to house without me, will not die a hungry death.[46]

Krechatnikov's pride and manly reputation, which he is evidently anxious to preserve, seem unhurt by this litany of woes; rather this represents an appropriate male language of supplication.

The language of appeal is exactly the same when the supplicant is female. In her 1692 petition to the cotsars Ioann and Peter Alekseevich, day-labourer Varka Ivanovna wove a tale with as complex and moving a narrative as any literary work, sparing none of the pathetic details.

> I, your poor and helpless orphan, Varka, Ivan's little daughter, the little wife of Sidor Tatarin, petition you! In the past, my husband Sidor lived in the household of Kadashev townsman Ananii Konaev and worked at various jobs, and he Ananii took me from the household of taxpayer Ivan Evdokimova, where I lived as a free woman, and married me to Sidor. And Sidor and I had two children who lived with us: a son, Filimon, and a daughter, Maria. The son is 9, and the daughter 12 years old. And in 1684/

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> 85, my husband Sidor was hacked to death by criminals in the street, and after his death, Ananii gave me, your orphan, in marriage to Ivan Mikhailov, one of his men, and took from my [new] husband a contract obligating him to five years of work. And in 1688/89, Ananii dismissed us from his household and ripped up the contract in front of many people, and he didn't give us the money, 25 rubles, that he owed us according to the contract – not the money, nor those little children of my first husband. Ananii and his son Grigorii won't give my son and daughter to me. He, Grigorii, wants to keep them for himself and to enslave them by force. Merciful Great Sovereigns, Tsars and Grand Princes ... Have mercy on me, your poor and helpless orphan, for the sake of the Saviour and the Immaculate Mother of God and for your own long health and for the health of the grand princesses ...! Order him, Grigorii, to give those little children of my first husband, my son and daughter, back to me![47]

Except for Krechetnikov's reference to his military service, the supplicant could as easily be a man as a woman in any of these cases. The beseeching tone, humble language, abject self-representation and pathos transcend gender, as indeed the Orthodox ideal recommends.

Displaying admirable consistency, Muscovite authors glorified the same traits in the mighty that they advocated for ordinary folk. Humility, piety, and deference were as respected in tsars as in servants. Court ceremonies emphasized the humility of the tsar-as-Christ in Palm Sunday reenactments of Christ's entry into Jerusalem.[48] Chronicles and histories singled out Tsar Fedor Ivanovich, the mentally impaired son of Ivan the Terrible, as the ideal ruler among the entire roster of more competent, activist, and alert men who sat on the throne. Tsar Fedor, paragon among men, lived the life of the ideal Orthodox Christian, devoting his time to prayer, repentance, and tears.[49] Defence of the meek and helpless was similarly a trait shared by males and females in positions of power. Just as Lukashka Onikeev, clerk of the Grain Bureau, directed his petition about his daughter's upcoming wedding to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich and his tsarista, so Muscovites of all ranks commonly addressed their petitions to well-connected women, whether tsaritsas or wives of noblemen and officials, and their prayers to the Mother of God, hoping for her intercession in bringing their supplications before her Son.[50]

A genderless Orthodox ideal, a vision of pious men and women obediently and humbly occupying their appointed positions, accepting the orders of their superiors and intervening on behalf of their subordi-

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nates in a complex social hierarchy, percolated into secular political culture and language. While we still know little about the spiritual life or religious practice of ordinary Muscovites, we can assert with confidence that they encountered and used tropes of Orthodox piety and obedience in their daily lives, in interactions with the state, in popular tales, or in household relations. Muscovites of every rank could deploy those genderless expectations to further their own claims to merciful support or to condemn those around them for impudence and insubordination. Used in an extraordinarily sex-blind way, charges of disobedience could drag a transgressor into court on suspicion of witchcraft, while reputations for obedience could lay the ground for local canonization.[51]

What can we conclude about gender and sexuality in Muscovite popular religion? The church, in its official teachings and in its unofficial manifestations, in tales, icons, and household handbooks, was generally far more concerned with sins of defiance and disobedience than with sexual sin. Orthodox Christianity, in its Russian variant, placed sexual sin comparatively low in its calculations of the relative weight of sins. Moreover, with occasional notable exceptions, Orthodoxy made little distinction between male and female susceptibility to sin or to the lures of Satan, and made little effort to attribute sexual guilt specifically to Eve or her daughters. Muscovite secular culture acted according to a relatively undifferentiated understanding of gender in models of behaviour, civic participation, and hierarchical ordering. In secular contexts as in religious ones, obedience to one's superiors was required regardless of the sex of either party, and the ideal language of self-representation stressed pathos and dependency. The most searing inequities in Muscovite culture, as reinforced by Muscovite popular religion, were not particularly associated with gender and its primary condemnations not particularly associated with sex.

Summarizing our findings is a straightforward job. The harder task is to prove the link between the two discourses. Did secular language mirror religious models because a popular Orthodoxy so thoroughly permeated Muscovite society as to make the secular indistinguishable from the religious? Or did the two merely run along two parallel tracks, without intersecting or influencing each other? A powerful current in Muscovite historiography argues that in fact religion and secular life had little to do with one another. This claim forces the burden of proof

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onto those of us who would argue for a popular culture deeply inflected by Orthodox religious ideas and customs. The interweaving of explicitly religious imagery and injunctions in the texts and practices examined here suggests more than a casual admixture of the two supposedly distinct worlds. Muscovite ideas of gender, and consequently of the body and of sexuality, traced their origins at least in part to a popularized Orthodox Christianity, which in turn resulted in a society far less fixated on sexual sin or on female sexuality than previous work has suggested and perhaps, though this remains to be further explored, less so than some of its Western Christian counterparts. The potentially emancipatory implications of a relatively equal gender regime, however, were entirely offset by the far more coercive set of social hierarchies that formed the object of obsessive concern and protective labour on the part of church and state, masters and lords, husbands and fathers, mothers-in-laws and eldest daughters throughout Muscovite society.

NOTES

1 V.F. Pokrovskaia, 'Neizvestnyi spisok 'slova' Daniila Zatochnika,' *Trudy otdela drevnerusskoi literatury (TODRL)* 10 (1954): 288. On Daniil Zatochnik, see, among others, H. Birnbaum and R. Romanchuk, 'Kem byl zagadochnyi Daniil Zatochnik?' *TODRL* 50 (1997): 576–602; D.S. Likhachev, 'Daniil Zatochnik,' in *Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi*, vol. 1, *XI–pervaia polovina XIV v.* (Leningrad, 1987), 112–15; and M.N. Tikhomirov, "Napisanie' Daniila Zatochnika,' *TODRL* 10 (1954): 269–79.

2 Neither 'gender' nor 'sexuality' appear in a search of Russian Orthodox web sites or reference works, and the cautious, distancing introduction by Father Thomas Hopko, dean of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, to Brenda Meehan's study of female spirituality suggests an unease with the marriage of the two approaches to the history of religion. Preface, in Brenda Meehan, *Holy Women of Russia : The Lives of Five Orthodox Women Offer Spiritual Guidance for Today* (San Francisco, 1993), ix–xii. Joanna Hubbs's *Mother Russia* provides the strongest formulation of the church as deliberately implementing a policy of subordinating women. *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN, 1988).

3 Pokrovskaia, 'Neizvestnyi spisok "slova" Daniila Zatochnika,' 288.

4 Reworking of book of Sirach in the Apocrypha, translated and quoted in

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Eve Levin, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs* (Ithaca, NY, 1989), 54–5.

5 Levin, *Sex and Society*, 46.

6 Ibid., 46–9, 56, 180.

7 Pokrovskaia, 'Neizvestnyi spisok "slova" Daniila Zatochnika,' 287. Literally, the phrase is 'A maiden ruins her beauty,' but the parallel to the instrumental case for men 'tat'boiu' suggests my reading.

8 Marcia A. Morris reviews some of the controversies in dating the tale, but concludes that a late seventeenth- rather than early eighteenth-century date is more compelling. The literature generally assumes that the tale reflects a seventeenth-century urban context. '*The Tale of Savva Grudcyn* and the Poetics of Transition,' *Slavic and East European Journal* 36 (1992): 203–4.

9 The tale contains numerous traces of Western influence, and so may not accurately reflect a purely Muscovite sexual sensibility. Passages here are taken from versions of the tale in 'Povest' o Savve Grudtsyne,' in *Pamiatniki literatury drevnei Rusi. XVII vek. Kniga pervaia* (henceforth *PLDR*) (Moscow, 1988), 41; and 'Povest' o Savve Grudtsyne,' in M.O. Skripil', ed., *Russkaia povest' XVII veka* (Leningrad, 1953), 84.

10 'Povest' o Savve Grudtsyne,' *PLDR*, 41.

11 'Povest' o nekoem kuptse Grigorii, kako khote ego zhena z zhidovinom umoriti,' *PLDR*, 94. Set in Rome, this story too must be based on a foreign import.

12 An extraordinary but idiosyncratic misogynistic condemnation of women as the vehicles of sexual sin is found in the *Malleus Maleficarum: The Hammer of Witches of Kramer and Sprenger*, trans. Montague Summers (Mineola, NY, 1971). Focus on this kind of fiercely misogynistic text in isolation, however, repeats the same methodological mistake that I have identified above. Stuart Clark puts the overwhelming misogyny of this piece in context in 'The Gendering of Witchcraft in French Demonology: Misogyny or Polarity?' *French History* 5, no. 4 (1991): 426–37. On early modern theology of the body, see Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1994), 171–98.

13 On the Web, see the adamant refutation of Immaculate Conception in 'The Heterodox Teaching of "Immaculate Conception" and "Original Sin,"' http://aggreen.net/theotokos/orig_sin.html. 'Because Roman Catholic doctrine teaches that all people bear the stain and guilt of original sin from the moment of their conception in the womb, the Roman Catholic Church had to devise a "Doctrine of Immaculate Conception" to confirm that the Holy Mother was sinless because, the Vatican rationalized, our Lord could

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not be born of someone sinful. The immaculate conception doctrine makes her different from the rest of humankind; it makes her not fully human because she was not by her own choice sinless but by the will of God. If Mary were sinless by God's choice, not hers, then by virtue of the fact that she was as fully human as all of humankind is and has been, then God could make us all sinless and take away the free will given to us by our being created in His image and likeness.' The author, 'a priest of the Orthodox Church in America,' cites Blessed John Maximovitch, *Life of the Virgin Mary, The Theotokos* (Buena Vista, CO, 1989). Another similar web site: www.networks.now.net/sspp/a_nativity_theotokos.htm (web site of Ss Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church). For more scholarly treatments of original sin, see also John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York, 1974), 143–9; Timothy Ware (Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia), *The Orthodox Church*, new ed. (London, 1993), 222–5, 257–61.

14 George P. Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind*, vol. 1, *Kievan Christianity: The 10th to the 13th Centuries* (Belmont, MA, 1975), 360–2, 376.

15 Laura Engelstein, *Castration and the Heavenly Kingdom: A Russian Folktale* (Ithaca, NY, 1999). On the Western tradition, see Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York, 1989).

16 H.W. Dewey and N. Challis, 'Divine Folly in Old Kievan Literature: The Tale of Isaac the Cave Dweller,' *Slavic and East European Journal* 22 (1978): 255–64. This article discusses Kievan tradition, but the implications hold true in Muscovy as well. See David M. Goldfrank, *Joseph Volotskii's Monastic Rules: Its Sources and Historical Importance* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1983); Ia. S. Lur'e, *Ideologicheskaia bor'ba v russkoi publitsistike* (Leningrad, 1960), ch. 4–5; Donald G. Ostrowski, 'Church Polemics and Monastic Land Acquisition in 16th–c. Muscovy,' *Slavonic and East European Review* 64 (1986): 357–79.

17 See my 'The Souls of the Righteous in a Bright Place: Landscape and Orthodoxy in Seventeenth-Century Russian Maps,' *Russian Review* 58 (January 1999): 1–25; and *Cartographies of Tsardom: The Land Its Meanings in Seventeenth-Century Russia* (Ithaca, NY, 2006).

18 Cited in Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 21.

19 Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), 387–427, quote on 416. See also his *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967). For a nuanced examination of women in the Calvinist tradition, see Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England* (New York, 1987).

20 Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent*, xviii, xix.

21 Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind*, 1:75–6; Ware, *The Orthodox Church*,

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222–5; Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 143–6. It is important to note, however, that an exorcism is a standard part of baptism rituals.

22 N. Tikhonravov, *Pamiatniki otrechennoi russkoi literatury* (St Petersburg, 1863), 1:299–300.

23 V.N. Sergeev, 'Dukhovnyi stikh 'Plach Adama' na ikone,' *TODRL* 26 (1971), 281–2, 284.

24 The Chrysostom passage is quoted in Sergeev, 'Dukhovnyi stikh "Plach Adama' na ikone," 285: 'If Eve had held back from the tree, we would not need this fasting.'

25 Images of Adam and Eve: Muzei drevnerusskogo iskusstva imeni Andreia Rubleva, Z*hertvennik kontsa XVI–nachala XVII v.*; M.V. Alpatov, *Early Russian Icon Painting* (Moscow, 1984), plate 203, 'The Symbol of Faith,' second half of the seventeenth century, from the Kolomenskoe Museum, Moscow, (reproduced here); Gennady Popov, *Tver Icons, 13th–17th Centuries* (St Petersburg, 1993), plate 173, Door to a Prothesis. Scenes: 'The Expulsion from Paradise' and 'The Parable of the Lame Man and the Blind Man,' first half of the seventeenth century; V.G. Briusova, *Russkaia zhivopis' 17 veka* (Moscow, 1984), 65, black and white plate no. 52: 'Novgorodskie pis'ma. Simvol very. Ikona iz Preobrazhenskogo sobora Solovetskogo monastyria,' mid-seventeenth century. Briusova reproduces a detail from the icon in beautiful colour: colour plate 115, 'Grekhopadenie,'; see also colour plate 114, 'Novgorodskie pis'ma. Sotvorenie Adama i Evy. Izgnanie iz raia. Fragment rospisi altarnoi dveri,' mid-seventeenth century; and colour plate 130, 'Kostromskaia shkola. Sotvorenie Adama i Evy. Grekhopadenie. Izgnanie iz raia. Fragment ikony "Veruiu,"' 1680s.

26 Levin, *Sex and Society*, 46.

27 Eve Levin, 'Infanticide in Early Modern Russia,' *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 34 (1986): 215–24.

28 Nancy Shields Kollmann, 'Women's Honor in Early Modern Russia,' in *Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation*, ed. Barbara Evans Clements, Barbara Alpern Engel, and Christine D. Worobec (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991), 60–73. Levin makes the same point: 'Although didactic literature taught that women were more susceptible to sexual sin ... most provisions of canon law authorized identical penalties for men and women offenders.' *Sex and Society*, 78.

29 'Povest'o Gore i Zlochastii, kak Gore-Zlochastie dovelo molottsa vo inocheskii chin,' in *PLDR*, 28. Translation is primarily my own, with reference to Serge A. Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles and Tales*, revised and expanded ed. (New York, 1974), 489–501. On 'Misery

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Luckless Plight,' see F. Vizgell (Wizgell), 'Bludnye synov'ia ili bluzhdaiushchie dushi: "Povest' o Gore-Zlochastii" i "Ocharovannyi strannik" Leskova,' *TODRL* 50 (1997): 754–62; V.L. Vinogradova, 'Povest' o Gore-Zlochastii,' *TODRL* 12 (1956): 622–41; J.P. Zbilut, 'The Tale of Misery and Ill Fortune as Allegory,' *Slavic and East European Journal* 20 (1976): 217–23.

30 Here my reading diverges from Faith Wizgell's. She reads the central crime or sin in the tale as the youth's rejection of a righteous, prosperous, and happy life and his wilful preference for a bitter and corrupt life. She rejects the reading that the tale concerns conflict between parents and children ('Bludnye synov'ia,' 758). I agree that it is not a psychological tale of family dynamics, but the disruption of generational and other hierarchies seems incontrovertibly to define the heart and moral of the story.

31 'Povest' o Gore i Zlochastii,' 38. Marcia A. Morris notes and analyses similar unmotivated plot developments in '*The Tale of Savva Grudcyn* and the Poetics of Transition,' *Slavic and East European Journal* 36 (1992): 202–16.

32 'Povest' ob Uliianii Osor'inoi,' in Skripil', *Russkaia povest' XVII veka*, 40. The tale is also reproduced in 'Povest' ob Ul'ianii Osor'inoi,' in *PLDR*, 98–104. Uliana practises what Peter Brown calls 'post-marital celibacy.'

33 Rossiiskaia Natsional'naia Biblioteka, St Petersburg, Ermitazhnoe sobranie, 237, Sluzhebnaia chertezhnaia kniga Remezova (Sluzhebnaia kniga), 12. Text published in E.I. Dergacheva-Skop, '"Pokhvala" Sibiri S. U. Remezova,' *Trudy. Institut russkoi literatury (Pushkinskii dom). Otdel drevnerusskoi literatury. Novonaidennye i neopublikovannye proizvedeniia drevnerusskoi literatury* 21 (1965): 266–74; quote on 272.

34 Alla Sytova et al., *The Lubok: Russian Folk Pictures, 17th to 19th Century* (Leningrad, 1984), plate 16.

35 Lyndal Roper, 'Was There a Crisis in Gender Relations in Sixteenth-Century Germany?' in her *Oedipus and the Devil*, 37–52; Steven E. Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 1983).

36 Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter, *Social Identity in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb, IL, 1997), 10, 17.

37 S.B. Veselovskii, *Soshnoe pis'mo. Izsledovanie po istorii kadastra i pososhnogo oblozheniia Moskovskogo gosudarstva*, 2 vols (Moscow, 1916) ; V.A. Aleksandrov, *Sel'skaia obshchina v Rossii (XVII-nachalo XIX v.)* (Moscow, 1976).

38 Records from Muscovite witchcraft trials very rarely hint at the sexual conduct or misconduct of the accused, but interestingly, this is not true of literary representations of witchcraft. For instance, in both 'Savva

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Grudtsyn' and the tale of the merchant's wife and the Jew, the guilty parties employ magic specifically to facilitate their adultery.

39 Valerie A. Kivelson, 'Male Witches and Gendered Categories in Seventeenth-Century Russia,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 3 (2003): 606–31.

40 Nancy Shields Kollmann, *By Honor Bound: State and Society in Early Modern Russia* (Ithaca, NY, 1999); and her 'Women's Honor'; George G. Weickhard, 'The Legal Rights of Women in Russia, 1100–1750,' *Slavic Review* 55 (1996): 1–23; Valerie A. Kivelson, 'The Effects of Partible Inheritance: Gentry Families and the State in Muscovy,' *Russian Review* 53 (1994): 197–212; Ann M. Kleimola, '"In Accordance with the Canons of the Holy Apostles": Muscovite Dowries and Women's Property Rights,' *Russian Review* 51 (1992): 204–29.

41 *The Domostroi: Rules for Russian Households in the Time of Ivan the Terrible*, ed. and trans. by Carolyn Johnston Pouncy (Ithaca, NY, 1994), 124, 143.

42 Pouncy, *Domostroi*, 145. The ever-satirical Daniil Zatochnik phrases the same requirement in inverted form. Asserting the natural patriarchal order, he notes with scorn that 'a husband who is commanded by his wife [is not] a man among men.' Pokrovskaia, 'Neizvestnyi spisok "slova" Daniila Zatochnika,' 287.

43 On the question of authorship, see Pouncy's Introduction to *Domostroi*, 1–54.

44 Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, 1987).

45 *Moskovskaia delovaia i bytovaia pis'mennost' XVII veka*, ed. S.I. Kotkov et al. (Moscow, 1968), 62, no. 38, 27 January 1642. A similar petition appears on p. 67, no. 50, September 1649. A similar tone of lament characterizes a literary counterpart of these petitions, the 'Alphabet of a Naked and Penniless Man.' 'Azbuka o golom i nebogatom cheloveke,' in V.P. Adrianova-Perets, ed., *Russkaia demokraticheskaia satira XVII veka* (Moscow, 1977), 149–50, 229–31.

46 *Moskovskaia delovaia i bytovaia pis'mennost' XVII veka*, 66, no. 48, 23 May 1646.

47 Ibid., 117–18, no. 132, 6 November 1692. This petition is unusually gender-free in its formulaic language. Women usually address the sovereign as his 'slave' (*raba*), rather than as his 'orphan' (*sirota*), a term usually reserved for nonnoble males. Varka for some reason refers to herself as the tsar's 'orphan.' I have taken some liberties with the translation, shortening the text and simplifying the names by omitting the patronymics.

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48 Michael S. Flier, 'Breaking the Code: The Image of the Tsar in the Muscovite Palm Sunday Ritual,' in *Medieval Russian Culture*, vol. 2, ed. by Michael S. Flier and Daniel Rowland (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994), 213–42.

49 Daniel Rowland, 'The Problem of Advice in Muscovite Tales about the Time of Troubles,' *Russian History* 6, pt. 2 (1979): 259–83.

50 Isolde Thyrêt, *Between God and Tsar: Religious Symbolism and the Royal Women of Muscovite Russia* (DeKalb, IL, 2001); Valerie A. Kivelson, *Autocracy in the Provinces: Russian Political Culture and the Gentry in the Seventeenth Century* (Stanford, 1997), 154–80; Rossiiskaia Natsional' naia Biblioteka, Sluzhebnaia chertezhnaia kniga, 9.

51 On obedience as grounds for unofficial, local canonization, see Eve Levin, 'From Corpse to Cult in Early Modern Russia,' in *Orthodox Russia: Belief and Practice under the Tsars*, ed. Valerie A. Kivelson and Robert H. Greene (University Park, 2003), 81–104.

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The Christian Sources of the Cult of St Paraskeva

EVE LEVIN

The cult of St Paraskeva is one of the most significant – and the most studied – manifestations of popular religion in Russian culture.[1] Paraskeva is numbered among the saints of the Orthodox Church, and although her cult does not enjoy much official sponsorship in Russia at the present time, she remains in vogue in Greece and Bulgaria. The decline in popularity of the cult of St Paraskeva in Russia is a relatively recent phenomenon. Even in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, up until the early Soviet period, Russian peasants revered St Paraskeva, or Piatnitsa as she was often called.

Although St Paraskeva's devotees included both men and women, she was the particular patron of women's activities, especially in Russia, where her iconographical symbol has long been the spindle. As recorded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Russian peasant women believed that St Paraskeva aided them in their household tasks, especially in spinning. The saint, women averred, forbade them to spin on Fridays, the day of the week special to her, since her name means Friday. According to folk tales, Piatnitsa became enraged when women violated this prohibition, and punished them, often by ruining their handiwork. The saint also punished lazy girls who refused to spin and sew, and inattentive mothers who endangered their children. Additionally, St Paraskeva protected the home and its inhabitants and livestock, and she sent good, loving husbands to maidens who invoked her. Like all saints, Paraskeva healed the sick, especially patients suffering from eye diseases and women's ailments. Women afflicted by *klikushi* (screaming spirits) in particular turned to her for relief. Secondarily, St Paraskeva was the patron of merchants.

For more than a century, scholars from many countries, including

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Russia, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Germany, France, and the United States, have studied the cult of St Paraskeva. Some of their studies have concentrated on the vitae and services to St Paraskeva in the medieval manuscript tradition, in particular questions of dating and textual variants. Certain studies have examined the political significance of the cult in the Second Bulgarian Empire, where St Paraskeva served as one of the official patrons of the governing city of Trnovo. Others have examined her cult in medieval Serbia, in Novgorod, and in other places.[2]

Other scholarly investigations focused on peasant custom, particularly in Russia, based on ethnographic data.[3] In the opinion of these scholars, the cult of St Paraskeva arose strictly from pagan sources, and it remained predominantly pagan in character, despite the official endorsement of the church. Eminent historians such as B.A. Rybakov and N. Matorin saw the cult of St Paraskeva as a survival of pre-Christian belief in the pagan goddess Mokosh.[4] Mokosh herself they viewed as an avatar of goddesses known to other Indo-European peoples, such as Aphrodite, Venus, Freya, and the Greek Fates. Like them, Mokosh was a later reflection of the Great Mother goddess of the neolithic epoch.

This glib association of Paraskeva with Mokosh cannot withstand scrutiny. First, the apparent similarity between the traits of Paraskeva and Mokosh is the result of scholars' circular reasoning. Medieval sources contain little information about the goddess Mokosh beyond her inclusion in the pantheon established by Grand Prince Vladimir a decade before the Christianization of Russia. Faced with this dearth of information, scholars reconstructed her characteristics on the basis of ethnographical materials on the cult of St Paraskeva. So it is no wonder that the two seem to be virtually identical! A more serious objection to the identification of Paraskeva with Mokosh comes from the evidence of her cult among other peoples. Although Paraskeva gained little attention in the West, her cult flourished among other Slavic peoples, especially the Orthodox Bulgarians and Serbs, and in Greece and Romania, where the Russian goddess Mokosh was unknown. This pattern suggests a specifically Orthodox direct source for the cult of St Paraskeva.

In recent years, American feminist scholars have adopted a similar view of Paraskeva's pagan origins, depicting her cult as an expression of women's religiosity.[5] They praised it as a method for women to resist the hostile forces of Christianity, autocracy, and patriarchalism. Feminist scholars are correct in their observation that the institutional structure of the Orthodox Church reinforced the patriarchal order, dictating

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that women subordinate themselves to men (husbands, priests, princes, and Jesus Christ). Medieval monks wrote sermons warning against 'evil women' who were too independent; the chief characteristic of 'good women' was often their subservience. Paraskeva, on the other hand, was never humble or timid, either in folk legend or in ecclesiastical literature. While feminist scholars are correct that the cult of St Paraskeva empowered women, they err in viewing it as a manifestation of living paganism. The women who venerated St Paraskeva staunchly identified themselves as Christian.

I do not deny the pagan origin of many of the beliefs and customs that surround St Paraskeva, because the roots of nearly every element of folk tradition can be found in the distant past. Analogues to virtually all Christian beliefs and customs, in Russia and Western Europe both, can be found within the pagan systems of the ancient and medieval worlds. Such beliefs survived precisely because they provided a means of expressing common human experiences. However, symbols may be reinterpreted in new contexts, and new layers of belief bury old ones.[6] Just as Christianity represents a redefinition of beliefs and a realignment of symbols into a distinctive religious system, so the cult of St Paraskeva represents, within that Christian system, an analogous reconfiguration. Paraskeva is not just a pagan goddess with a new name. Instead, her cult reflects a recombination of elements and their reinterpretation within a specifically Christian context.

Scholars previously have not attempted to identify links between the ecclesiastical veneration of the Saints Paraskeva so well documented in premodern literature, and the popular veneration so well documented by ethnographers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. According to the American ethnographer Linda Ivanits, 'The Paraskeva-Friday ... of Russian popular devotion bears little resemblance to the original; she is an almost wholly legendary creation whose roots are more in the veneration of an ancient Slavic goddess-protectress of women and women's work and of the fruits of the earth than in the history of the conflict between paganism and Christianity in the third century.'[7] South Slavic scholars have been more willing to grant the incorporation of Christian elements, while still emphasizing the underlying folkloric strata.[8] Despite Ivanits's assessment, a comparison of the evidence from the two types of sources demonstrates close links between the ecclesiastical image of St Paraskeva and the popular cult as it began to emerge in the medieval period.

The Orthodox calendar of the saints includes several named Paraskeva.

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Some of them can be dated to a later period: for example, Paraskeva of Polotsk, a pious princess-nun. But the Orthodox cult is built primarily around two characters. The first Paraskeva was a martyr from the period of the Roman Empire. In different variants of her vita, she is associated with various cities, in particular Iconium and Rome, and different oppressive rulers. Because of these minor differences in the vitae, the Orthodox calendar now identifies the Paraskevas as separate individuals. The existence of any martyr of this name, much less more than one, cannot be verified. The close similarity in the narratives, however, indicates a single common tradition. This Paraskeva is celebrated primarily on 28 October in Russia, and less often, especially in Belarus, Ukraine, and the Balkans, on 26 July.[9]

Greater historical certainty surrounds the second Paraskeva, a Bulgarian of the late tenth–early eleventh century. She was a notable recluse who rejected family and marriage in favour of a life of prayer in the wilderness in imitation of Christ. She undertook spiritual feats, crowned by a pilgrimage to Constantinople. In 1231, her relics were moved to Trnovo, where she became one of the patrons of the Second Bulgarian Empire. After the fall of Trnovo to the Turks, her relics were transferred several times: to Vidin, Belgrade, Constantinople, and finally to Jassy in Romania.[10] From the Balkans, her cult spread to Russia. Her relics currently are found in Jassy, in Romania, at the church dedicated to the Three Holy Hierarchs.[11]

The oldest surviving Slavic texts relating to St Paraskeva are found among the South Slavs. One of the earliest vitae of Paraskeva the martyr was included in the Vidinskii Sbornik of 1360. This miscellany is of the type 'Materikon' – the lives of the mothers of the church, analogous to the more common 'Paterikon.' It was compiled for the Bulgarian prince Ivan Stratsimir, whose mother had suffered an ignominious divorce from his father, Ivan Alexander IV.[12] A short version of the vita was included in the *Velikiia chetii minei* of Metropolitan Makarii;[13] a longer version also circulated.[14] The most widely disseminated version of the vita of St Paraskeva the recluse was written by Patriarch Evtimii of Bulgaria just a few years later. It superseded the earlier versions: one in Greek, now lost, and a twelfth-century version that circulated in Greek and Church Slavonic.[15] The version of this vita in the *Velikiia chetii minei* was based on Evtimii's, edited and emended by the Bulgarian Grigorii Tsamblak.

Both the Roman martyr and the Bulgarian recluse shared not only the Greek name Paraskeva, but also the Slavic nickname Petka (in South

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Slavic languages) and Piatnitsa (in Russian). The existence of two saints with the same name gave ample opportunity for confusing them, and such confusion is evident even among scholars.[16]

Although references to popular veneration of St Paraskeva are scant from the pre-Petrine period, they are also very telling. Because churches were dedicated to her as early as the twelfth century, clearly the cult must have existed already at that time. But it is noteworthy that few Slavic Orthodox calendar texts (*sviattsy*, *minei*, *prologi*) before the late fourteenth century included Paraskeva. One of the earliest Slavic calendars of saints, the glagolitic Asemaniev Gospel codex, omitted Paraskeva. A later scribe added a reference to her in the margin in Cyrillic script, giving her date of commemoration, oddly, as 9 November. But by the fifteenth century, South Slavic compendia often contain texts devoted to Paraskeva.[17] Numerous medieval icons depict Paraskeva, separately or in conjunction with other popular saints such as Nicholas, Vlasii, and Ilia, but most date to the end of the fourteenth century or later.[18] Paraskeva became a very popular name for girls, but only at the end of the fifteenth century; before that, its use was rare, although other saints' names had long since come into common parlance.[19] This pattern suggests that the cult of St Paraskeva developed slowly, and received wide popularity only after paganism as a conscious belief system had vanished.[20] This chronology alone militates against a facile equation of Paraskeva with Mokosh, or any other pre-Christian deity.

Apparently the cult of St Paraskeva first became popular among merchants; the earliest churches and icons dedicated to her may be connected, albeit tentatively, to commercial organizations. In Novgorod, Paraskeva was one of the patrons of merchants, along with Varlaam Khutynskii, John the Merciful, and St Anastasia.[21] That church and its miracle-working icon retained its connection to commerce. A book of miracles from the church copied in the 1680s or 1690s names merchants involved in overseas commerce as its founders. The account describes how a riot that broke out in the church on Good Friday in 1571 spread to nearby merchants' offices.[22]

Early in the fifteenth century, the Russian metropolitan Kiprian instructed his spiritual children concerning proper observance of St Paraskeva's Day. Kiprian was Bulgarian himself, and a relative of Patriarch Evtimii of Bulgaria, who had promoted the cult of the St Paraskeva through his authorship of a new, exceptionally emotional version of her vita. Kiprian directed that commercial duties (*iamy*) not be collected on this day and that fasting be waived.[23] Thus he identified veneration of

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St Paraskeva as an official cult of the church and associated it particularly with urban merchants. Nothing in Kiprian's description of the holiday suggests that he had doubts about the orthodoxy of the cult or that St Paraskeva was special to women. The question concerning proper observance of the holiday hints, however, that it was of recent provenance.

By the sixteenth century, the cult of St Paraskeva was gaining considerable official recognition in Russia, and not only as a focus for merchants. Icons of both Saints Paraskeva were donated by Grand Prince Vasilii III to the city of Rzhev, where they were installed with grand ceremony.[24] It was from the church dedicated to Paraskeva in Rzhev that Ivan IV and Metropolitan Makarii set out to reestablish Orthodoxy in Polotsk, newly reconquered from Poland-Lithuania.[25] Both Paraskeva the martyr and Paraskeva the recluse received prominent places in the *Velikiia chetii minei* of Metropolitan Makarii, under the dates 14 October (the recluse) and 28 October (the martyr).

In addition to officially sponsored veneration, popular enthusiasm for St Paraskeva arose in the same period. The Rostov chronicle in 1497 reported:

> In the year 7005 a maiden named Glikeriia came to Rostov, and she said that the Prophet Ilia and the holy martyr Paraskeva, called Piatnitsa, appeared to her on the [holiday] in memory of John the Baptist. She was taken up by an unseen force that placed her in heaven. And she saw the most pure Mother of God for two days. When she appeared, she said that the people should pray to God and not abuse each other with mother swears.[26]

The author of the Rostov chronicle presents this incident as a genuine manifestation of divine grace. Glikeriia, the wandering holy woman, obviously gained a considerable following in Rostov; only important happenings earned inclusion in the chronicle. Her message had nothing to do with commercial matters or governmental authority, but rather with personal piety. This incident suggests a growing gendered cast to the cult of St Paraskeva. Not only was the saint's spokesperson a young woman, but her message specifically protected the honour of mothers.

Although Glikeriia's ministry gained her honour in 1497, the same conduct half a century later caused the prelates of the Stoglav Council of 1551 considerable consternation. The protocols of the council complained:

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> False prophets, men and women and maidens and old grannies wander among parishes and villages, naked and barefoot, with loose hair and dissolute, shaking and beating themselves. They say that Saints Piatnitsa and Anastasia appear to them and instruct them to preach the canons to Christians and to teach. They preach not to do handiwork on Wednesdays and Fridays, and women should not spin or wash clothing or heat stones.[27]

Here we see several of the elements connected with veneration of St Paraskeva in nineteenth- and twentieth-century ethnographic records: Women refraining from housework, especially spinning, on Fridays, and going about with loose hair. Like Glikeriia before them, these devotees of St Paraskeva called for proper behaviour, as they undersood it, citing the saint's authorization to deliver the message.

These followers of St Paraskeva practised extremes of Christian asceticism. Shaking and self-flagellation were familiar elements in Western European cults of the period, especially those connected with the Black Death. Wandering naked and barefoot, with hair uncovered, and preaching the gospel, could be representative of unusual piety as in the case of Russian *iurodivye*. Devotees of St Paraskeva could readily point to similar activities by the saint herself. In the vita of the martyr Paraskeva, she is depicted asking herself: 'Is it not good for me to preach the Gospel of Christ in all towns and countries?' and the service to her praised her for 'teaching to believe in the Holy Trinity.'[28] The practices attributed to the followers of St Paraskeva do not at all resemble those attributed to pagans: dancing, drinking, feasting, and ritual sex.

Even while condemning these religious dissidents, the Stoglav Council recognized the Orthodox content of their message: devotees of Paraskeva and Anastasia urged their listeners to fulfil the obligations of Christian canons. Significantly, the Council did not condemn or forbid veneration of St Paraskeva, but only the disruptive conduct of some of her more extreme followers.

The tale of the discovery of the relics of St Andrian Poshekhonskii provides further evidence for the official acceptance of the veneration of St Paraskeva, even though some aspects of the popular cult caused concern. One incident in the tale recounts how the people gathering for a commercial market each summer organized public prayers by a rowanberry tree growing at the site where St Andrian's relics were later discovered:

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In the year 7120 [= 1612], in the village of Tuzhevo in Shigarskaia *volost'* of Poshekhonskii *uezd*, the ecclesiastical deacon Ivan Prokopiev went each year to the [church of] the Prophet Ilia [Elijah] in the abandoned village on the Oukra River at the mouth of the creek near Shlomy Krebina on the Friday before St Ilia's Day. All the clergy from the surrounding [areas] came on that day. And with him he brought an icon of the martyr Paraskeva, called Piatnitsa, and he read prayers. And from the surrounding districts and towns many commercial and agricultural people came on that day, keeping faith in Christ's martyr Paraskeva, called Piatnitsa. They prayed to Christ's martyr Piatnitsa, and they passed little children and youths through the branches of a rowanberry [tree] located there. Some people even in full adulthood did the same. The aforesaid deacon Ivan Prokopiev reasoned with these people, 'It is not appropriate for Orthodox Christians to do what you are doing. According to the rules of the holy apostles and the holy fathers, we do not reverence such a tree, when there is no icon of the Saviour or his holy servants on it, for it is not legitimate.'[29]

The purpose of the gathering was the public veneration of two Christian saints, Ilia and Paraskeva. The participants chose the site, as the tale later makes clear, because previously a church dedicated to St Ilia had stood at that spot and they were observing his saint's day (20 July). In short, the participants in this ritual, peculiar as it may seem from the perspective of official Orthodoxy, were acting out of Christian piety.

The participation of local clergy in the ritual also testifies to the basic acceptability of the cult to the church. While the inspiration for the ritual surrounding the rowan tree, then, was Christian rather than pagan, it operated outside official church norms. Thus the deacon Ivan Prokopiev tried to regularize the celebration, bringing it into conformity with church standards as he knew them. First he brought an icon of St Paraskeva to serve as a focus for the ritual. Later he organized the rebuilding of a church, dedicated to St Ilia and St Paraskeva, on that site. Significantly, Prokopiev did not castigate the worshippers for paganism, but instead invoked their Christian identity. He applauded their devotion and faith, and reminded them that building a church would bring them respect from their neighbours.

Neither the veneration of St Paraskeva nor the attention paid to the rowanberry tree marked the cult as pagan. Trees, whether rowans, oaks, pines, or birches, frequently stood as the markers of sacred space, as numerous vitae, miracle tales, and icons demonstrate.[30] Even after the miracles associated with the rowan tree were revealed to be the work of

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the saint buried beneath it, the tree itself was preserved upon explicit orders from Patriarch Filaret of Moscow: 'Do not harm it in any way, and [treat] it with great care.'[31] Clearly, Filaret's intent was to allow the rowan to continue to serve as a locus for pilgrimage even after the removal of the relics of the saint. Thus the highest official of the Russian Orthodox Church approved the cult – Paraskeva, tree, and all.

The prophylatic power devotees of St Paraskeva attributed to the sacred rowan-tree site likewise fits easily within Orthodox tradition. Nearly all saints were credited with the power to heal, usually through the medium of their relics or icons, but sometimes through other objects connected with them. Thus the Novgorodian saint Antonii Rimlianin effected miraculous cures through sea reeds.[32] At the Novgorod church in her honour, Paraskeva worked miracles through the sacred space of her church and an icon of her held there.[33] Several of the miraculous cures attributed to Paraskeva in the miracle book of this church involved blindness.[34] While Paraskeva was known to heal many types of diseases, her specialty is eye ailments. The Russian service to her specifically refers to her healings of the blind. In Greece and the Balkans, icons of St Paraskeva the martyr frequently depict her holding a small medicinal bowl containing a pair of eyes. This iconographic marker and the folk belief in the saint's patronage of eye ailments stem from an incident in the vita of Paraskeva the martyr, when she heals her torturer of blindness and thus convinces him to leave off persecutions and adopt Christianity.[35] According to the vitae by Evtimii and by Grigory Tsamblak, the tomb of St Paraskeva the recluse was famous in their time for miraculous healings, and the prayers to her emphasize this characteristic.[36] Indeed, shrines to the saint in Sofia, Belgrade, Jassy, and Greenlawn, New York, still attract pilgrims searching for respite from physical ills.

Although the popular cult surrounding St Paraskeva fits solidly within Orthodox tradition of the premodern period, the particular characteristics attributed to her still require elucidation. Why should she have the nickname Piatnitsa – Friday? Why should she be associated with St Anastasia and the prophet Elijah? Why should Paraskeva, among all the dozens of women saints in the Orthodox calendar, become the focus for a women's cult? Why should her iconographical symbol be the spindle? Why should merchants choose her as their patron? Because the cult of St Paraskeva exhibits the same characteristics in the Balkans as in Russia, the explanation should be sought not in Russian pre-Christian folk belief, but rather in the shared sources of Eastern Orthodoxy.

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St Paraskeva's nickname 'Friday' is explained within the vita of the martyr, when the saint explains: 'My name is Friday; I am an oblate to Christ's passion.'[37] The nickname clarifies for Slavic speakers the allusion of the Greek name to Good Friday, the day of Christ's crucifixion. In another version of the martyr's vita, she says, 'My parents were Christian and they understood that on the sixth day our Lord God Jesus Christ undertook a free and life-giving passion for the salvation of the whole world. Understanding this, my parents respected the holy day of Paraskeva.'[38] The reference to the 'sixth day' might have struck Slavic readers as anomalous, because 'piatnitsa' means 'fifth day.' It points to an earliest non-Slavic source for the vita – one in which the days of the week began with Sunday, rather than with Monday, as Slavs count. Since Paraskeva represented Good Friday, her frequent connection to St Anastasia becomes understandable: the latter represents Sunday, the day of the Resurrection.[39]

Although Paraskeva represented specifically Good Friday, she came to be connected with Fridays in general – just as every Friday commemorated Christ's passion. The miracle book of the Church of St Paraskeva in Novgorod in the sixteenth century specifically mentioned that the wonders it recounted occurred on Fridays.[40] The Poshekhonskii text connects veneration of St Paraskeva and special observance of the Friday before St Ilia's Day. It was one of twelve specially observed in Slavic folk tradition. Songs and tales about the 'Twelve Fridays' circulated widely, not only in Russia but among the South Slavs as well – both Orthodox and Catholic. Not all Fridays were connected with St Paraskeva, and, indeed, she does not make an appearance at all in some versions of the 'Twelve Fridays' tale.[41]

The message of the 'Twelve Fridays' text did not vary, whether or not the message was attributed to Paraskeva: pious Christians should observe fasting and sexual abstinence on the Fridays, and generally practise proper conduct. Paraskeva preaches similar behaviour in popular religious songs about her. Not only does Paraskeva exhort women (and men) to observe fasts, but also to avoid dirty work on Wednesdays and Fridays. She also condemns sins that would endanger family harmony: abortion, cursing parents, breaking up marriages, fighting at meals.[42]

The fervour with which some Orthodox Slavs observed Fridays – and, in particular, the cessation from work – disturbed not only the Stoglav Council, but also later church leaders. In 1590, Metropolitan Mikhail of Kiev sought the endorsement of Patriarch Jeremias of Constantinople to condemn this behaviour as heretical. Jeremias ac-

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ceded to Mikhail's request, but apparently misunderstood the East Slavic custom: he condemned 'those among Christians who observe Fridays but work on holy Sunday.'[43] But Jeremias was clearly thinking of the Islamic context of his own immediate flock, who might be tempted to transfer their primary religious observance from Sunday to Friday in order to interact more comfortably with their Muslim neighbours. Neither Jeremias nor Mikhail mentioned St Paraskeva.

By the eighteenth century, most clerics had forgotten the connection between Paraskeva and Good Friday, and denounced the popular association between the two as error and superstition.[44] The Spiritual Regulation of Peter the Great specifically condemned popular observance of Fridays as sacred to Paraskeva.[45] However, even at that time, Markell Rodyshevskii, an erstwhile protégé of Feofan Prokopovich and one of his harshest critics, defended the Orthodoxy of the cult of St Paraskeva. Rodyshevskii argued, accurately, that Paraskeva represented Good Friday, and if ordinary Christian believers waxed enthusiastic about the personification, there was no harm done.[46] But most church spokesmen were not so lenient. In his guide for pastors published in 1900, S.V. Bulgakov recommended that parish priests remind parishioners that Fridays commemorated the Crucifixion, rather than St Paraskeva, and refuse prayers in her honour except as scheduled on 28 October.[47] Despite official discouragement, Russian and Ukrainian peasants continued to draw a direct connection between veneration of St Paraskeva and respect for Fridays as times of special religious devotion.

The connection between St Paraskeva and the prophet Elijah is less obvious. One reason could lie in the folk custom of observing the Fridays before major holidays, including that of St Ilia, as the Poshekhonskii text reveals. Both figures were connected to commercial fairs in the middle of the summer, as seen in the Poshekhonskii text, and both were celebrated in the space of one week, on 20 July and 26 July. The connection between Paraskeva and Ilia remained vibrant in peasant culture in the nineteenth century.[48] But Paraskeva is not particularly associated with the Archangel Michael, whose day on 8 November lies in close proximity to October celebrations of both Saints Paraskeva. The vita of Paraskeva the recluse in the Evtimii/Tsamblak version provides a clue to the association between the saint and the biblical Elijah: he compares the two in their devotion to the ascetic life in the wilderness. Evtimii also compares Paraskeva to John the Baptist, helping to explain why the maiden Glikeriia in Rostov experienced her vision of Paraskeva on St John's holiday.[49]

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The evidence from sixteenth and seventeenth-century Russia indicates that St Paraskeva was already special to women. The Stoglav text explicitly refers to three categories of women involved in the cult, as well as to 'loose hair' – a female failing. Although commercial people, particularly from Iaroslavl, Kostroma, Vologda, and Romanov, were credited with originating the Poshekhonskii cult, women played an important role in it as well. Not only are they, and their children, explicitly mentioned, but a local widow, Irina Cheglokova, endowed the church built at the site and appointed its priest – the very same Ivan Prokopiev who spurred its founding.[50]

Yet the reasons women gravitated to the cult of St Paraskeva remain obscure. As patron saint for housework, she served an important purpose – she became a means for women to enforce their own standards of conduct. Speaking with the saint's voice, the female community could express its disapproval of other women's shoddy work or their overzealousness. It is not accidental that folktales recorded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries depict St Paraskeva, not other women, exacting retribution on lazy maidens or show-offs. But any saints could have served this function, and certainly there was no dearth of female figures in the Orthodox pantheon – the Virgin Mary, foremost, but also numerous other women saints. In Western Europe in the later Middle Ages, St Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary, became a favourite of women, and her patronage of women's household activities resembles St Paraskeva's.[51]

A partial explanation for the choice of Paraskeva may lie in the particular strength and autonomy attributed to both Saints Paraskeva in the hagiography. Although the life of the martyr Paraskeva follows the same plot line as most virgin martyrs' vitae, in the early Bulgarian 'Materikon' version, the heroine is particularly outspoken. She calls one ruler 'You dog!' and another 'sorcerer' and 'son of the Devil' when they try to induce her to abandon her faith.[52] In a later Russian version of the vita, Paraskeva responds to interrogation in riddles, intelligible only to those of the Christian faith.[53] The vita of the hermit Paraskeva also provided a striking picture of a female role model. In his version of Evitimii's vita, Tsamblak specifically invoked women's capability for spiritual excellence:

> Do not see female weakness bearing the name of masculinity (*muzhstvennoe*), but judge by her strong and courageous (*muzh'stvenoe*) intelligence, and not by the visible nature. For among men are numbered

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> Hannah, and Judith, and Deborah, who gathered forces, ruled a kingdom, and put a dishonourable tsar to shame.[54]

Tsamblak not only emphasized Paraskeva's public role – 'You are like a brave governor (*voevoda*)' – but also her patronage of women: 'You are glory to women, beauty to maidens, intercessor to young people, protector of those under marriage.'[55]

As the reference in Tsamblak's panegyric indicates, Paraskeva was recognized even in the sixteenth century as the patron of married women. The Piatnitsa of later folk culture similarly serves as the patroness of marriages; it was to her that maidens appealed to send them good husbands. Because neither Saint Paraskeva ever married, this patronage, on the surface, would seem peculiar. But the Evtimii/Tsamblak version of the vita of Paraskeva the recluse addressed her as 'the chosen bride of the heavenly tsar,' who enjoyed a deeply romantic attachment with her bridegroom Christ, calling to him: 'I search for you, my bridegroom ... whom my soul loves.'[56] Paraskeva the martyr was notable for her staunch refusal of marriage to a prominent, but evil, man: 'I have a true bridegroom, Christ, and I need no other husband.'[57] In the context of premodern society, where families arranged marriages, a maiden's right to choose a husband was limited to authorization to refuse an unwanted bridegroom. A saint who did precisely that could easily serve as an inspiration to young women to insist upon their own preferences.

Although many characteristics of the popular cult of St Paraskeva can thus be traced to the hagiographical texts, two key aspects cannot: her patronage of women's housework, particularly of spinning, and her patronage of merchants. Finding no reference to either merchants or needlework in the vitae, scholars have concluded that they must stem from non-Christian sources. In particular, they have hypothesized a connection in Paraskeva's association with Friday: the day dedicated to female deities in the ancient world (Venus, Freya), and the day of greatest business in the marketplace.[58] But Paraskeva's characteristics do not match those of Venus or Freya: she is the patroness of proper women's conduct, not sex. Furthermore, Friday was not necessarily the day of chief importance to merchants. But Paraskeva's patronage of women's housework and merchants need not be explained through some distant connection in the pre-Christian world; it, too, may be traced easily to an ecclesiastical source.

As we have seen, Paraskeva represented not simply the personifica-

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tion of Friday, but particularly of the holy day preceding Easter, Good Friday. Indeed, she was originally celebrated only on Good Friday, and did not have a place in the regular calendar. The miracle book of the Church of St Paraskeva in Novgorod records that special prayers to St Paraskeva were recited after the liturgy on Good Friday.[59] But none of the readings in the medieval liturgy for Good Friday concern a saint by the name of Paraskeva – or any woman figure at all, except the Mother of God. However, one reading for the 'preparatory' service (in Greek, 'paraskevia')[60] was taken from the book of Proverbs, chapter 31, depicting the ideal woman:

> Who shall find a good woman? She is more precious than a precious stone. The heart of her husband rejoices in her. Such a woman does not lack for good profits. She does good for her husband all her life. She finds wool and linen and does good work with her hands. Like a ship, she makes purchases, gathering riches for herself from afar. She arises in the night and looks to the activities of her slave women, buying with care ... She reaches out her arms in effort, and turns her elbows to the spindle. She stretches out her hands to the needy and gives fruit to the poor. Her mouth opens with reason and righteousness, and she receives honour for the speech of her tongue in strength and goodness. Her children call upon her the Lord's mercy, and her husband, enriched, praises her. Many daughters care for wealth, and many act with strength, but you have exceeded them all.[61]

In this biblical text, especially as reworked for the use in the Good Friday liturgy, we can see the origin of the central elements of the popular cult: Paraskeva's connection with merchants; her association with women's work – especially needlework and the spindle; her patronage of proper married life. Like the vitae of both saints named Paraskeva, chapter 31 of Proverbs depicts a strong, active, respected woman.

It was the conjunction of the three, originally separate, ecclesiastical traditions about St Paraskeva that together provided the inspiration for the popular cult. Unlike so many of the church's examples of exemplary women, Paraskeva was not modest and retiring, but rather brave and indomitable. She empowered women to battle against injustice, to preach religious truth, to decide for themselves whom to marry and when to work. The saint's patronage sanctified women's work, defending its respectability and importance to the rest of the community.

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It was because this powerful female image made churchmen uncomfortable that more and more often they ignored the Christian roots of the cult of St Paraskeva, and condemned it as pagan. Later scholars, themselves suspicious of Christianity and favourably inclined towards paganism, agreed with this assessment, regarding the Christian elements as later, regrettable, accretions: 'The original, specific meanings ... dating from pre-Christian Russia, may have been forgotten and obscured by Christian observance.'[62] Now tainted with the charge of paganism, St Paraskeva has increasingly been shunned by observant Christian women, and so has had little place in the religious revival of the post-Soviet era. But, as we have seen, the original meaning of the cult of St Paraskeva was rooted in Christian traditions, as reinterpreted and transmitted through popular culture.

NOTES

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2 Emil Kaluzniacki, 'Zur alteren Paraskevalitteratur der Griechen, Slaven, und Rumänen,' *Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch-Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 141, no. 8 (1899): 1–93; Konrad Onasch, 'Paraskeva-Studien,' *Ostkirchliche Studien* 6 (1978): 121–41; Khr. Kodov, 'Starite zhitiia na Sv. Petke Epivatska,' *Dukhovno kultura; mesechno spisanie za religiia, filosofiia, nauka i izkustvo* 40, no. 1 (1960): 21–33; Klimentina Ivanova, 'Zhitieto na Petka Turnovska ot Patriarkha Evtimii; Istochnitsi i tekstologicheski belezhki,' *Starobulgarska literatura* 8 (1980): 13–36; Ivan Bozhilov and Stefan Kozhukharov, *Bulgarskata literatura i knizhnina prez XIII vek* (Sofia, 1987), 53–4, 97–106, 209–10, 235–6; Stefan Kozhukharov, 'Turnovskata knizhnova shkola i razvitieto na khimnichnata poeziia v starata bulgarska literatura,' *Turnovska knizhovna shkola 1371–1971:*

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5 Joan Delaney Grossman, 'Feminine Images in Old Russian Literature and Art,' *California Slavic Studies* 11 (1980): 38–42; Mary Kilbourne Matossian, 'In the Beginning, God Was a Woman,' *Journal of Social History* 6, no. 3 (1973): 325–43; Joanna Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture* (Bloomington, IN, 1988), 116–23.
6 Stephen Benko makes this point in his monograph, *The Virgin Goddess: Studies in the Pagan and Christian Roots of Mariology* (Leiden, 1993), especially 4–5.
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8 Mirjana Detelić, 'Sveta Petka u sivoj zoni usmene knjizevnosti,' in *Kult svetih na Balkanu*, ed. Nikola Tasić and Mirjana Detelić (Kragujevac, 2001), 123–45; and Racko Popov, 'Mnogobrojna lica svete Petke trnovske,' in the same volume, 137–48.
9 *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei*, vol. 32 (Moscow, 1975), 23, 131; Ioannes Martinov, *Annus Ecclesiasticus Graeco-Slavicus* (Brussels, 1863), 263–4; Onasch, 'Paraskeva-Studien,' 127–9; Ammann, 'Die Heilige Grossmartyrerin Parasceve,' 382; Detelić, 'Sveta Petka,' 132–3, note 32; Popov, 'Mnogobrojna lica,' 137–8. For versions of her vita, see *Bdinski Zbornik: Ghent Slavonic Ms 408 A.D. 1360. Facsimile Edition* (London, 1972), ff. 58–72; Hilandar Research Library, Ohio State University, Columbus [henceforth HRL] Hilandar Monastery Collection [henceforth Hil.] 153, Mineia for October, fourteenth century, ff. 124–5v.; Novaković, 'Apokrifsko žitije,' 28–32; *Velikiia minei chetii sobrannyia vserossiiskim mitropolitom Makariem, oktiabr' dni 19–31* (St Petersburg, 1880), 1968–9; HRL, Uppsala 53, ff. 118–26; Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts [RGADA], F. 196, No. 637, Kniga, glagolemaia 'sobornika,' sixteenth-century, ff. 45–51; Belich, 'Zametka o slavianskom zhitii,' 1053–7. For an iconographical representation of the vita, see G.V. Popov, *Tverskaia ikona XIII–XVII vekov* (St Petersburg, 1993), 129–33, 267–8.
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11 For versions of her vita, see Francois Halkin, 'Sainte Parascève la Jeune et sa vie inédit BHG 1420z,' in *Studia Slavico-Byzantina et Mediaevalia Europensia*, ed. P. Dinekov et al. (Sofia, 1989), 1: 281–92; Emil Kaluzniacki, *Werke des patriarchen von Bulgarien Euthymius (1375–1393)* (Vienna, 1901; London, 1971), 59–77; *Velikiia minei chetii sobrannyia vserossiiskim mitropolitom Makariem, oktiabr' dni 4–18* (St Petersburg, 1874), 1021–42; Novaković, 'Život sv. Petke,' 53–9.

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12 *Bdinski Zbornik*, ii, vi–vii, ff. 58–72; Novaković, 'Apokrifsko žitije,' 23–32.
13 *Velikiia minei chetii ... oktiabr' dni 19–31*, 1968–9.
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15 Bozhilov and Kozhukharov, *Bulgarskata literatura i knizhnina*, 210, 236; Ivanova, 'Zhitieto na Petka Turnovska,' 16–23; Donka Petkanova, *Starobulgarska literatura* (Sofia, 1987), 2:69–71; Kaluzniacki, *Werke*, 59–77.
16 For medieval texts that confuse the two saints, see State Historical Museum, Moscow [GIM], Sinodal'noe sobranie 707, f. 183; HRL, Great Lavra Collection 56, ff. 52v–6; HRL, Great Lavra Collection 22, f. 6; HRL Hil. 149, ff. 26v–34v. For a modern work that makes this mistake, see Momir Tomić, *Srpska slava* (Belgrade, 1988), 150–1.
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22 HRL, Saratov State University [henceforth SGU] 354, 'Miracles of the Great Martyress Paraskeva,' ff. 7, 29.
23 'Otvety mitropolita Kipriana igumenu Afanasiiu,' *Pamiatniki drevnerusskago kanonicheskago prava* [*Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*, vol. 6] (St Petersburg, 1908), 253.
24 *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei*, vol. 13, pt. 1 (St Petersburg, 1904), 57–58; *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei*, vol. 12, pt. 2 (St Petersburg, 1901), 411; *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei*, vol. 23 (St Petersburg, 1910), 205.
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32 HRL, SGU 326, 'Miscellany of sermons with the vita of Antonii Rimlianin,' ff. 32v–4.
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45 P.V. Verkhovskoi, *Uchrezhdenie Dukhovnoi kollegii i Dukhovnyi reglament* (Rostov-on-Don, 1916), 2:34–5.
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48 M. Sinozerskii, 'Il'inskaia piatnitsa,' *Zhivaia starina*, 1896 vyp. 1, 538.
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51 Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn, eds, *Interpreting Cultural Symbols: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Society* (Athens, GA, 1990).
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53 HRL, Uppsala 53, f. 54.
54 *Velikiia minei chetii ... oktiabr' dni 4–18*, 1037.
55 *Velikiia minei chetii ... oktiabr' dni 4–18*, 1040.
56 Kaluzniacki, *Werke*, 64; *Velikiia minei chetii ... oktiabr' dni 4–18*, 1027, 1040.
57 HRL, Uppsala 53, f. 121v; RGADA F. 196, No. 637, f. 47v; see also the prayers in RGADA F. 181, No. 443/911 Zhitiia sviatykh, ff.158v, 160.
58 For the clearest example, see Hubbs, *Mother Russia*, 116–23.
59 HRL, SGU 354, ff. 28–8v.
60 Nicolaus Nilles, *Kalendarium Manuale utriusque ecclesiae orientalis i occidentalis* (London, 1971), 2:253–6. An alternate schedule for this reading was on the eve of Lazarus Saturday; see *Le Typicon de la grande église*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 166 (Rome, 1963), 62.
61 HRL, Russian National Library [GPB] Q.p.I.51, Parameinik, twelfth century, ff. 4–5v, Hil. 313 Parameinik, thirteenth century, ff. 72v–4. The text is not a direct rendering of chapter 31, but rather a loose reworking of the text.
62 Hilton, 'Piety and Pragmatism,' 69.

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Popular Religion in the Time of Peter the Great

PAUL BUSHKOVITCH

In October 1718 the Hanoverian diplomat Friedrich Christian Weber recorded an incident in St Petersburg that he believed to be representative of the changes in religious custom that resulted from Peter the Great's Europeanization of Russian culture. A priest in the city claimed to have a miracle-working icon of the Mother of God, which he showed to the 'simple and generous on-lookers' secretly at night in his lodging. Peter got wind of this emerging cult and ordered the priest and the icon brought to the court. There the tsar had the icon placed in front of the priest and told him that he wanted to see the miracles. The priest fell to the ground before his sovereign, admitted the deception, and was forthwith imprisoned in the fortress. The punishment was a whipping and expulsion from the priesthood. 'Thus he provided a warning for his colleagues not to oppose the tsar's salutary decrees against superstition and false miracles and not to strengthen in those things the Russians, who are otherwise inclined to superstition.'[1]

Since the eighteenth century such stories have formed the image of the rationalist reformer Tsar Peter struggling against the traditions of Russia, and indeed they were not isolated incidents. The *Dukhovnyi reglament* of 1722 ordered Russian priests to redirect popular practices by giving sermons and teaching the young. State and church policy, until at least the mid-nineteenth century, tried to prune many common practices, especially the devotion to miraculous relics and icons, of excesses which the elites classified as superstition. In practice this meant 'false' miracles, unsanctioned popular cults, and idiosyncratic forms of devotion. Peter's state and church discouraged such practices in favour of a more inward, text-based individual piety. As the campaign against popular cults was largely unsuccessful, the people remained devoted to

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the miracle cults while the elite heard sermons and read books. The result was a twofold Orthodoxy that had one form for the elite and another for the people. This image of twofold Orthodoxy, elite and popular, shaped debates in the Russian intelligentsia and the work of scholars, so that the same image of a twofold faith persists in much modern study of Orthodoxy, albeit with varying terminology. In the West we write of 'popular religion,' while current Russian scholarship seems to favour the terms 'popular Orthodoxy' (*narodnoe pravoslavie*) versus 'official' Orthodoxy.[2] The twofold scheme, however useful as an organizational device, misses some important points. It assumes that Peter's shift in emphasis was successful with the Russian elite, but that is not an established fact. No historian has examined the miracle cults, which certainly continued through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to determine how extensively the aristocracy and the middle and provincial gentry participated and when (if ever) their participation declined. It is quite possible that Peter's revolution in the culture of the court did not affect private devotion: we simply do not know. Further, the policies of Peter and his churchmen (mainly Prokopovich) were not nearly as 'rationalist' and even 'Protestant' as the literature claims.[3] Peter and his policies were not directed against miracle cults per se, only against excesses. Peter and the Synod trimmed the edges off the network of cults, but left the core intact. This was not just because they lacked time and resources, but rather because they accepted the basic presumption of such cults: that they reflected divine power acting in the world. This aspect of Peter's policy towards religion is evident both in his actions and in the writings of the churchmen who supported him. In turn the recognition that Peter and his successors wished only to control these popular devotions, not eliminate them, requires the historian to ponder whether or not they should really be described as popular.

A large part of the problem lies in the very notion of popular religion. If the term is to be meaningful, popular religion should imply a variety of religious experience that is characteristic of non-elite layers of society and possesses a certain autonomy from elite culture. Popular religion should also not be used to mean lay piety, the varieties of religious experience and practice characteristic of men and women, including those of the elite, who were not clergy or religious and lacked their specific training and learning. The problem is that it is difficult to find examples of practices that are restricted to lay, non-elite layers of soci-

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ety. Even before Peter, it is by no means clear that the practices historians call popular were restricted to laymen or the lower orders of society. The many manuscripts of supplicatory prayers, for example, since they were written down, imply audiences higher up in the social scale than the peasantry. It is not even perfectly clearly that such prayers can be called lay piety, since some of them came into manuscript *trebniki* and the manuscripts are found in monastic libraries.[4]

To be sure, miracle cults from the early sixteenth century onwards possessed some degree of social bipolarity. The records of miraculous cures at shrines of the relics of saints and miracle-working icons record a predominantly non-elite population, with (in contrast to Western Europe) the boyar elite conspicuous by its absence. Yet the recipients of the cures did not come exclusively from the peasantry: merchants, traders, soldiers, priests, monks, and lesser landholders all figure in the lists. Furthermore, the miracle cults in almost all cases revolved around relics or icons in monasteries, and the boyar elite heavily subsidized the monasteries and buried their dead in the monastery cemeteries. The boyar clans often favoured a particular monastery over many generations. In part the tsar and boyar elites showed their respect for the holy monks, but also for the relics. The absence of the boyars in the lists of miracles should not be taken to mean that they were indifferent to relics or miracles. Some of the boyars even kept elaborate relic collections in their houses.[5] At the Russian court the boyar elite also participated with the tsar in the various ceremonies honouring saints and icons, the most important being the nearly annual September pilgrimage to the Trinity Monastery for the feast day of St Sergii of Radonezh.[6] Outside of the court the boyars seem to have preferred to keep their devotion within their households, as the relic and icon collections demonstrate. Seventeenth-century boyars also maintained churches in their houses, outside of the parish network. The church disapproved of this practice, but failed to suppress it.[7] Thus the boyar honoured the same saints and icons in the same way as the peasant, but preferred to do it in a place and a manner that was compatible with his dignity at the top of society.[8] Such social separation does not necessary imply a difference in religious practice, though the fact remains that we have no evidence that boyars actually claimed cures at shrines or by the aid of relics in their possession.

The pattern until about 1650 seems to have been one that combined common objects of worship with somewhat different forms. After that point the distance between the elites and the rest of society began to

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widen, and this is the side of the story we know best from the existing literature. There were two sides to these changes, the schism and the changes in religious culture at the court. The most spectacular division between elite and at least some form of popular religion came about because of the schism of Old Belief that began in the 1650s. Old Belief became one of the principal expressions of popular religion in Russia, embracing by the mid-nineteenth century some 20 per cent of the ethnically Russian population of the empire, concentrated in the more 'popular' regions of the north, the Urals, Siberia, and other borderlands with little gentry (and state) presence. The unique examples of Old Believers among the elite remain the Sokovnin sisters, Feodora/Feodosiia Morozova and Princess Evdokiia Urusova, martyred in 1675. The whole of the peasantry and plebeian classes did not accept Old Belief, but the elite and the upper classes certainly rejected it overwhelmingly and thus made it a popular movement whether Avvakum wanted that outcome or not.[9]

The court elite was heavily involved in the cultural and religious changes of the later seventeenth century, changes that put a new face on traditional Orthodoxy. It was the new written religious culture coming from Kiev that ultimately reorganized learning and devotion in Russia, but it is the changes in church architecture that must have had the most rapid impact on the mass of the population. It was mainly the court elite, not the provincial gentry, that supported church construction in the new semibaroque style that came from the Ruthenian lands of the Polish Commonwealth. The aristocrats continued the practice that seems so prominent in the seventeenth century of building churches on their estates. Up until the 1680s, however, the boyars built churches with the older architecture and spatial arrangement that conformed to the Russian conception of the church with its heavy theological implications. The new churches also introduced three-dimensional carving and icons displaying iconographical variants derived from Ruthenian (thus ultimately Western) origin.[10] The new architecture immediately produced a highly visible split between the religion of the elite and that of the people, with its more traditional architecture. Where the gentry was not present to impose these changes, changes did not happen, as, for example, in the famous wooden churches of Kizhi. The village of Kizhi on Lake Onega, with its mixed Russian and Orthodox Karelian population, had no resident gentry and thus the older forms continued to develop.[11] At the same time, the new baroque churches were also village churches for the most part, and their congregations were not

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restricted to aristocrats: the churches were built for the village as well as the resident landholders. Whether the peasantry liked it or not, their churches had changed on boyar estates. The religion of the elite had become part of the religion of the masses.

In other areas there was no such easy transfer from top to bottom in society. The social separation of religious practice increased in the later seventeenth century because the court elite and the higher clergy (including those humble in rank but connected to the court or the Moscow monasteries) were open to the new impulses coming in from Kiev and other Ruthenian centres and ultimately from farther west. After the accession of Tsar Aleksei in 1645, this stream widened to a flood, helped along by the Ruthenian clergy in Moscow, Epifanii Slavinetskii and Simeon Polotskii. The effect of this literature was to introduce into Russia the very well-developed Orthodox Ruthenian practice of sermons, entire orations with complex language and rhetorical elements. These sermons, and the Kievan books of sermons that came with them, constituted a form of religious practice that was closed to the popular classes. Further, Ruthenian religious culture seems to have been much less oriented towards miracle cults than that of Russia (or of their Catholic neighbours). The Ruthenian Orthodox Church in the years between the fourteenth century and the Khmel'nyts'kyi revolt of 1648 seems to have proclaimed almost no new saints; this limited the number of possible miracle cults. Certainly devotion to miracle-working icons of the Mother of God existed, but the number of such icons was again extremely small. The exception, the great miracle shrine of the Ruthenian Orthodox Church, was the Kiev Monastery of the Caves, which maintained a continuous tradition of devotion to the relics of the Kievan saints. In this case the tradition was heavily revived during the early seventeenth century, in response to Catholic pressure, and as an obvious defensive tool against the claims of religious opponents.[12] With this important exception, the Ruthenian church never put the emphasis on miracle cults that the Russian did before Nikon. Thus the new religious culture that came from Kiev had a built-in bias towards sermon and liturgy rather than the more traditional mix of miracle cult and liturgy characteristic of earlier times in Russia.[13] At the same time the Russian church began to move cautiously towards a greater regulation of miracle cults, anticipating in this the attitudes of Peter the Great and his churchmen after 1718. The stricter policy of the church may not have seriously obstructed the appearance of new miracle cults, but it certainly had one effect: the composition of stories about miracles,

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usually by clerics, rapidly declined in the second half of the seventeenth century.[14]

The new religious culture with its roots in Kiev profoundly affected the character of elite spirituality in late seventeenth-century Russia. At the same time, new elements entered in the 1680s that even further separated the court elite from the people in religious as well as cultural terms. These new elements were the direct influence of Catholicism and of Catholic educational models in Russia. Exactly how Catholic teaching came to be known in individual cases cannot be clearly determined. It is the case that after 1684 the regent Sophia's negotiations with the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I led to the establishment of the first Catholic church in Moscow in the German suburb, staffed by Bohemian Jesuits. They implied in their reports from before their 1689 expulsion, as well as after their return, that they had some limited success among the Russian elite, but the story remains obscure.[15] The most important of the pro-Catholic Russian boyars, B.P. Sheremetev (1652–1719), later Peter's Field Marshal, spent some of his early years in Kiev, but there is no evidence of interest in the Roman church early in his life. He never left Russia until his 1687 diplomatic mission to Poland and the Empire, and for the next ten years spent his time on military service on the southern frontier against the Tatars. Yet during his 1697–8 embassy to Rome and Malta he very nearly converted to Catholicism. We do not know the names of other examples of aristocrats with such Catholic sympathies, but they did exist and among the clergy in Moscow as well.[16]

As these trends demonstrate, the Russian elite in the 1690s was no longer a bastion of Orthodox traditionalism. The princes Dolgorukii and Golitsyn continued to bury many of their dead in the Bogoiavlenskiii Monastery in the Kitaigorod, while Peter's family patronized important Moscow monasteries and buried their dead there. The Lopukhins were generous donors to the Andronikov Monastery (once the home of Andrei Rublev), while the Naryshkins performed the same function for the Vysokopetrovskii Monastery. Thus some of the main patrons of the 'Moscow baroque' continued the traditional boyar role of patronage of monasteries which in turn served as clan burial sites.[17]

The reformulation of religious life for the elite started with the death of Peter's mother, Tsaritsa Natal'ia, in January 1694. Peter put an end to devotional court ceremonies simply by not going. He did not participate in the Palm Sunday ceremony of 1694 nor the Kremlin Easter

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services. After the death of Tsar Ivan in 1696, one of the boyars took the tsar's place in the Palm Sunday rituals, leading the patriarch seated on a donkey, but even that soon came to an end with the death of Patriarch Adrian in 1700. The Epiphany ceremony, the blessing of the waters by the patriarch on January 6, remained through Peter's reign and beyond, but without the political symbolism of earlier times. Peter, when he came, stood in the rear with the guards in his guards uniform, and did not participate in the action as his ancestors did. Since Peter was very rarely in the Kremlin after the 1690s, the whole court calendar with its daily liturgy came to an end, and he did not replace it until after 1710, with a new series of more political and military ceremonies.[18]

The changes in the religious observances at the court and the radical reduction in liturgical attendance, fasts, and pilgrimages reoriented the religious observances of the court elite. Little happened to religious observances outside that court, in large part because Peter devolved the management of such matters onto Stefan Iavorskii, metropolitan of Riazan' and *mestobliustitel'* of the patriarchal throne. Starting in 1716, Peter began to regulate religious devotions more closely, culminating in the establishment of the Synod and the enactment of Peter's Spiritual Regulation of 1718–22.[19] These moves sought not only to diminish the administrative role of the higher clergy but also to supervise religious practices more closely beyond the world of the court elite. The Regulation directed the new Synod (pt. 11, 6–9) to look out for false relics and icons and particularly those that appeared as the result of the desire of bishops to increase their revenue.[20]

The careful supervision of miracle cults, especially of the establishment of new cults, continued through the eighteenth century, but with very mixed success. The government and the Synod could control religious observances in major centres, but in the provinces miracle cults continued to appear, though to what extent is difficult to determine.[21] Most important, the church and state authorities were only trying to supervise the cults, not eliminate them or even stop the operation of major shrines. The notion of Peter and Feofan as rationalists or displaying Protestant (that is, Lutheran) leanings comes from reading the Spiritual Regulation out of context, as well as from misreading the dispute over Tveritinov and Stefan Iavorskii's *Kamen' very*. Since the time of Iurii Samarin historians have opposed Prokopovich (with Peter) as showing 'Protestant' tendencies to Iavorskii as allegedly influenced by Catholicism. In fact the sharp difference between the two is present

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primarily on issues of church and state. The difference of opinion on icons, by contrast, was a matter of degree.[22]

Dmitrii Tveritinov was an obscure Moscow *lekar'*, that is, a surgeon rather than a trained physician, who was denounced to Metropolitan Stefan in 1713 as the propagator of heretical religious views. Tveritinov seems to have been most opposed to the devotion to icons, and some evidence emerged that he had been reading Protestant religious literature. The case sent Metropolitan Stefan into a frenzy and caused him to hand over Tveritinov to the Preobrazhenskii prikaz and to compile a massive tract against Tveritinov and Protestantism in general, the *Kamen' very*. The case dragged on, reaching the senate by 1714, and neither Peter nor the senators, particularly Prince Iakov Dolgorukii, were inclined to be harsh. Stefan wanted Tveritinov executed no matter what, but Peter and the senate decreed early in 1716 that he would not be executed if he recanted. This Tveritinov did, and he was thus exiled to a remote monastery. Two of his followers who refused to recant were put to death.[23]

Stefan's massive treatise inspired by the need to oppose Tveritinov remained unpublished until 1727, for he not only defended the cult of icons but also advanced very strong views on the proper independence and power of the clergy. This Peter could not accept, and the incident only increased the tsar's dislike of Iavorskii, already suspect since his 1712 defence of Tsarevich Aleksei.[24] The whole affair ultimately led to a change in the direction of Peter's policy towards the church, for it led to a break between Peter and Iavorskii early in 1716, and it is at this point that Peter invited Feofan Prokopovich to come from Kiev to St Petersburg. From that moment until the end of his reign, Feofan, soon made archbishop of Pskov, became Peter's principal spokesman in the church and even before secular audiences. Feofan was to a large extent the author of the Spiritual Regulation and a major actor in the establishment of the Synod in 1718. Feofan was not, however, against the devotion to icons or miracle-working relics. In March 1717, on Quadragesima Sunday, Feofan gave a long and detailed sermon in defence of the devotion to icons. In his view, icons gave visible reminders of the power of God in the world, of the incarnation of his son, his power to work miracles, and the holiness of the saints. He specifically defended kissing and embracing icons, arguing that this was not idolatry, for it was the inward attitude of the heart, not the action itself that mattered.[25] Nor was this Feofan's only pronouncement on the subject. In 1718

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Prokopovich also wrote in defence of the miraculously preserved relics of the monks of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves. This was part of a running polemic with German Lutherans, in this case an attempt to refute the 1675 account by Johannes Herbinus of the Kievan relics, which claimed that the bodies of the saintly monks had been preserved by natural, not supernatural means. Feofan included brief sections in defence of icons and relics in his many general or popular accounts of Orthodoxy published during and after his lifetime. Feofan's 'Protestant' inclinations did not extend to the rejection of either relics or icons. What Peter and Feofan were trying to do was to control the miracle cults by eliminating those that were fraudulent or unsupervised, not eliminate basic aspects of popular religious devotions.[26] Furthermore, there was some 'popular' support for this sort of regulation.[27]

At the same time, Peter and his successors altered but did not eliminate the place of pilgrimage and devotion to icons and relics from the culture of the court. Between 1694 and 1710 the court languished, but after Poltava he began to create a new Europeanized court culture about which we know little. Peter, legend aside, was not irreligious. He attended liturgy more than once a week in St Petersburg, usually at the Trinity Cathedral near the fortress of SS Peter and Paul.[28] Similarly, Aleksandr Menshikov, Peter's principal favourite and most important minister, went to church every Sunday, often twice, to matins or vespers as well as the liturgy. Some weeks he went several times, either to the Trinity Cathedral or to the Church of the Resurrection in the garden of his palace on Vasil'ev Island. In order for Peter to visit a shrine as his ancestors had done so often, however, there had to be one close enough for him to reach it conveniently. Until the Monastery of St Aleksandr Nevskii was founded in Petersburg in 1712, there was no such shrine. The actual relics of Aleksandr Nevskii did not come to the new monastery until 30 August 1724, when the feast of St Aleksandr was transferred from 23 November to 30 August, to commemorate the treaty of Nystad. Peter did attend services in the monastery before the relics were brought there: he was present for the consecration of the church on 25 March 1713 and celebrated the feast day (which was Menshikov's name-day) there as early as 1715.[29] This pattern continued, as we know from the journal of Menshikov's daily activities. Menshikov himself went to the monastery for his name-day or on the eve of it in 1716, 1717, 1718, 1719, and 1726. He also went for the liturgy and the sermon by Varlaam Golenkovskii, one of the Ukrainian monks whom Peter brought to found the monastery, four times early in 1717. Peter himself went

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with Menshikov for the liturgy and sermon on 1 November 1717, as well as for Menshikov's name-day three weeks later.[30] No other monasteries appeared within the city, nor did any appear or exist nearby that played the role of the Trinity Monastery for the court in the Kremlin before Peter. Peter's elevation of Aleksandr Nevskii to a local patron saint had explicit political implications, for it fit the main shrine of the new city into the series of celebrations of his victories (Poltava, Lesnaia, and others) and of dynastic name-days which made up the basis of the new round of court ceremonies. On the other hand, Peter did bring to the new city the relics of a saint, even if they were not actively working miracles.[31]

After Peter's death Russian rulers of the eighteenth century revived the practice of pilgrimage to Trinity Monastery and others, though not with the earlier frequency. Empress Elizabeth visited Trinity Monastery in 1742 as part of the journey to Moscow for her coronation, and again in 1744. Her pilgrimages were accompanied by a variety of secular festivities, but they were still pilgrimages. Catherine imitated her in 1762 and 1763, and Tsar Paul in 1797. On her trip south in 1787 Catherine visited the relics of the saints of the Kiev Monastery of the Caves and prayed there. Both Elizabeth and Catherine attended the liturgy in the Aleksander Nevskii Monastery in Petersburg on 30 August as Peter had done.[32]

The conventional view of the religious views of the Russian elite in the eighteenth century stresses Enlightenment, '*vol'terianstvo*,' and the Freemasons with their attendant Western-inspired mysticism. All of these were central to Russian culture, but it is not clear that they reached the majority of Russian noblemen, or that enlightened or Masonic nobles rejected the miracle cults. A.T. Bolotov, who was friendly with the Masons and was certainly religious, celebrated the Orthodox holidays, participated in *sviatki* (celebrations) between Christmas and Epiphany, and built churches in his villages. He never made a pilgrimage to any miracle shrines and showed no interest in relics or miracle-working icons, though his wife and daughter did.[33] He represents a cultural and religious type quite common in the reign of Catherine II, but was it the majority?

Russian aristocrats continued to be buried in the cemeteries near the important monasteries, both in and around Moscow and at the Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery in St Petersburg. This was the practice in Peter's time, for the wife of Senator I.A. Musin-Pushkin (1717), Peter's sister Tsarevna Natal'ia Alekseevna (1717), the wife of Senator Tikhon

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Streshnev (1718), and even Peter's infant son Tsarevich Petr Petrovich (1719) were all buried in the cemetery of the Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery. Back in Moscow, the Bogoiavlenskii Monastery in the Kitaigorod served the Princes Dolgorukii and Golitsyn and the Sheremetevs into the nineteenth century, while the Donskoi Monastery sheltered the remains of other Golitsyns, and Catherine II's grandees: Prince Ia.N. Shakhovskoi, General-Field Marshal N.V. Repnin, the wife of Count P.A. Rumiantsev-Zadunaiskii, and others. While the Bogoiavlenskii Monastery had no unusual shrine, the Donskoi Monastery housed the miracle-working icon of the Mother of God of the Don.[34] These traditions continued in the course of the century: Count Nikita Panin, who apparently had Masonic connections, wanted to be buried in the Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery when he died in 1783. The monastery in fact was one of the principal burying grounds of the Petersburg elite at least through the early nineteenth century. A generation later (1816), the poet Derzhavin, who was not a Mason, had himself buried in the Khutynskii Monastery near Novgorod.[35]

Part of the problem is historiographical. Prerevolutionary Russian historians who analysed religion in the eighteenth century dealt either with administrative and church-state matters, the early history of *starchestvo* (system of elders), or the religious and mystical ideas outside of Orthodoxy, such as the Masonic movement.[36] They never even posed the question of elite participation in such traditional devotions as pilgrimage to miracle shrines, assuming such activities to be 'popular.' Yet scattered evidence indicates that the nobility did participate in such activities.[37] The late eighteenth-century *sinodik* of the Trinity Monastery records continued donations to obtain prayers for the souls of the dead, but it seems that most of the donors were provincial gentry or even merchants. Aristocratic women often paid for prayers for their husbands or other relatives, but entire clans were unusual. One clan that was fully represented was the clan of Count Andrei Artamonov Matveev, Peter's diplomat and president of the College of Justice. Another family from Peter's time was the Tolstois, the donor being the wife of General Tolstoi. In 1797 the clan of General A.I. Ilovaiskii of the Don Host entered the list. On the whole, however, the group to be prayed for lacked the great aristocratic clans, and perhaps even the upper layers of the middle gentry, some women aside, and the sums involved were quite small, rarely as much as a hundred rubles. In contrast the Russian aristocracy did patronize the shrines in the Kiev Monastery of the Caves, which became an important pilgrimage site well beyond the

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Ukrainian heartland. Among those who gave expensive gifts to the Kiev monastery were Field Marshal B.P. Sheremetev, who gave the *tsarskie vrata* (royal doors) to the monastery's Dormition Cathedral in 1713, and his son, who paid for their repair in 1749. Field Marshal Count P.A. Rumiantsev-Zadunaiskii was buried in the church and his son, N.P. Rumiantsev (Alexander I's foreign minister 1807-18), was a generous donor, but so were virtually all important Russian aristocratic families, the princes Gagarin, Golitsyn, Dolgorukov, Kurakin, the counts Vorontsov, Saltykov, Chernyshev, and a host of lesser gentry families. All this was in addition to the Ukrainian hetmans, from Samoilovych to Danylo Apostol and Kirill Razumovskii and the 'Little Russian' gentry of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century: Iakubovych, Hudyma, Kandyba, and especially Ekaterina Efimovna Halahan.[38] Similarly the Petersburg elite provided lavish gifts for the Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery (Lavra from 1797). The counts Sheremetev provided such gifts in 1808 and 1818. In 1818–22 the construction of a new Church of the Holy Spirit in the monastery called forth not just the Sheremetev gifts but also others from Countess Anna Orlova-Chesmenskaia (known for her piety), Countess Sof'ia Stroganova, Princess Kleopatra Lobanova, Counts Aleksandr and Grigorii Kushelev, and Count Sergei Pavlovich Potemkin.[39]

At the same time, the demotion of the miracle cults from their central role at the court must have changed the context of any such devotions and must have decreased their importance to the nobility in comparison with the seventeenth century. Weber already noted that the pilgrimages to holy sites with relics of saints had diminished, though they had not disappeared.[40] Without a more thorough study of the shrines in the eighteenth century, one that includes the elite, not just the people, we cannot really say just how popular they were, though the evidence suggests that there was considerable elite participation, even if less than before.

Peter's revolution in Russian culture changed the context of religion, and certainly added to the existing distinctions among different layers of society, but did they build a real wall between the elite and the masses? Or did religion remain the one area of shared culture? There are other questions. How 'popular' was popular religion? The increasing attempt of the church and state to supervise and regulate the devotion to miracle-working relics and to all types of icons was not an attempt to eliminate them. Nor did the church and state discourage the

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elite of society from participating in these cults. What did happen was that the cults and the pilgrimages ceased to be as important a part of the court's life as they had been earlier. That change necessarily diminished elite participation in the cults, but we have no reason to believe that such participation disappeared. We simply do not know that the gentry read Voltaire or Masonic literature while the peasants prayed to miracle-working icons.

If the elite continued to participate, if in a reduced form, in the basic expressions of popular religiosity, to what extent can it be called popular? Eve Levin noted that 'the line between elite and popular culture was both nebulous and permeable.'[41] Perhaps the historian can save appearances by conceiving of the patterns of devotion as poles, one popular with liturgy and the miracle cults as the main form, and one elite with liturgy, private reading, and listening to sermons the main forms alongside some interest in miracle cults. Such an approach might allow the historian to characterize the types of devotion prevalent in various layers of society, but it does not really justify the use of a term like 'popular religion.' Without a more thorough study of the religion of the ruling elite of Russian society, we cannot hope to know that of the masses, for we will never know just what it is that we are looking at.

NOTES

1 F.C. Weber, *Das veränderte Rußland*, 3 vols (Frankfurt, Leipzig, Hannover, 1738–40), 1:309.

2 A.V. Kartashev, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tserkvi*, 2 vols (Paris, 1959), 2:311–77; Igor Smolitsch, *Geschichte der russischen Kirche 1700–1917* (Leiden, 1964), 57–132; P.V. Verkhovskoi, *Uchrezhdenie Dukhovnoi kollegii i Dukhovnyi Reglament*, 2 vols (Rostov na Donu, 1916); James Cracraft, *The Church Reform of Peter the Great* (Stanford, 1972); Reinhard Wittram, *Peter I: Czar und Kaiser*, 2 vols (Göttingen, 1964), 2:170–218; Lindsey Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great* (New Haven and London, 1998), 332–56; Gregory Freeze, *The Russian Levites: The Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1977); idem, 'The Rechristianization of Russia: The Church and Popular Religion 1750–1850,' *Studia Slavica Finlandensia* 7 (1990): 101–36; and idem, 'Institutionalizing Piety: The Church and Popular Religion, 1750–1850,' in *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire*, ed. Jane Burbank and David L. Ransel (Bloomington, IN, 1998), 210–49; and A.S. Lavrov, *Koldovstvo i religiia v Rossii 1700–1740* (Moscow, 2000).

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3 The attempt of Peter and the churchmen he supported to rein in the miracle cults and increase preaching is more reminiscent of the Catholic reforms in the wake of the Council of Trent than of Protestant practice.
4 Eve Levin, 'Supplicatory Prayers as a Source for Popular Religious Culture in Muscovite Russia,' in *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Russia and Ukraine*, ed. Samuel H. Baron and Nancy Shields Kollmann (DeKalb, IL, 1997), 96–114. Freeze's distinction between official and popular piety is really one between the piety of churchmen and the laity, but he also implicitly excludes the Russian elites from lay piety ('popular' religion, in his terminology): Freeze, 'Rechristianization,' passim.
5 Paul Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society in Russia: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford and New York, 1992), 38–40, 102–17; Isolde Thyret, 'Muscovite Miracle Stories as Sources for Gender-Specific Religious Experience,' in *Religion*, ed. Baron and Kollmann, 115–31; Andreas Ebbinghaus, *Die altrussischen Marienikonen-Legenden*, Slavistische Veröffentlichungen 70 (Berlin and Wiesbaden, 1990); Ludwig Steindorff, *Memoria in Altrußland: Untersuchungen zu den Formen christlicher Totensorge*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa 38 (Stuttgart, 1994); Jennifer Spock, 'The Solovki Monastery 1460–1645: Piety and Patronage in the Early Modern Russian North,' (PhD diss., Yale University, 1999). Prince Dmitrii Mamstriukovich Cherkasskii (died 1651) listed a large number of relics, the true cross, the milk of the Mother of God, and bones of St John Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian, the apostles Andrew and Peter, James the brother of the Lord, John the Baptist, and many others. See G.S. Sh[eremetev], 'Dukhovnoe zaveshchanie Kniazia Dmitriia Mamstriukovicha Cherkasskogo,' *Letopis' Istoriko-rodoslovskogo Obshchestva v Moskve* 4, no. 12 (1907): 17–24.
6 Robert O. Crummey, 'Court Spectacles in Seventeenth Century Russia: Illusion and Reality,' in *Essays in Honor of A.A. Zimin*, ed. Daniel Waugh (Columbus, OH, 1985), 130–58; Paul Bushkovitch, 'The Epiphany Ceremony of the Russian Court in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,' *Russian Review* 49, no. 1 (1990): 1–17; Michael S. Flier, 'Breaking the Code: The Image of the Tsar in the Muscovite Palm Sunday Ritual,' in *Medieval Russian Culture*, ed. Michael S. Flier and Daniel Rowland (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994), 2:213–42; idem, 'Court Ceremony in an Age of Reform: Patriarch Nikon and the Palm Sunday Ritual,' in *Religion*, ed. Baron and Kollman, 73–95; and more generally Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy* (Princeton, NJ, 1995–2000), 1:22–41.
7 Robert O. Crummey, *Aristocrats and Servitors: The Boyar Elite in Russia*

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1613–1689 (Princeton, NJ, 1983), 154–5; Lavrov, *Koldovstvo*, 275–6. The issue in part was that house churches often employed widowed priests who were not supposed to serve the liturgy; see Makarii, *Istoriia russkoi tserkvi* (reprint, Moscow, 1994–7), 7:489 (Church Council of 1682). See most recently P.S. Stefanovich, *Prikhod i prikhodskoe dukhovenstvo v Rossii v XVI–XVII vekakh* (Moscow, 2002).

8 Other practices, such as fasting, might show a different profile, but would be exceedingly hard to verify in reliable sources. Some foreign observers asserted that all Russians were faithful to the fasts, but we do not really know where they made the observations and what their own expectations were. Weber, *Rußland*, 1:130. Similarly the Prussian envoy Gustav baron Mardefeld (20 March 1722) asserted that 'Alle des hiesigen Kaisers Diener, welche sich von dem vulgaire distinguiren, halten fast keine Fasten, ausser etliche alte Holzblöcke, die noch an dem Kölerglauben kleben.' *Sbornik Imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva*, 148 vols (St Petersburg, 1867–1916) 15:204–5. Olearius, in contrast, reported a half century earlier that some Russians were strict about fasts and some were not: Adam Olearius, *Vermehrte Newe Beschreibung der Moscowitsichen und Persischen Reyse*, ed. Dieter Lohmeier (Tübingen, 1971), 308–9. Did Russian custom change in favour of stricter observance between 1640 and 1700, or did the change from 1700 to 1720 so strike the Protestant German envoys that they exaggerated the strictness of Russian observance in 1700? The latter seems a more likely conclusion, always assuming that Olearius was correct.

9 V.S. Rumiantseva, *Narodnoe antitserkovnoe dvizhenie v Rossii v XVII veke* (Moscow, 1986); Georg B. Michels, *At War with the Church: Religious Dissent in Seventeenth Century Russia* (Stanford, 1999); A.I. Mazunin, *Povest' o boiaryne Morozovoi* (Leningrad, 1979).

10 B.R. Vipper, *Arkhitektura russkogo barokko* (Moscow, 1978); James Cracraft, *The Petrine Revolution in Russian Architecture* (Chicago and London, 1988), 19–110; idem, *The Petrine Revolution in Russian Imagery* (Chicago, 1997), 123.

11 Irina Cherniakova, *Kareliia na perelome epokh. Ocherki sotsial'noi i agrarnoi istorii XVII veka* (Petrozavodsk, 1998), 65–88, 205–26.

12 See Atanasiusz Kalnofoyski, *Teraturgema* (Kiev, 1638), reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Writings on the Kievan Caves Monastery*, ed. Paulina Lewin (Cambridge, MA, 1987).

13 S.T. Golubev, *Kievskii mitropolit Petr Mogila i ego spodvizhniki. Opyt tserkovno-istoricheskogo issledovaniia*, 2 vols (Kiev, 1883–98); Ivan Vlasovs'kyi, *Narys istorii ukrains'koi pravoslavnoi tserkvy*, 4 vols (New York, 1955–66), 2:271–80; Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, 128–49.

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14 Bushkovitch, *Religion and Society*, 89–99.
15 Georgius David, *Status modernus Magnae Russiae seu Moscoviae (1690)*, ed. A.V. Florovskij (The Hague, 1965); P. Gagarin, 'Un document inédit sur l'expulsion des jésuites de Moscou en 1689,' *Études de théologie de philosophie et d'histoire* 1 (1857): 387–430; A.V. Florovský, *Česti jesuité na Rusi* (Prague, 1941); *Pis'ma i doneseniia iezuitov o Rossii kontsa XVII i XVIII veka,* ed. M.O. Koialovich (St Petersburg, 1904), 75, 271.
16 A.I. Zaozerskii, *Fel'dmarshal Sheremetev* (Moscow, 1989), 20–9; Paul Bushkovitch, 'Aristocratic Faction and the Opposition to Peter the Great: The 1690's,' *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 50 (1995): 102–4, 109–14. A new, essentially Catholic, culture also came to Russia through the Slavo-Greco-Latin Academy, which numbered Prince Iu.Iu. Odoevskii and Ivan Musin-Pushkin among its students. Traditionally considered a bastion of the 'Grecophile' opponents of Westernization, its courses were, in fact, entirely taken from Jesuit prototypes brought from Italy by the Greek Likhudes brothers. Nikolaos Chrissidis, 'Creating the New Educated Elite: Learning and Faith in Moscow's Slavo-Greco-Latin Academy 1685–1694' (PhD diss., Yale University, 2000), 129–41.
17 Sebastian Kempgen, *Die Kirchen und Klöster Moskaus: Ein Landeskundliches Handbuch* (Munich, 1994), 226–33, 620–30.
18 M.M. Bogoslovskii, *Petr I: Materialy dlia biografii* (Moscow, 1940–8), 1:175–6; Wortman, *Scenarios*, 1:42–80; and most recently Elena Pogosian, *Petr I – arkhitektor rossiiskoi istoriii* (St Petersburg, 2001).
19 The 1716 enactments are described in Verkhovskoi, *Uchrezhdenie*, 2:109–12; Cracraft, *Church Reform*, 141–2.
20 V.M. Kleandrova et al., 'Dukhovnyi Reglament,' in *Zakonodatel'stvo Petra I* (Moscow, 1997), 548–9.
21 Michels and Freeze correctly stress the lack of effective control over the provinces by the church (and state) both before and after Peter's time: Michels, *War*, 187, 227–8; Freeze, 'Rechristianization,' 112–14.
22 Iu.F. Samarin, 'Stefan Iavorskii i Feofan Prokopovich,' in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 5 (Moscow, 1880); more recently in Iu. F. Samarin, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow, 1996), 15–408. The work was an 1844 dissertation, the full text of which remained unpublished until 1880. Later historians follow Samarin's scheme of Iavorskii the pro-Catholic and Prokopovich the pro-Protestant: Kartashev, *Ocherki*, 2:330–45; G. Florovskii, *Puti russkogo bogosloviia*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1983), 84–104; Smolitsch, *Geschichte*, 78. While there is no doubt of the extensive use of Western theological and devotional literature by both hierarchs, and of their respective sympathies, this scheme serves to conceal real areas of agreement and the extent to

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which both continued Orthodox tradition. Further, Feofan's sympathies probably lay more with Pietism than orthodox Lutheranism.

23 Leontii Magnitskii, *Zapiska Leontiia Magnitskogo po delu Tveritinova*, Pamiatniki drevnei pis'mennosti 38 (St Petersburg, 1882), 266; F. Ternovskii, 'Moskovskie eretiki v tsarstvovanie Petra I,' *Pravoslavnoe obozrenie* 4 (1863): 305–47; 5:58–74; 6:111–35; 8:323–38; N.S. Tikhonravov, 'Moskovskie vol'nodumtsy nachala XVIII veka i Stefan Iavorskii,' in his *Sochineniia* (Moscow, 1898), 2:156–304. The senators who tried to settle the case quietly at the end of 1714 were Prince Ia.F. Dolgorukii, T.N. Streshnev, Prince M.V. Dolgorukii, Prince G. Volkonskii, and M.M. Samarin: Ternovskii, 'Moskovskie eretiki,' 5:67–74.

24 Stefan Iavorskii, *Kamen' very* (Moscow, 1729), 1–2, 33–180 (icons), 265–300 (relics), 689–776 (superiority of church to state). On Iavorskii, see most recently Viktor Zhivov, *Iz tserkovnoi istorii vremen Petra Velikogo. Issledovaniia i materialy* (Moscow, 2004).

25 Feofan Prokopovich, *Slova i rechi* (St Petersburg, 1760–5), 1:75–95 ('Slovo o pochitanii sviatykh ikon v nedeliiu pervuiu sviatye chetyredesiatnitsy v 10 dnia marta 1717 goda'). Prokopovich delivered this sermon only a few months after his arrival in St Petersburg, about a year after the end of the Tveritinov case. It is hard to resist the conclusion that he was making it clear that he, too (not just Iavorskii), was supporting the devotion to icons.

26 Feofan Prokopovich, *Rassuzhdenie o netlenii moshchei sviatykh ugodnikov Bozhiikh v Kievskikh peshcherakh netlenno pochivaiushschikh* (Moscow, 1786) (originally Latin in *Miscellanea sacra*, Breslau, 1745). Feofan noted that such miracles were found not just in Kiev but in many places throughout the world, in both Little and Great Russia: *Rassuzhdenie*, 806–90. See also P. Morozov, 'Feofan Prokopovich kak pisatel',' *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia* (*ZhMnP*) 207 (1880): February, 416–76; 208: March, 72–133; 209: May, 107–48; June, 251–311; 210: July, 1–49; August, 293–354; 211: September, 1–65. Morozov was the only historian to devote even minimal attention to Prokopovich's defence of the Kiev relics (Morozov, 'Feofan,' *ZhMnP*, 209 [1880]: May, 121–2; April, 262–4). Cf. the few lines in I. Chistovich, *Feofan Prokopovich i ego vremia*, Sbornik otdeleniia russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk 4 (St Petersburg, 1868), 589. For Feofan's opponent, see Johannes Herbinus, *Religiosae Kijovienses cryptae* (Jena, 1675), reprinted in *Seventeenth Century Writings on the Kievan Caves Monastery*, ed. Lewin.

27 Lavrov, *Koldovstvo*, 393–408.

28 Wittram, *Peter*, 2:170–1; Hughes, *Russia*, 375–8.

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29 S.G. Runkevich, *Aleksandro-nevskaia lavra* (St Petersburg, 1913), 255–72; *Kamer-fur'erskie zhurnaly*, 1715; *Pokhodnyi zhurnal 1715 goda*, Iurnaly i Kamer-fur'erskie zhurnaly 1695–1774 godov 21 (St Petersburg, 1855), 29.

30 S.R. Dolgova and T.A. Lapteva, eds, 'Povsednevnye zapiski delam kniazia A.D. Menshikova 1716–1720, 1726–1727 gg.,' *Rossiiskii arkhiv* 10 (2000):86, 111, 114, 116, 122, 145, 173, 177, 208, 272, 342, 444.

31 For the details of Peter's 'reform of piety' after 1716, see Lavrov, *Koldovstvo*, 408–35.

32 Wortman, *Scenarios*, 1:105–6, 120–1, 181; Nikolai Barsukov, ed., *Dnevnik A.V. Khrapovitskogo* (St Petersburg, 1874), 25 (15 February 1787); 'Perepiska imperatritsy Ekateriny II s v.k. Pavlom Petrovichem i v.k. Mariei Fedorovnoi,' *Russkaia Starina* 8 (November 1873): 673, Catherine II to Grand Duchess Maria Fyodorovna, Kiev, 20 February 1787: 'J'ai fait mes devotions la première semaine.' Empress Elizabeth went to the Aleksandr Nevskii monastery in 1743, 1754, and 1757–9, while Catherine visited in 1762, 1764, 1769, and 1773: Runkevich, *Lavra*, 772–3.

33 Rexheuser describes his understanding of Orthodox liturgy and sermons as essentially 'aesthetic,' coinciding with a Western type of inward Christianity. A.T. Bolotov, *Zhizn' i prikliucheniia Andreia Bolotova*, 4 vols (St Petersburg, 1871–2); Adelheid Rexheuser, 'Orthodoxe Frömmigkeit und westliche Bildung im Rußland im 18. Jahrhundert: Das Leben A.T. Bolotovs,' *Ostkirchliche Studien* 37 (1988): 148–77. Vernadskii estimated that there were some 2,000 Masons in the Russian elite in the 1770s and 1780s, out of some 6,000 (1770s) to 12,000 (1780s) men in the eight highest classes according to the Table of Ranks. One sixth (16.6 per cent) is only a large minority, but some of them, like Panin, were individually quite important: G.V. Vernadskii, *Russkoe masonstvo v tsarstvovanie Ekateriny II* (St Petersburg, 1999), 132.

34 Dolgova, 'Povsednevnye,' 149, 176, 194, 286–7, 301, 305; Nikolai Mikhailovich, *Moskovskii nekropol'* (Moscow, 1908), 1:292–302, 392–7. Sheremetev apparently wanted to be buried in the Kiev Monastery of the Caves, but Peter ordered him buried in the Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery instead: 'Sheremetev, Boris Petrovich,' *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, vol. Sabaneev-Shiutts (St Petersburg, 1911), 131. Burial in nonmonastic cemeteries seems to have become more common only around the middle of the nineteenth century.

35 *Ekaterina II i G.A. Potemkin: lichnaia perepiska 1769–1791* (Moscow, 1997), 159; Vernadskii, *Russkoe masonstvo*, 69; David L. Ransel, *The Politics of Catherinian Russia: The Panin Party* (New Haven and London, 1975), 255–61; Nikolai Mikhailovich, *Peterburgskii nekropol'* (St Petersburg, 1912),

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1:628–31 (Golitsyns), 2:71–3 (Dolgorukovs); Ia. Grot, *Zhizn' Derzhavina* (St Petersburg, 1883; reprint Moscow, 1997), 657–60.

36 Typical of such works are B.T. Titlinov, *Gavriil Petrov, Mitropolit novgorodskii i sanktpeterburgskii* (Petrograd, 1916); Igor Smolitsch, *Russisches Mönchtum. Entstehung, Entwicklung, und Wesen 988–1917* (Würzburg, 1953); and the extensive literature on the Masons, such as A.N. Pypin, *Russkoe masonstvo. XVIII vek i pervaia chetvert' XIX veka* (Petrograd, 1916); Vernadskii, *Russkoe masonstvo*. Surveys of gentry culture usually ignore Orthodoxy: for example, N.D. Chechulin, *Russkoe provintsial'noe obshchestvo XVIII veka* (St Petersburg, 1889); or Iu.M. Lotman, *Besedy o russkoi kul'ture. Byt i traditsii russkogo dvorianstva XVIII-nachala XIX veka* (Moscow, 1994).

37 O.V. Kirichenko, 'O blagochestii russkikh dvorian XVIII veka,' *Pravoslavie i russkaia narodnaia kul'tura* 3, (Moscow, 1994), 168–79; Lavrov, *Koldovstvo*, 294–309.

38 Mitropolit Evgenii Bolkhovitinov, 'Opisanie Kievo-Pecherskoi Lavry,' in *Vybrani pratsi z istorii Kyieva*, by Mytropolyt Ievhenii Bolkhovitinov (Kiev, 1995), 325, 330–3; Russkaia gosudarstvennaia biblioteka, Moscow, f. 304/ II (Trinity Monastery, Supplementary Library), MS 346 ff. 108 (Matveev), 112 (Countess Tolstaia), 333v (Princess Gagarina), available at http://stsl.ru. The manuscript dates from the late eighteenth century (ff. 1–342) with additions (ff. 342v–75) for the years 1793–1802. The role of aristocratic women seems to be new and needs investigation. The difference between Trinity and the Caves Monastery may be the result of different sources, and both need a modern study with a more detailed analysis of the Trinity *sinodik* than provided here.

39 Runkevich, *Lavra*, 841, 855, 871–3.

40 Weber, *Das Veränderte Rußland*, 2:310–11. Weber's personal observations were to a great extent limited to the capitals.

41 Levin, 'Supplicatory Prayers,' 98.

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Letters from Heaven: An Encounter between the 'National Movement' and 'Popular Culture'

ANDRIY ZAYARNYUK

Listy z Nieba sypiaċ sieċ co roku. I saċ tacy co czytajaċ. A tam wszystko jest, aż szumi, posłuchaj tylko, Duwyd, zadumaj sieċ. Groźba nad światem ... Ja skoro tylko posłucham piśma, to w tej chwileczce poznam czy to z Nieba, czy nie. Mnie nikt nie oszuka, Ksiaċdz, pan, żyd czy diak.
(Letters from heaven drop every year and there are those who read them. And everything there is so clear. Duwyd, contemplate it, menace hung above the world ... In the very minute I hear the letter, I recognize whether it is from heaven or not. No one can cheat me: priest, landlord, Jew, or cantor.)

Stanisław Vincenz, *Listy z Nieba*

The Polemics around a Small Brochure

The 'letters from heaven' or 'heavenly letters' were first brought to the attention of the Ukrainian educated public in Galicia in 1877, when Bilous, a publisher of popular books in Kolomyia, printed a fourteen-page pamphlet called *Lyst iz'iavlenyi* (A Letter of Revelation). Bilous was severely attacked by national-populist-oriented members of the Ukrainian clergy for printing the letters. An article signed by several 'progressive' priests makes the presumptive declaration: 'We must say: (1) that no one in heaven wrote or writes letters; (2) that neither the patriarch of Jerusalem nor Mr Bilous ever received any such letters from heaven because all letters are delivered by the postal service which does not extend to heaven.'[1]

According to enemies of the publication, the letters which Bilous published were sold for a few gulden, although the most comprehensive register of Galician Ruthenian publications gives the original

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publisher's price as six kreuzers.[2] Critics mentioned that in his defence Bilous said that the letters had also been published in France and Poland, so he was merely following in the steps of other nations.[3]

Discussion of the issue in a popular periodical was preceded by an attack on the publication by the leader of the national-populist camp, Volodymyr Barvins'kyi, who stated that after some tiresome efforts they had finally managed to get 'an original document of the Ruthenian-Galician obscuration of the people.' For quite some time, rumours had been spreading that people were flocking to Kolomyia and paying 40 kreuzers for a certain 'letter,' which was only sold in special cases for 20 kreuzers. Finally, the national-populists had got their hands on a copy of this publication.

Barvins'kyi ridiculed its appearance and the context of its publication, both of which were very much in keeping with the mores and style of the 'Old Ruthenian' camp. He calculated that three editions of the letter, at least 10,000 copies each, even if sold for only 20 kreuzers each, amounted to 6,000 gulden, which 'poor people' had paid 'for the most topsy-turvy exploitation of their darkness and unclear faith.' He characterized the publication as a 'mixture of extreme stupidity and shameless profanation' and expressed surprise that church authorities (Rev. Mykhailo Malynovs'kyi in particular) had not discerned the anti-Catholic motifs in the pamphlet as they eagerly found them in national-populist publications. Concluding, Barvins'kyi addressed himself to the prosecutor's office and admonished it not to ignore such an abuse of religion in the press.[4]

In the course of this discussion it appears that letters similar in their content to the one published by Bilous were widely known across Galicia. A peasant who had copied such letters for money as a child wrote a response to the national populists' article, criticizing the letter and offering a recollection:

> Then I saw this letter in Iakiv Palyvoda's possession. He was an assistant in Hlyboke. He had got it from a nearby cantor. The letter was not printed but written in Cyrillic. I rushed to copy the letter, not only for myself but for others as well. I confess, though I am ashamed of it now, that people paid me for such copying. I firmly believed that the letter had fallen somehow from heaven to earth.[5]

What is striking about this confession is not the peasant's trust in the letter, but rather the fact that he was now ashamed of it.

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The Old Ruthenian camp tried to defend Bilous without arguing for the authenticity of the letters. One 'townsman' responded with an article appearing in *Russkaia Rada*, a Russophile popular newspaper:

> I must answer that God's letter did not begin circulating in the Christian world today but has been circulating for a few hundred years and that Mr Bilous at the demand of many people reprinted God's letter in the Ruthenian language so that our people could read the letter in their own language instead of German or Polish.
>
> The letter teaches people everything that is good, encourages piety and morality, and warns against drunkenness and various wicked deeds, and if the sorcerer-correspondents of *Pys'mo z Prosvity* lived according to these teachings, they would not be as lost as they are now but would have reached the heavenly kingdom and would have obtained forgiveness for their sins, which they certainly possess in abundance, because they reject and dishonour even God's letter. Do not be misled by God's letter sorcerer-correspondents, but read it every day and live according to its instructions and God will forgive you yet.[6]

It seems obvious that this article was written either by Bilous himself or by a priest who sympathized with him but could not defend the apocrypha publicly as a priest and therefore disguised himself as a townsman. The author's knowledge of the background of the 'letters from heaven' proves that he was no mere townsman. Most probably the author of this article's justification of the pamphlet coincided with Bilous's own reasoning (although in the case of the publisher, commercial considerations were also very important). Justifying the brochure on moral grounds was consistent with the traditional clerical attitude towards the apocrypha that were circulating among the peasantry: they 'were not approved officially by the church, although they were usually readily tolerated.'[7]

Two decades passed after the polemics surrounding Bilous's publication of the letters. That the letters were still circulating widely among the Galician peasantry is indicated in an article written in 1895 by Mykhailo Verbyts'kyi. It starts with a reminder that God's only true 'letter' is the Bible, although another kind of 'God's letter' is circulating in both Ruthenian and Polish in Galicia among the unenlightened people. He quotes from the letter and concludes that everybody could easily see that it was stupidly written by someone who knew neither 'our Ruthenian speech nor the Holy Bible.'[8]

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Verbyts'kyi provides us with a description of the external appearance of the 'letters from heaven': 'On a big, thick sheet of paper, there is a drawing of a dove holding a sealed letter in its beak on which the words 'God's letter' are written.' Rev. Verbyts'kyi suggests that the letters were written by *psaltyrnyky* or *lirnyky* (beggars who played the *lira* or occasionally read from the psalter over the dead in order to make money). He speculates that cantors were also possible creators of the letter. (It should be noted that cantors in Galicia created a peculiar, humorous discourse from the sacral language of Church Slavonic and the vernacular,[9] making them potential writers of any kind of text that mixed the sacred and profane.) Verbyts'kyi also makes devastating comments about the reading public of the letters: 'All such tales are believed mostly by totally uneducated people, primarily women. On hearing of such letters they do everything to obtain them regardless of how much money it might cost – in order to guard their homes against any mishap.'[10] Verbyts'kyi cites widely from the letter, almost retelling it, providing us with a valuable copy of the letter as it circulated in the 1890s.

Mykhailo Verbyts'kyi was most likely unaware of the previous polemics surrounding the letters or of the previous publications of them. He describes the letters as popular in Lemkivshchyna where he lived and worked as a parish priest. Lemkivshchyna is a mountainous region, the westernmost part of the Ukrainian territory in Galicia, and considered to be a backward region even for such a backward province as Galicia. Verbyts'kyi's geography brings the connotation of backwardness to the letter. Gender associations (women as the letters' audience) serve the same purpose. Although unaware of the discussion from 1877–8, Verbyts'kyi deals with the letters much as the previous critics had. Despite the serious threats that the letters posed to the critics' authority, they all try to ridicule them with criticism couched in a mixture of anger and irony, which presents the letters as something not worthy of lengthy discussion, as mere superstition in which educated people could not possibly believe.

A Genealogy of the Letters from Heaven

The letters that caused these harsh polemics had a long history. The origins of the letters can be found in the early medieval period – from at least the sixth century. They were mentioned for the first time in the

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Visigoths' kingdom. They then penetrated the North and became popular among the populations of Charlemagne's empire, Ireland, England, and Iceland. The first letters stressed the observance of Sunday, and this remained central in all their descendants.[11] Robert Priebsch ascribes the origin of the letters to the activities of a sect of sabbatarians, while A. Veselovskii finds the letters' origins in popular superstitions surrounding holidays and the personalizing of Sunday and Saturday.[12] Similar letters periodically appeared in Western Europe throughout the medieval period.

For Eastern Europe, the appearance of the letters in the flagellants' movement that spread throughout Europe in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was especially important. Various millenarian apocalyptic texts employed a notion of a heavenly letter that included the motif of the observance of holidays. The motif was very strong despite the fact that the main stress in these letters was laid upon the second coming of Christ and the religious fervour expected from the people.[13] Veselovskii argues that the flagellants' movement introduced to the letter the motif of celebrating Friday, as well as the episode of the Mother of God interceding with Christ on behalf of mankind.[14] Despite the fact that there are no testimonies about similar movements in the territory of contemporary Ukraine, flagellants' processions are known to have touched upon Polish lands and other neighbouring countries. Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi has argued that Western Ukraine, on the periphery of the millenarian movements of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was receptive to all kinds of apocalyptic literature, that this was when the letters were introduced in Rus', and that from Western Ukraine the letters spread through the lands of the Eastern Slavs.[15] This hypothesis is hard to substantiate because of the absence of adequate evidence.

According to one of the classifications, the letter in Rus' is known to have circulated in two editions. The difference between these editions lies in the story of the origin of the letters. The older version points to Rome and has a Western origin, while the later Bulgarian version known from Church Slavonic manuscripts points to Jerusalem.[16] Aleksei Sobolevskii was the first to differentiate between these versions in his collection of translations circulating in Muscovite Rus' from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries. In this collection one copy of the letter, which points to Rome, is included among the borrowings from Polish literature, while another referring to Jerusalem is placed among the

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borrowings from the southern tradition.[17] The Ukrainian ethnographer Mykola Sumtsov was of the opinion that the Ukrainian letters were different from the Russian ones because the former stressed only Sunday, merely mentioning Friday and Wednesday, and did not mention the events from the Old Testament that were supposed to have occurred on Sunday. According to Sumtsov, the Ukrainian letters clearly belong to the western tradition.[18]

But in fact there is no exact correspondence between certain editions of the letter and ethnographic territory. Further, despite the fact that the southern edition of the letter was not known in the Ukrainian territory, there are copies of the western edition from Russian territories from as early as the sixteenth century.[19] To make matters even more complicated, in addition to different editions of the same letter from heaven, there are also the so-called second and the third epistles from heaven, which, despite the fact they are also letters written by God and sent from heaven, have a much different content. The eighteenth-century Russian copies of the heavenly letters were also compiled on the basis of the first edition, pointing to Rome. These copies closely resemble the copy written by the chronicler Iakym Ierlych in 1660 in Polish, which is often interpreted as an example of Polish influence. In fact, a reference to Rome does not automatically imply this letter was a Polish creation because, as Ivan Franko showed, Iakym Ierlych's letter in fact was a translation from Ruthenian.[20]

Ierlych's account is very important for the genealogy of the Galician letters from heaven for several reasons. Textually, of all the copies from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this one is closest to the nineteenth-century Galician letters. In Ierlych's account, the heavenly letter is combined with the 'Dream of the Mother of God.' The letter from heaven had figured prominently in flagellants' processions of 1349, the 'Dream of the Mother of God' in 1399. This combination appeared prevalent in Ukraine and Russia and, according to Hrushevs'kyi, was one of the combinations created in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Different countries accepted different combinations of the heavenly letter with other apocrypha. Often together with yet another apocrypha 'On Twelve Fridays,' the letter and the dream became very popular in Eastern Europe. According to Hrushevs'kyi, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, all three apocrypha underwent changes, mostly stylistically but sometimes even in their content. This was done to connect all three popular apocrypha with one idea and make them closer to each other.[21]

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The Galician Manuscripts

The largest collection of Ukrainian manuscripts of the letters was collected and published by Ivan Franko. Although arguing for the Ruthenian origin of Ierlych's text, in the case of the Galician manuscripts, he argues that the Galician Ukrainian manuscripts from the nineteenth century were not produced in the Ruthenian tradition as were texts written in various religious books in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but rather were translated from popular Polish manuscripts. He cites two almost identical Polish manuscripts from different parts of western Galicia: one from the beginning of the nineteenth century and another written circa 1870, stating that the Ukrainian popular tradition in nineteenth-century Galicia drew from these manuscripts.[22]

The first of this new type of letters in Franko's collection is a manuscript from Uhniv written on 7 December 1861 by Viktor Bilyk (Uhniv manuscript). It is the first of an outstanding collection of nineteenth-century manuscripts containing the letter from heaven. The second manuscript is from the Bachka region (contemporary Vojvodina) and was found by the famous Ukrainian ethnographer Volodymyr Hnatiuk in the possession of Mykhailo Turians'kyi. This manuscript contains the letter combined with the 'Dream of the Mother of God.' A further two almost identical manuscripts contain the most popular variant of the heavenly letter as it circulated in nineteenth-century Galicia. The first was found by Ivan Franko in the village of Iaikivtsi, Zhydachiv district (Iaikivtsi manuscript), while the second was sent to Franko by his peasant friend Fed' Derhalo from Zavaliv, Stryi district (Zavaliv manuscript). Of these two, the Iaikivtsi manuscript was copied together with the 'Dream of the Mother of God.' There is also a manuscript from the village of Berlyn, Brody district, probably given to Franko by the ethnographer Osyp Rozdol's'kyi, who did a great deal of fieldwork in that village. The final Franko manuscript is from the village of Stratyn, Rohatyn district. It was written on 6 July 1867 for Ivan Kashchuk and his wife Iavdokha. Teodor Derlytsia sent it to Franko from the house of Iavdokha, who had by that time become a widow. Unlike the other Ukrainian manuscripts from the nineteenth century in Franko's collection, this one was written not in Cyrillic but in Latin script. This letter hung on the wall under a glass cover and was venerated by a peasant family as an icon.[23] We also know that Franko had seen other copies of the letter, which he did not include in his collection of published apocrypha. One such letter without an ending was sent to him by Father

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Mykhailo Zubryts'kyi from the village of Mshanets' in the Stare Misto (Staryi Sambir) district.[24] Manuscripts in the collection are thus from different regions of Galicia and prove that the letters were read and spread all over the province.

The content of these letters, if we ignore minor differences in detail, is almost identical. These versions are all shorter than the older Cyrillic version from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. All the manuscripts present the first edition of the heavenly letter. The letter falls down to earth at the Mount of Olives in 'British' land. The most probable hypothesis is that 'British' (*Brytans'ka*) is a corrupted version of the word 'Bethany' (*Vyfyans'ka*), and dates back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to another story, the letter was available to everyone who wished to read it. The letter hung between earth and heaven and no one could get it but Pope Leo, who later sent it to his brother, the king. The king (*korol'*) stands here for Karl, who, in the medieval tradition, was supposed to have been the brother of Leo. The pope sent it to his brother in order to help the king against his enemies (this stresses the magical power of the letter). The Stratyn manuscript calls the king to whom the pope has sent the letter *Brosl'awski*, an adjective which does not make any sense, and is probably a corruption of the Polish word *Boleslaw*, the name of the king mentioned in Polish copies of the letter. One of the Polish manuscripts cited by Franko characterizes the king as *Braxiewiecki*, the meaning of which is also unknown.

The letter cited in the manuscripts forbids any work on Sunday and Saturday after vespers and commands people to attend church. If people behave according to the commandments of the letter, then God will give them 'an early rain at a suitable time, the land will produce plentiful harvests, your sons and daughters will multiply from the east to the west, peace, quietude, and agreement will reign over your land, the smallest fear will not attack you, and everything you wish for yourself I shall give you' (Uhniv manuscript).

Disobedience of the orders in the letter, on the other hand, would result in internal strife and unrest: tsar would fight tsar, lord would fight lord, mother would fight daughter, daughter would fight mother, husband would fight son, etc. Hatred would be sown among the people, and this would only be the first warning. If the people did not correct their behaviour, a second wave of punishments would follow, this time directed against the means of subsistence. These would include locusts, tornadoes, unbearable heat, and so on. Those who did not trust the

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letter would be cursed and those who kept and copied it would have all their sins remitted. The letter would save a house from fire and help pregnant women to deliver their children.

The Bachka manuscript added to Christ's orders the injunctions not to offer false testimony, not to be proud, and 'to honour father, mother, and older people.' The Iaikivtsi manuscript admonished people not to forget death and the Last Judgment. Among the tools mentioned in the second wave of punishment are fear and a 'flaming weapon' (*ohnystoie oruzhiie*). The Iaikivtsi manuscript concludes by stating that 'those who have these words with them and honour them in their houses will emerge victorious over their enemies and after death will be given the beauty of my heavenly kingdom and will live with my angels forever' and that when such people die, 'I myself [Jesus Christ] and the venerated Theotokos, my mother, and the angels will take their spirit to the heavenly kingdom forever.'

Two Letters and Their Scribe

Two manuscripts from the 1850s held in the Manuscript Divison of the Vasyl' Stefanyk Library in L'viv contain heavenly letters in Polish and Ukrainian. The Ukrainian copy is written in Latin script. These manuscripts are interesting because they can be placed in context of the biography and other writings of their scribe. In this section, I will provide a short account of that context and then compare these letters with the one cited earlier and criticized by Mykhailo Verbyts'kyi.

The manuscripts from the 1850s containing the heavenly letter were written down by Teodor Stasiv Kostraba, a cantor, community scribe, and unofficial teacher in the village of Iasynovets'. His life is known to us from his autobiography. He was born on 13 February 1828, in the village of Hrabovets', circle Kalush. In 1842, Kostraba began working as a cantor in the village of his birth. From 1843 to 1847, he worked as a cantor for Rev. Iosyf Klipunovs'kyi in the villages of Kniazhovs'ke, Ianovets', and Iasynovets'. On 27 May 1848, he was enlisted in the Austrian infantry and participated in sixteen face-to-face encounters with the Hungarian insurgents. His army service continued until 1856, after which Kostraba settled down in the village of Iasynovets'.

While serving in the army, Kostraba visited almost all the lands of the Austrian Empire as well as Romania. There he learned to speak, read, and write in Hungarian, Czech, Romanian Jewish (Yiddish), and a little in Turkish and Italian. He knew German, Polish, and Ruthenian even

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before enlisting in the army. After his return, he lived in Iasynovets', where he died in 1881.[25] At the time that he wrote down these letters, Kostraba was active in the temperance movement, taking an oath as early as 1856 not to drink vodka for seven years. It is hard to say how his military service is connected with the fact that he copied the letters. We know that the letter spread among German soldiers during every major war in the nineteenth century: from wars following from the French revolution to the German expedition to China to suppress the Boxer uprising.[26]

From other sources we know that Teodor Kostraba was a member of the Kachkovskii society, a Russophile organization dedicated to the enlightenment of the peasants. A local priest, Father Kunyts'kyi, reported Kostraba's death to the central executive of the Kachkovskii society in 1881 in the following words: 'Our society has not lost anything with his death because he was an unsure man and his bribery did a lot of damage during elections. He was a very clever agitator and twice conspired so that another candidate won in our [electoral] district.'[27] Kostraba's manuscripts, as well as a short autobiography, contain a significant collection of temperance poems and plays, mostly in Polish.[28] The letters themselves (in the Ukrainian copy combined with a copy of the Theotokos's dream and a description of the twelve Fridays) are followed by the statutes of the Sobriety Brotherhood.

All the letters from heaven provide an account of their origin. According to the Polish copy of the letter, Pope Leo sent this letter to King Bolesław. While it was hanging on the Mount of Olives near the icon of Archangel Michael, the letter was available to everyone who wanted to read or copy it. Those who read it had one hundred days of remission. According to the Ukrainian letter, Pope Leo sent these words to his brother (without mentioning the name Bolesław) to help him against the enemies of all Christendom. While mentioning the Mount of Olives and the icon of Archangel Michael, this letter places the event in 'British' land. In Mykhailo Verbyts'kyi's letter, the icon is the same but the mountain is Tabor.

The next part of the letter is devoted to a description of its power. This was already mentioned in the historical part of the letter: one hundred (in some copies, one thousand) days of remission and the power to help the king against his enemies. Then the letter states that all those carrying the letter need not fear, for neither fire, water, nor Satanic magic will harm them. In the Ukrainian text, it is neither fire nor iron (fire standing for natural disasters and iron for human mischief). Fur-

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ther, the Verbyts'kyi text mentions pregnant women, a motif that is also common in other copies of the letter. The letter promises pregnant women who carry the letter painless childbirth and happiness to their children who will gain 'favour from God and honour from people.' Men are promised victory over all their material and spiritual enemies.

In order to invoke the power of the letter and use it against their enemies, people were supposed to make the sign of the cross and repeat the following words:

> O Lord Jesus Christ [in the Ukrainian text – Jesus Christ with me], protect me from diabolical danger, sanctify me against everything evil, defend, O Lord, my spirit and my body; in you I am placing all my hopes because you protect me day and night and at the time of my death, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. Defend me from the devil's cunning, from enemies known and unknown, and help me, Lord Jesus Christ, through the spilling of your blood, which is holy for us, which from your side you wished to spill to save our souls. (VR LNB, f. 3, spr. 726/9, a. 2)

After this prayer comes the text of the letter itself. It starts with the statement: 'I, Jesus Christ, have written this letter in my own hand.' The rest is also written in the first person, i.e., Jesus Christ. After reminding people that he has redeemed them with his own blood, he forbids, by his own divinity, any work on Sunday and any digging in the soil for food. Instead people must go to church, to contemplate and listen to the service and prayers. If they do not live according to the Father's orders and the teaching of this letter, then Jesus will punish them with terrible thunder, lightning, and flashes of fire, with epidemics, bloody war, and endless catastrophes. He will set king against king, lord against lord, city against city, neighbour against neighbour, and so on. He says:

> And I will draw out my sword and there will be a disturbance and spilling of blood among you ... You will run from each other, your work and your estate will turn to nothing, your cattle will be eaten by wild beasts, you will die for nothing, and not a trace will be left of you. (VR LNB, f. 3, spr. 726/9, a. 4, 8)

If people hear this reminder and do not mend their errant ways, worse punishments will follow: the harvest will be destroyed, land will turn to iron, and there will be a great famine. If after these punishments anyone should still be left and should not want to correct his or her

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behaviour, then according to the commands of the letter unknown blackbirds will be sent; they will attack people and the people will not be able to defend themselves against them. The punishment will be endless. In Verbyts'kyi's letter, hunger, war, and floods will come first, followed by civil war and the blackbirds.

The Ukrainian copy of the letter also includes benefits for people if they behave according to its instructions:

> I will give you timely early and late rain, the land will produce plentiful harvests ... Your sons and daughters will multiply from the east of the earth to the west, peace and quiet will reign over your land, you will live as though in a restful sleep – without fearing anyone. I will give health and salvation to your souls and many years of life, and everything you will wish from me, I will hear your voice in prayer, and then I will give you everything you wish. (VR LNB, f. 3, spr. 726/9, a. 7)

Once more Jesus reminds people to finish all work on Saturday and to honour his Mother. If it were not for the praying of the Mother of God, he says, you would have died a long time ago because of your anger and your sins. The Ukrainian variant also orders its readers to honour the saints who always pray for them before God's majesty. Then the Ukrainian text repeats the motif about the Mother of God praying for the peasants. If not for this prayer, people would have been executed for their lawlessness (*bezzakonnia*) a long time ago. The letter orders people to reflect every Sunday in church 'on their sins, remembering death and the Last Judgment, listening to the Gospel and to the prayers, and with diligence to the orders of my Father (VR LNB, f.3, spr. 726/9, a. 7).' These admonishments are also to be found in Verbyts'kyi's letter, which also says not to work on Saturday after vespers in honour of the Mother of God (Saturday has been considered the day of the Mother of God ever since the Middle Ages). These orders include 'not to swear by my blood and my members, not to testify falsely, and to honour my Father and my Mother (VR LNB, f.3, spr. 726/9, a. 5, 7).'

The next part of the letter concerns its distribution. Those who have the letter in their house should pass it from one house to another to be read and copied. Those who behave according to the letter, even if they have as many sins as there are stars in the sky, grass in the ground, leaves on the trees, and sand in the sea, will be forgiven. All those who carry the letter with them, granting it due honour and behaving according to its precepts, will enjoy God's favour and people's friendship.

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They will not die without confession and the Holy Sacrament. Upon their death, God and his Mother, together with the angels, will guide them to the heavenly kingdom. Verbyts’kyi’s letter also includes some threats: ‘Whoever does not believe in this letter will be cursed and will not have any joy here on earth ... And whoever possesses this letter but does not show it to anyone else will be dismissed from my kingdom.’[29]

The Polish copy of the letter established its origin by noting that it had been rewritten in 1776, and sent from Rome to the Franciscan fathers in Kraków for the use of religious people. Instead of this, the Ukrainian copy has the addition about the Mother of God’s dream, which is absent not only in this Polish copy but also in the Polish copies published by Ivan Franko. The Ukrainian text says that the Mother of God slept on the Mount of Olives and had a dream – Jesus Christ caught and tied, placed in front of Annas and Caiaphas, whipped, crowned with a wreath made of thorns, crucified, and speared in the ribs. Blood poured from Christ’s wounds, and the holy body fell down like bark from the tree. According to Jesus Christ, everything she described really happened to him, and Jesus Christ, his Mother, and the angels would take those who kept this dream with them straight to heaven after their death. There is also a text on observing a fast for twelve Fridays. It stresses that men should not have sexual relations with their wives on these days because a child conceived on these Fridays would be born a monster.

Galician Cyrillic Publications of the Letter

Bilous’s publishing house in Kolomyia printed at least four editions of the *Lyst iz’iavlenyi*: in 1877, 1878, 1879, and 1881. It seems that the editions from 1878 and 1879 were just reprints of the original 1877 edition. I was unable to find Bilous’s original edition of the ‘Letter of Revelation’ and therefore consulted the corrected edition from the year 1881. This letter is published in the form of a small pamphlet. There is a cross and words of Christian greeting: ‘Blessed be our God now and forever. Amen.’ on the title page. Before the beginning of the text on the third page is another picture of two angels who hold in their hands ‘God’s Letter,’ below which we see a small human figure praying on its knees.

According to this text, the letter contains ‘Godly teachings’ (*pobozhnii nauky*). The opening is the same as in the nineteenth-century Galician manuscripts – the letter appeared on the Mount of Olives in the land of

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Jerusalem before the icon of Archangel Michael. However, it is interesting that the name of the mountain is *Ieleons'ka*, a word coined from Church Slavonic, instead of *Olyvna*, as in the manuscript versions of the letter. The editor of the letter, an Old Ruthenian, obviously did not like the word *Olyvna* because of its similarity with the Polish *Oliwna*, although *Olyvna* became the norm in contemporary Ukrainian. Instead of the pope, the patriarch of Jerusalem is mentioned, who rewrote the letter to 'his brother tsar to preserve him from his enemies' – and this was apparently another attempt to modify the 'pro-Western' folk version according to Orthodox tradition. Those who pay attention to the letter and copy it are promised God's favour. The letter functions as a kind of magic amulet: 'Neither fire nor water nor thunder, nor any evil thing will be able to harm the house in which this letter is kept, and where people live according to its precepts.' The order to observe Sunday as a holiday is retained. The letter commands people to honour the Mother of God, to attend church, 'and especially to avoid drunkenness.'[30]

If people observe the letter's teachings, then there will be the benefits mentioned in the manuscripts connected with good weather for agricultural production. If not, then there will be punishment in the form of thunder, lightning, clouds, and tornadoes, a war of all against all, bloodshed, a 'terrible flaming weapon,' and fear. The land will not produce, and there will be no rain. If after this punishment people are not subdued, then the blackbirds that peck out human eyes, together with diseases, snakes, and locusts, will come. Those who keep the letter with them will not die without the Holy Sacraments, and the Mother of God, together with the angels, will be present at their death.

Besides anti-Western modifications two major changes may be seen when one compares this text with that of the letter known in the popular tradition. The first is the above-cited passage on drunkenness that is connected with the observance of Sunday. The only time a similar motif appears in the previous Galician tradition is in Franko's Drohobych manuscript dating back to the eighteenth century. That copy of the letter orders people 'not to drink or eat of your own free will with the Jews.'[31] It is worth noting that in Bilous's publication the passage on temperance is not accompanied by any anti-Semitic sentiment. Another change to the traditional texts is the passage which emphasizes the power of Christian life instead of the power of the letter: 'whoever tries to live according to God's commandments, even if they have as many sins as there are stars in the sky, sand in the sea, grass in the ground, leaves on the trees, all their sins will be forgiven.'[32]

After the main text, there are some prayers, a list of important fasts,

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and psalms: 90 (a prayer for delivery from the national adversary, which was also sometimes used as a magic amulet) and 120 (an exile's prayer for deliverance from enemies). It is obvious that this part has been substituted for the 'Dream of the Mother of God' and the sermon (*Slovo*) on twelve Fridays. The motifs of the prayer and the days of abstinence are preserved but apocryphal texts are replaced with orthodox religious texts. The last page of the pamphlet contains a picture of the three-barred cross. Around the cross are the words: 'Repent: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand' and 'And be not drunk with wine, wherein is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit' (Eph. 5:18).

Given the polemics mentioned at the beginning of this essay, it would seem logical not to expect a Ukrainian edition of this letter. But this is not the case. There is such an edition, although without an exact date. This letter coincides with the text cited by Franko and dated 1903.[33] No connection with the Ukrainian national movement is declared, but it did come from a publishing house of Ukrainian orientation and the language of the brochure is closer to literary Ukrainian. This pamphlet bears the title 'God's Letter,' and was printed by the publishing house of Ivan Bednars'kyi. The editor uses the pseudonym Ivan the Traveller (*Podorozhnyi*), but who lies behind this pseudonym is difficult to establish.[34] Franko commented on this letter that among the whole range of published letters 'which were usually clumsy remakes of the older manuscript versions, [I] chose this one; this is an example of modern preaching grafted onto the old apocryphal outline.'[35]

There are significant differences between the publications of Bilous and Bednars'kyi, however. The cover of Bednars'kyi's pamphlet features a picture of a Western (Gothic) entrance to a chancel with a Christian greeting – Glory to Jesus Christ. On the second page, the picture from Bilous's letter is reprinted, but the human figure is enlarged and more clearly engraved. The outline of the old text is so dispersed, altered, and sprinkled with quotations from the Bible that it is hard to discern the stress on the observance of Sunday as a day of rest. For example, the passage on the magical properties of the letter now reads as follows:

> Whoever carries God's teaching in his heart [the older text refers to carrying the material letter], rereads this letter often, keeps it in his house as a most precious jewel, and lives together with all his family according to it, he is worthy of God's grace, and God will give him what he wishes for; God guarantees this in the nineteenth psalm with the words: 'Grant thee according to thy heart, and fulfil all thy desire.'[36]

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Also, there are revivalist passages in Bednars'kyi's text, which could be considered a reprise of motifs from the flagellants' movement and are inconsistent with the letters functioning as part of folk culture. For example: 'Wake up from your sinful dream, O man, and look at your wounded Saviour, look at his head wounded with the thorns and invoke pity in your heart.'[37]

Concerning the passage that orders people to celebrate Sunday, Bednars'kyi's letter commands people to abstain from 'hard [!] work,' from sinful festivities, and to observe the teachings. Proper religious behaviour in this text requires the believer to contemplate his sins and to take the Holy Sacrament. The order to honour parents and older people, which can be found in the Bachka manuscript, is transformed into the notion of obedience to authority: 'I order you to honour your parents, your spiritual and secular superiors, to love them, to listen to them, and to pray for them, and then you can hope for guidance and blessing in this life and eternal happiness in the next.'[38] In the same tone, another passage says, 'Do not stretch out your hands for another's property.'

The quotation from the Bible on drunkenness that Bilous placed on the back cover of his pamphlet (Eph. 5:18) is placed here in the text and followed by the words: 'And now in quite a few villages we can say after the Holy Prophet that our 'slaves subdued us,' and you, owners and landlords of the land of your ancestors, have become slaves!'[39] The words were obviously aimed at Jews, although Jews are not mentioned. Concerning drunkenness, Bednars'kyi's letter says: 'Avoid any impurity, all shameless thoughts and urges, i.e., everything of which you will later be ashamed.' The notion of shame never appeared in the manuscript containing the Galician versions.

This proves that while Bilous's letter was still compatible with folk tradition and did not interfere with it radically, the new letter presented a decisive break from it. This letter from God belongs to a genre of religious and moral writings that proliferated at the turn to the twentieth century in the context of a particular Greek Catholic revivalism, rather than to the genre of the heavenly letter. The manuscript that was presented by the ethnographer Volodymyr Hnatiuk to the Library of the Shevchenko Scientific Society proves that Bilous's letter unlike Bednars'kyi's was easily incorporated into the older folk tradition.[40]

This is, probably, the latest known manuscript version of the letter that circulated among the Galician peasantry, and it bears a strong trace

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of Bilous's editions. This copy of the letter is written in the form of a book with eleven pages. The title page says 'God's Letter,' and the words are framed by wavy squares. This form contrasts strikingly with the form of one sheet of paper as was the case with the Strutyn and Verbyts'kyi manuscripts. The last page is an exact copy of the last page of Bilous's edition.

Like both published versions of the letter Hnatiuk's manuscript begins with 'In the name of Father+and Son+and Holy Spirit+. Amen.' This letter also contains 'Godly teachings.' The patriarch of Jerusalem and his brother, the tsar, are the heroes of the story of the letter's origin. Even the mountain on which the letter appeared is called *Ieleons'ka* not *Olyvna*. The rest of the text repeats almost to a word Bilous's printed version. It says, 'Whoever carries this letter or observes it carefully, or copies it, will enjoy God's grace. Everyone who lives according to God's commandments will be rewarded with eternal salvation. In all homes in which this letter is kept ... there will be neither fire, nor water, nor thunder, nor lightning.'

It is interesting that despite the fact that the manuscript follows the version of the letter printed by Bilous, it still includes 'The Dream of the Mother of God' and the text on the twelve Fridays instead of the official prayers and fasts of Bilous's pamphlet. The text about the dream of the Mother of God is a classical variant without any significant differences. It is followed by a prayer and explanation of the benefits connected with observing the fast scrupulously on these Fridays. To each Friday corresponds one of the following benefits: one will not die unexpectedly, one will not be impoverished, one will be saved, one will know the time of one's own death, one will not suffer serious illness, one will be pleasantly surprised on the next holiday, one will not die in mortal sin, one will be protected from enemies, one will never be poor while working and fasting properly, one will see the Mother of God before one's death, one will see Jesus before one's death, and one's spirit will be accepted by God into the heavenly kingdom.

Letters from Heaven as Peasant Tactics of the Old Regime

Intellectuals studying the heavenly letters obviously did not take the nineteenth-century manuscripts and printed versions circulating among the peasantry seriously. One of the first authors to investigate the heavenly letter wrote:

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> The epistle in a remade German folk version known under the title *der Braker Himmelsbrief* represents the extreme extent of the genre's decay. It circulates in the form of a manuscript and printed copies, and its meaning has definitely diminished to that of an amulet; it is a compilation of magical formulas among which the original meaning of the epistle disappears almost totally.[41]

This was the view of those interested in the epistle as a literary text from the Middle Ages. They despised the shortened and simplified texts of the peasant manuscripts as senseless imitation.

Because of the strong populist orientation of the Ukrainian movement, the attitude of Ukrainian ethnographers and historians could not be as dismissive. Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi pointed out that the manuscripts from the seventh to nineteenth centuries were characterized 'by an almost complete coincidence with only secondary differences.'[42] In his view, early modern literature incorporated the moral side of the letter, while 'the people' borrowed the magical: 'This call for moral revival unexpectedly became a fetish against thieves and fires and a warding talisman for pregnant women. Thus the connection between two apocrypha [the letter and the dream] – the order to observe Sunday and Friday, and the sermon of penance – were missed.'[43]

As the most interpretive among all Ukrainian scholars of the letters, Hrushevs'kyi tries to place them in a social context. However, while defining the letters as the 'people's second Gospel,' he stresses the formalization of the text of the letters in folk culture, placing them among the so-called *heortology* or celebrations of certain days.[44] An imitation of the Jewish tradition, this formalizing tendency was connected with the spread of Christianity among the popular masses.[45] In spite of the fact that most of his evidence is from the nineteenth century, Hrushevs'kyi discusses the letters as oral popular creations of the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries. Having influenced early modern high literature, the letters in the context of folk culture became mere magical amulets.

Hrushevs'kyi's conclusions are based on the works of Franko and Sumtsov, both of whom showed that the letters, as well as other apocrypha, were closely connected to folk culture. Both tried to show the richness of Ukrainian culture and thus contributed to the creation of the image of a homogenous Ukrainian culture. The works of Sumtsov and Franko on Ukrainian apocrypha had different emphases. While Sumtsov was trying to create the picture of a folk culture that was clearly delin-

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eated territorially and constituted the basis for a separate national Ukrainian culture (in spite of the fact that he was forced to call this territory South Russia), Franko was concerned with the continuity of this culture, tracing the tradition of Ukrainian literature from the Middle Ages.

These different emphases of Franko's and Sumtsov's works together with their attempts to use letters for the support of their arguments resulted in many tensions and contradictions. Sumtsov stresses the way the apocrypha were tolerated in Ukrainian (or South Russian) society in the early modern period, in striking contrast with the concern for 'evil-doing books' in Muscovite Rus'.[46] Franko, on the other hand, stresses the similarities between Galician Ukraine and Central Russia, although, in his opinion, unlike in the latter, in the former 'love of the old apocrypha did not call for religious dissent and doubts, but was simply a part of the old cultural and literary tradition; and as such had a significant impact on the formation of the popular worldview.'[47]

As mentioned previously, Franko saw a break between the early modern and the nineteenth-century letters, which, in his opinion, had been translated from Polish copies. Unlike Franko, Sumtsov thought that the role of literary tradition should not be overestimated:

> Some motifs sown in the soil of South Russia's scholastic literature did not result in the sprouting of folk poetry; other motifs, partly through the mediation of that literature, but mostly independently of it, penetrated the people to their very depths, were included in the general framework of the people's world view and were developed into songs under the influence of local regional life and local peasant psychology.[48]

These opinions disclose the attitude of the ethnographers to folk culture. Considering folk culture as something necessary to study and valuable to the development of a new national culture, they could not approach it in terms of practice or even in terms of the functions it performed in peasant society. Although the folk tradition was officially proclaimed to occupy a central place in the national tradition and national culture, it was at the same time considered archaic, an odd curiosity that would eventually disappear. On the one hand, the folk tradition was presented as rich and of great value. It was the basis of fundamental distinctions between nations and testimony to the existence of the Ukrainian nation. On the other hand, it did not fit the needs of modern society. The ethnographers were looking for the essence of a

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national folk culture, which was supposed to be the source of its distinctiveness in a world naturally divided into separate homogenous cultures. Folk culture was interesting only as far as it helped to establish boundaries between ethnic communities that had to be transformed into national borders.

It is interesting that Franko does not mention the nineteenth-century letters in his numerous social studies of peasant life. Instead he introduces them in the context of the apocryphal literature of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. In short, even for the age of positivism, Peter Burke's observation on the discovery of popular culture by the Romantics, 'in which the ancient, the distant and the popular were all equated,'[49] is still applicable. But in the Ukrainian case, 'popular' does not appear in opposition to 'high' or 'learned.' Ukrainian ethnographers do not talk about popular but about people's (*narodna*) culture, which, because of the semantic polyvalence of the noun *narod* and the adjective *narodnyi*, can be easily bridged with national. Culture is seen as an enclosed system, and a canon of the people's culture was being created from which all the contesting and inconvenient elements were carefully sifted and excluded.

The first question that comes to mind – why exactly was this kind of apocrypha so popular? – is often avoided. Sumtsov asserts that the main reason for the letters' popularity lies in the Ukrainian national character – the letters were especially close to Ukrainian folklore with its cult of Sunday as the personification of holiday leisure: 'Little Russian [i.e. Ukrainian] popular legends about Sunday are satisfactorily explained by the epistle on Sunday or the heavenly letter and, besides that, are based on the etymological meaning of the word Sunday (*Nedelia*) – from the words 'not to work' (*ne delat'*).'[50] The weaknesses of these explanations do not diminish the contributions of Franko and Sumtsov to our understanding of the letters as a phenomenon of popular culture, but they reveal the knowledge frame in which these contributions were made.

If Franko showed that the letters from heaven were the most popular text circulating among the Ukrainian peasantry in Galicia, Sumtsov showed that the letters from heaven did not exist separately from oral culture. An example of the influence of the letter from heaven on folklore is the song 'Winnow, girls' (*Viite divon'ky*) from Galicia, written down by Holovats'kyi and considered by Sumtsov to be one of the best examples of folk poetry. In this song, the punishment for those breaking the holiness of Sunday and Friday is waiting at the Last Judgment.[51] For

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Sumtsov, this is an example of how many religio-mythical and church-apocryphal motifs could be closely and organically united by the creativity of the folk spirit. Not only the letter but also the text of the 'Dream of the Mother of God' was intimately connected with oral culture. From a different source we know that it circulated in the Sambir region in the form of a prayer, which ended with the words: 'And whoever recites the prayer and carries it with him will never have a nightmare.'[52] But, as Sumtsov is interested only in the aesthetic aspect of such a confluence between the letters and the oral tradition, for him this shows only the richness of folk culture.

The letters were the most popular manuscript text circulating among the would-be Ukrainian part of the Galician peasantry, but not the only one. Manuscript collections of other apocrypha, religious songs, and prayers were frequently met as well. And in this respect Galician peasants were not unique – at the end of the nineteenth century similar manuscripts circulated among other Slavic peasants of East-Central Europe.[53] Paradoxically, this wide circulation is the reason why only a few of them are now to be found. According to Hnatiuk, old manuscripts of religious songs in the peasants' own handwriting were very popular in the nineteenth century but they changed hands frequently and quickly wore out.[54] In the case of the letters, they were often not only kept in the house but worn on the body. Tymotei Zaiats, a sectarian-rationalist from Russian-ruled Ukraine, recalls: 'And he who keeps the "Dream of the Holy Mother of God" with him will find all his sins forgiven, even if he has as many sins as there are grains of sand in the sea or leaves on the trees; and I carried the "dream" with me even when I went to steal.'[55] Some manuscripts of the dream even had traces of the human body on them. From the manuscript copies we have it becomes clear that the letters from heaven were not only the most popular manuscripts among peasants, but that they also did very well in competition with print culture, outliving, for example, religious songs, which soon were replaced by printed and officially approved versions.

First of all, for the peasants the letters were an accessible text. All peasants had seen and were familiar with the Gospel. It was a book used in the liturgy, but it was inaccessible to them:

> There were cases when peasants for tens of miles attended one church and asked that the Gospel be read over the head of its holder. There would be nothing wrong with the reading itself were it not for the fact that after a certain time when another Gospel was acquired, the people demanded

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> that the old book be read. What mattered was not the Word of God but the book.[56]

Because of its inaccessibility, they did not call it 'the Book,' as English country folk did. The text itself was considered an attribute of God. There is the example of a popular prayer, where books are closely associated with the apostles and preaching, and God is quoted as saying: 'O Peter and O Paul, do not feel pity for my sufferings! Take a golden stick and golden book, go into God's world, teach the people.'[57] The proverb 'He read to him as from a book,' meaning to tell the whole truth about a person,[58] reflects the same attitude and shows the inaccessibility of print to the peasant. There was also a custom in the Staryi Sambir district in Galicia that when someone intended to build a house, he would go to a priest and have him consult the Gospel to find out whether or not the place was clean. The priest would ask the farmer to open the Gospel and looking at the text would tell him what would happen.[59]

The account of reading from the Bible shows that the practice of divination in Ukraine differed from that in Western Europe in that the Ukrainian peasants not only did not read the biblical text on which the prediction was based, but did not even hear it read by the priest. What they had was just an interpretation of the text by the priest, who was the sole authority on the Bible in the village and very often had sole access to the printed sacral text. His monopolistic access to the Bible was one of the sources of his power. But the inaccessibility of the text led the peasants to find another text they could use. Printed texts in general did not fit this purpose well. The peasants believed that there were wonder-working books, books 'that can call forth the evil spirit but they were not allowed to fall into the hands of simple people, while those who have knowledge will not be harmed by them.'[60] Apparently, these books were out of their reach. In the absence of printed texts when even the Bible was not accessible to the peasantry, manuscripts became the central form of text the peasants knew about. The fact that the letters circulated as manuscripts also becomes significant in this light.

The letters were, first of all, a channel for the peasants to communicate with absolute truth that they established outside regular channels controlled exclusively by the church. The letters were their Bible, a substitute for the real one, to which they had no direct access. The letters were, exactly like the Bible, the words of God himself. The relation of the letters to the Bible was similar to the relation between the

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golden charters, which circulated among the peasantry in the Russian Empire, and the original documents on the emancipation of the serfs in Russia: 'The peasant Articles were everything the manifesto and statutes were not – easy to read, easy to understand, short, and very appealing to the peasants.'[61] In peasant society at that time, God's authorship of the letters meant that they expressed the views of the highest authority.

It seems that the letters proved the world view of the peasants to be first and foremost Christian. Despite flights of imagination, the basic structures of the letter more or less corresponded to certain parts of Christian teaching appropriated by the peasants. The images the letter presents to the minds of its readers are Christian. The Mount of Olives is the centre around which a Christian history was constructed in the letters. According to biblical tradition, the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem began from this mount. It was also the site of Christ's eschatological discourse (Mt. 24:3, Mk 13:3); it witnessed his agony and arrest, and his ascension to heaven. In the letters, this mountain is the site of Christ's written eschatological discourse and the place where his Mother foresees his sufferings. It is only in Verbyts'kyi's letter that another mountain is mentioned as the site of the letter's appearance – Mount Tabor, which is the place suggested as the site of the Transfiguration.

But Christianity was also a hegemonic ideology and as such used by the peasants out of necessity. The letters not only expressed eternal truth; they were also highly contemporary writings, the medium of everyday communication with God despite the fact that the date of the appearance of the letters was sometimes located at a distance of a century or two from the actual date on which they were copied. God was intervening, responding to the events on earth, and the letters stressed that communication had been established between earth and heaven. The link was accessible to everyone. The pope and the tsar received it first, but both of them were detached from the clergy or the local authority of the landlord. The Mother of God was praying for the peasants, and they had a much better chance of being saved. The peasants were aware of the importance of communication – for example, Hutsuls (Galician mountaineers) believed that the Roman pope received letters from God every Sunday.[62] Thus the peasants had access to the same kind of text as the pope had. The letters served as 'news' for the countryside (if we accept that the only difference between rumours and news is the fact that the latter is adjudicated and spread by a single commonly recognized authority).

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The only reference Mykhailo Verbyts'kyi made to the quoted text of the letter is the claim that the sins of those who observe, read, and spread the letters will be forgiven. Verbyts'kyi observes: 'Sins can only be repented in confession through the sincere sorrow of the sinner, and no letters can offer remission of sins. Merely from this fragment it is clear that the letter was written by an uneducated person and, maybe, even in a state of inebriation.'[63] It is clear that Verbyts'kyi's anger resulted from what he perceived as an attempt by the letter to appropriate part of the church's authority, which was also the basis of his own authority in the village. The letters diminished the power of officials, priests, and other educated people and provided an opportunity for illiterate people to possess a text of their own. They could keep this text, know it by heart, and 'read' it without necessarily being literate.

The text was even used in anticlerical agitation. In 1900, Rev. Bachyns'kyi in Ripchytsi, in the Drohobych district, complained that Illiarii Harbins'kyi, the son of a priest from Volia Iakubova, who had been involved in radical agitation during the so-called Dobrivliany conspiracy in 1886, had used the form of a letter from heaven during his agitation among the parishioners 'so that it will work more successfully among people and in which blasphemy, agitation against church orders and authorities, hatred of my person, and extreme radicalism in general are clearly seen.'[64]

Omelian Ohonovs'kyi notes that the reason for the popularity of these apocrypha is the fact that they were written in a language close to the vernacular.[65] However, it seems that the clear style of the sentences and the accessible construction of the text was even more important to the letter's accessibility. The text of the letter is a typical myth-centred one that organizes and orders the world, explains the world of the reader, and prescribes adequate behaviour that is good in any situation. The conceptualization of time in the letters can be described in Walter Benjamin's terms, paraphrased by Benedict Anderson as 'simultaneity of past and future in an instantaneous present.'[66]

At the same time, the text has eschatological tendencies. The order of things is threatened, which is why behaviour becomes so important. According to Yuri Lotman, eschatological discourse constitutes the first break with ritual and signals the appearance of narrative.[67] The narrative of the letter is clearly built on a set of oppositions between good and evil through which the letter legitimizes itself. The letter is not totally directed at supporting the status quo; rather it stresses the sinfulness of the contemporary world and the necessity of regeneration. The

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text of the letter becomes a text arming the peasantry with knowledge and power.

What Sumtsov saw as a national trait of the Ukrainian copies of the letter – their short form and laconic expression – was, in fact, a trait of the letter's popular origins, a connection to the culture of resistance.[68] The stress on the observance of Sunday can be seen as a classical example of peasant resistance. It was directed against the extraction of peasant labour and claimed that the peasants also had the right to leisure. (Perhaps it is not at all accidental that the aftermath of the abolition of serfdom in 1848 was characterized by the refusal to work on landlords' estates even for pay, which was later presented as the first peasant strike in Galicia).[69] These peasant tactics not only countered and were dangerous to the old system in which peasant labour was extracted by direct force and the monopoly on knowledge officially preserved. I would argue that even more important is the fact that potentially the letters were even more dangerous to the discourse of 'modernity.'

New and Old Discourse – Rejection, Substitution, and Mimicry

The way ethnographers and historians have approached the letters is comparable to the reactions of the populist priests, the correspondents of *Pys'mo z Prosvity*, Volodymyr Barvins'kyi and Mykhailo Verbyts'kyi. Both interventions represent scholarly and publicist ways of denying the viability of the letters by attempting to make them an anachronism. They did not try to interpret the letters. The letters were senseless and destined to die out. The authors presented the culture of the letters as apolitical because it did not coincide with their notion of representational politics. They refused to consider the letters as containing knowledge because that did not coincide with their ideas about rational knowledge.

It is not a coincidence that after describing the letters, the ethnographers forgot about them for almost a century, and the letters disappeared from discussions of traditional folk culture. The letters did not fit the images of traditional culture created by ethnographers who were trying to legitimize a homogeneous national culture. Their traditional culture was one that preserved the national character in purity, preventing it from being sullied by interaction with cosmopolitan high culture while waiting for the national high culture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to be developed on its basis. The letters were an interna-

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tional phenomenon, and no clear line could be drawn between Ukrainian, on the one side, and Polish and Russian popular culture, on the other. The letters belonged to Christian folklore while the most precious part of folk culture was considered to be pre-Christian. The letters were texts while the folk culture was supposed to be exclusively oral.

The attack on the letters in the Ukrainian press was inaugurated by Volodymyr Barvins'kyi, the leading national-populist enlightener of the 1870s. Those who attacked the letter in the Ukrainian popular press were priests and, at the same time, promoters of a new discourse in the countryside. They were nationalists, but they were also a new kind of priest, those who wanted to see their authority in the community based not on the traditional status of the clerical estate but on their superior spirituality, education and ethics. While maintaining the link between knowledge and power, these new priests claimed to possess a new kind of knowledge and new values. The letter posed a threat to these new values even more than to the values of the old regime. Under the old regime, the priests as well as the landlords had tolerated the letters, probably, because despite their being part of the peasant culture of resistance, the letters did not threaten the foundations of the dominant order. Rather, the letters accepted and thus to some extent supported the basic categories of the old regime. It is not an accident that, despite being a member of the Kachkovskii society, Teodor Kostraba, one of the letters' scribes, worked against prominent Ruthenian politicians and was an enemy of the local priest. Kostraba represents the older type of peasant activist, whose authority was based not on formal institutions, organizations, and education but on personal experience, self-education, and community recognition. And the letters were associated precisely with this type of peasant politics.

The new discourse could not tolerate the letters the way the old regime had. The letters used a set of geographical coordinates for identification that were different from those set by modern discourse. The centres of their world were the Mount of Olives, Rome, or Jerusalem; and these were much more important than, for example, Kyiv. God, the pope, and the tsar were the source of authority, not the will of the people. The notion of time in the letters was resolutely different from the one preached by the national movement. The time of the letters is the time of Christian history, but even the events of that history are transformed into a regular exchange of holidays and weekdays. Time was a circle in which sacral and profane periods alternated, and even unusual events like the intervention of God were woven into that

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cycle. This notion of time was deeply foreign to two central notions of modern discourse: linear time as progress and time as money. Therefore, it is not strange that the new discourse did not only try to reject the letters but did not discuss them too much, presenting them as already dead.

At the same time, publications of the letters show that the interaction between new and old discourse was much more complicated and not limited to simple rejection. Printed remakes of the letters that appeared on the margins of modern projects exploited the old form of the letter from heaven. It substituted for the letter a new form of religious discourse, one that did not conflict with the secular ideas the national movement preached. The differences between Bilous's and Bednars'kyi's editions of the letter also point to differences between the two orientations or two national movements that developed among Galician Ukrainians. Bilous's party (Russophiles) was not as modern as the Ukrainian party was. Whereas the Russophiles could not discern what was wrong with publishing the letter as it circulated among the peasantry if the letter taught only good old Christian morals, Ukrainian national-populists saw in such toleration a threat to their project of creating a modern Ukrainian nation.

Despite this incompatibility, or because of it, the letters could not be simply rejected by the modern national movement. Their historical legacy lay in the tactics of the simple people. It is possible to discern the legacy of the letters from heaven in the cultural production associated with the national movement. The national movement made wide use of the old attitudes of the peasantry towards texts, introducing new texts, popular newspapers, and books. Brevity, vernacularity, and straightforwardness characterized popular publications. While rejecting one characteristic of the letters' discourse, namely the images they articulated, the modernizers accepted another characteristic of that discourse, namely its particular form of narration.

The attitude of the peasants towards the popular press was not very different from their attitude towards the letters. According to Franko:

> People waited for *Bat'kivshchyna* [considered to be the best of the Ukrainian popular newspapers in Galicia] in whole communities far outside the village, waiting for the messenger from the post office who delivered the issues. On Sundays at cemeteries near the church, literate peasants read the newspaper to whole communities that hung on the words, news, and advice that sounded strange to them, and they forgot about food and rest. The paper's word was holy ...[70]

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Such reading still had something heretical to it. The books forbidden by the church and read by Czech peasants were read in the same way: 'Here it is the written text that contains absolute truth and produces truth in its readers, legitimizing their spiritual and individual freedom of choice.'[71] This particular way of reading its production was appreciated by the national movement despite the fact that it was based on the peasants' earlier attitudes towards texts.

New religious newspapers clearly copied, consciously or unconsciously, the form of the letters from heaven. Apparently, the newspaper *Misionar'* (The Missionary) did it consciously. An issue of the newspaper was called a 'letter' (*lyst*) not a 'number' (*chyslo*). The paper claimed to have a supernatural power, although it is unclear whether that power was attributed to its content or to the physical letter itself:

> Wherever the missionary letters appeared and encountered good, pious hearts, they set souls aflame with the love of God and religious fervour, pious life flourished while sinning and immorality were curtailed ... But evil people and wicked souls were angered by this divine grace. – Our letters were set on fire, shredded by hand, stamped into the mud – but nothing could harm them because God's grace was with us.[72]

To confirm its magical power, *Misionar'* readily printed letters from readers who thanked the paper for wonderful cures. Such borrowing was not invented in the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century the Catholic Church in Bohemia used a similar strategy to fight Protestant publications: 'Catholic works must take the place of the sequestered volumes, works imitating as closely as possible the form and structure of the ones that circulated in Bohemia from Zittau, Leipzig, or Halle.'[73]

Printed production in late nineteenth-century Galicia was too often judged in terms of truth and falsehood. Not only church but also state authorities and political movements presented the production of their adversaries as false. A newspaper supporting a political opponent was called 'false' as late as 1907.[74] The rhetorical style of the letters and parallels between national and religious authority were widespread: 'Glory be to Jesus Christ! The sound of the angelic trumpet spreads nicely and pleasantly over our people and awakens them to the light so that they may open their eyes after a long dream and see the sun of truth and their own salvation.'[75] The employment of this particular

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religious rhetoric can help to explain the popularity of newspapers that were of no practical use to peasants.

The use of rhetoric shows that the narrative form was not the only discursive figure borrowed from the letters. Besides the form, the order of the narrative present in the text of the letter was used and developed. The geography of the letters was replaced by a new one. Ukrainian secular history in popular newspapers took the place of biblical history, and the narrative of Ukrainian history was placed in the territory of the would-be Ukrainian nation. The introduction of Kyiv in the press and popular books instead of Christian centres ended with the appearance of Kyiv as the centre of a new imagined space even in the texts of Christmas carols published by a press of Russophile orientation.[76]

Similarly, the new discourse played with the old notions of time present in the letter. In the memoirs of Jan Słomka, a Polish Galician peasant activist, the description of a clock he had bought and brought to the village occupies an important place in his description of changes connected with modernization.[77] The new notion of time was developed in two directions – linear progressive time as opposed to cyclical and eschatological, and time divided into equal units comparable with productivity of work as opposed to the holy days and weekdays connected with the needs of traditional agriculture. [78]

Unlike Ukrainian national populists, the Russophiles could not develop a clear understanding of the problem. The stress on holidays was very strong in their discourse. Sometimes it was connected with capitalist sentiments: 'A shoemaker made boots on Sunday, and then drank until he fell under a table on Monday. To this one traveller answered: "You stole Sunday from God, and today the devil stole Monday from you."' But more often there was a stress on Ruthenian holidays, which were mobilized in the political struggle against the administration and against Poles and Jews who often did not show enough respect for the holidays that were celebrated according to the Julian calendar;[79] and it did not matter that peasants themselves often broke with the division between the sacral and profane from earlier times.[80] But what was good enough as a means of everyday resistance in the national conflict looked laughable when used as a means of explanation in the wider world. For example, it was argued in the Russophile press that the source of all the order and wealth in England was the strict observance of Sunday, when all trade stopped and all the theatres were closed.[81] In this case, paying attention to appearances, the press linked this order and wealth with

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the traditional observance of holy days, while missing the crucial intervention of the English state in policing the population and maintaining this 'public order.' The way the Russophile camp constructed their discourse was suitable for the first stage of penetrating the Galician countryside (i.e., in the 1870s), but it did not stand a chance of becoming a modern ideology.

The Ukrainian-oriented nationalists, on the other hand, took a decisive step in stating clearly the need for a new understanding of time. The time of the Ukrainian national-populist newspaper *Bat'kivshchyna* was the time of progress: 'No! We go further, and it is life, its needs, that force us onwards towards progress. Your fathers and mothers were illiterate ... You have become different from your parents.'[82] This article made the peasants feel the need for change. The history in this article is the history of inevitable political change – 1848–1860–1867. This linearity and increasing intensity was used to underline the importance of the peasants' own time span. An illustrated Ukrainian calendar noted the following important events from the recent past: the abolition of serfdom – sixty-three years ago, the establishing of *Narodna Torhovlia* (People's Trade) – twenty-seven years ago, the establishing of the *Dnister* insurance company – nineteen years ago, the 'bloody' elections – fourteen years ago, the first peasant strike – eight years ago.[83] Thus, new calendars connected the higher level of linear (i.e., historical) time, world and national history, with individual life. But the eschatological mood of this new calendar is also obvious – the events lead to something important and promise that justice on earth will be renewed. The time of progress, of the approach of the national state, is not a sequence of sacral and profane periods. It is the capitalist (Fordist) time of equal units, which measure work productivity. The first issue of the new economic newspaper proclaimed: 'Time is money.'[84] The construction of this narrative is similar to that of the letters: if you live according to these rules about time, you will be rewarded in the future.

On a more general level, other parallels can be found between the letters from heaven and the new discourse. The basic apparatus of persuasion in the letters was developed on the basis of simple oppositions. These oppositions aimed at persuading the peasantry that one system of behaviour was better than another, providing a register of possible gains if the rules were obeyed by the peasants and of possible losses if they misbehaved. Similar modes of opposition and codes of behaviour can be found in numerous popular newspapers and books.

Political injustice replaced old individual sins in the search for an

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explanation for poor living conditions. The traditional explanation was: 'Earlier, when we sinned less, the potato crops were larger, but now heaven's grace has changed.'[85] In that case, sin most often involved the breaking of sacral time. Such was an explanation for the famine of 1846, the last of the premodern crises to afflict the Galician economy, which gave way to capitalist ones.[86] Now it was said: 'Many people have noted the various disasters which fell like curses on the people as a result of the still functioning election ordination with all its fraud and robberies.'[87] Political change became a panacea for all the disasters afflicting the Galician villages: 'From disease, hail, storm, and ... from the mayor-'oinker,' save us, O Lord!'[88] In the case of misbehaviour and disobeying the rules, the Ukrainian nation was threatened, and life outside this nation was unimaginable. Thus the racial discourse of the modern nation-state appears, in which the nation-state takes the place of the promised heavenly kingdom on earth.

Instead of a Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to mention two other stories in which the motif of peasant attitudes towards a sacral text containing an absolute truth plays a key role. In 1863, Polish noble insurgents tried to spread the golden charter among the peasantry of Right-Bank Ukraine. The charter promised the peasantry democratic reforms and land, but the peasantry did not react to the letter despite the fact that it was written in golden letters.[89] Sources show that the uprising had different versions of the charter – an alternative version stressed freedom and fighting[90] – but none worked.

Soviet editions of Ukrainian folk tales often include the tale of the golden charter. The story is as follows: while peasants are digging a well for their landlord, they do not reach water but dig up a golden charter. They are unable to read it because they are illiterate and have to ask the landlords to read it to them. The landlords laugh while reading the charter and relate that the charter says that people are born unequal and that some must work for others. The peasants do not believe this, and the landlords get angry. The peasants flee and in a magical way, the charter once again falls into their hands. They then ask officials and are told that the charter states that every authority is from God. The peasants do not believe this either, and the story repeats. The third category of literate people who are able to read the charter are priests, who say that those who cry on earth will be rewarded in heaven. The peasants again do not

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find this story credible. Then they meet Lenin, who tells them to learn how to read and to read the charter themselves. They learn to read, overthrow the tsar, and find that there was only one word in the charter – *communism*.[91] This tale seems to be fake, as so many others in official Soviet folklore. Both stories are about movements and peasants to whom my story about the letters from heaven does not apply.

In the Great War, many German soldiers used to carry letters from heaven, which were supposed to help them to survive.[92] The Great War being the first form of 'industrial killing' was also the last premodern war. It was the last war that could be described in the words with which Teodor Kostraba described the war of 1859: 'Our Kaiser proclaimed war on another Kaiser.' We do not know whether the Ukrainian soldiers in the Habsburg army carried letters from heaven; most likely those who enrolled in the Legion of the Ukrainian *Sich* Riflemen (the regiment formed by nationally conscious Ukrainian volunteers) would not have carried them.

The letters from heaven did not disappear. To remain as a tactical device, they had to modify their form and change their content. Industrial society witnessed the appearance of chain letters and postindustrial society the appearance of chain e-mails. But these belong to twentieth-century history, while this article deals with the nineteenth.

NOTES

I would like to thank Ostap Sereda, who showed me articles from *Pys'mo z Prosvity* and thus attracted my attention to this topic.

1 *Pys'mo z Prosvity*, 1878, no. 5, 50.
2 Compare *Pys'mo z Prosvity*, 1878, no. 5, 50–1, with Ivan Levitskii, *Galitsko-russkaia bibliografiia XIX-go stoletiia s uvzgliadneniem izdanii poiavivshikhsia v Ugorshchinie i Bukovinie (1801–1886)* (1888; reprint, Vaduz, 1963), 2:316.
3 *Pys'mo z Prosvity*, 1878, no. 5, 50–1.
4 [Volodymyr Barvins'kyi], 'Lyst z neba. (Prychynok do istorii temnoty v Halychyni),' *Pravda* 10, no. 24 (1877): 947–8.
5 I. Sh. z Khmelivky, 'Pys'mo z Bohorodchans'koho,' *Pys'mo z Prosvity*, 1878, no. 6, 57–8.
6 Mirianyn iz Uhnova, 'Nadoslane. Do koldunov dopysuiuchykh do slavnoho "Pys'ma iz Prosvity,"' *Russkaia Rada* 8, 16 February 1878, no. 4, 36.
7 Jean Baudouin de Courtenay, 'Z sennykh widziadeł ludskości,' *Zapysky*

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Naukovoho Tovarystva imeni Shevchenka (henceforth *Zapysky NTSh*) 116 (1913): 245–9.

8 Mykhailo Verbytskii, 'O lystakh Bozhykh,' *Poslannyk*, 1895, no. 5, 4–5.

9 Ivan Verkhrats'kyi, 'Z diakivs'koi literatury,' *Zapysky NTSh* 113 (1913): 147.

10 Verbytskii, 'O lystakh Bozhykh.'

11 Robert Priebsch, *Letters from Heaven on the Observance of the Lord's Day* (Oxford, 1936).

12 Ibid.; Aleksandr Veselovskii, 'Opyty po istorii razvitiia khristianskoi legendy,' *Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia*, 1876, no. 3, 51–68.

13 Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1970) (revised and expanded edition, 1957), 62, 94–5, 119–20, 129–30, 131, 134, 146, 230.

14 Veselovskii, 'Opyty po istorii razvitiia khristianskoi legendy,' 82–3.

15 Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, *Istoriia ukrains'koi literatury*, vol. 4, book 2 (Kyiv, 1994), 224.

16 M.A. Salmina, 'Epistoliia Iisusa Khrista o nedele,' in *Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi*, ed. Dmitrii Likhachev, vyp. 1: *(XI – pervaia polovina XIV v.)* (Leningrad, 1987), 123–4.

17 Aleksei Sobolevskii, *Perevodnaia literatura Moskovskoi Rusi XIV-XVII vekov. Bibliograficheskie materialy* (St Petersburg, 1903), 252, 378–9.

18 Nikolai Sumtsov, *Ocherki istorii iuzhno-russkikh apokrificheskikh skazanii i pesen'* (Kyiv, 1888), 118–19.

19 Nikolai Tikhonravov, ed. and comp., *Pamiatniki starinnoi russkoi literatury* (Moscow, 1863), 2:314–22.

20 Ivan Franko, *Apokrify i legendy z ukrains'kykh rukopysiv. Apokrify eskhatolohichni*, Pamiatnyky ukrains'ko-rus'koi movy i literatury, vol. 4 (Lviv, 1906), xxxviii.

21 Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, *Istoriia ukrains'koi literatury*, vol. 5, book 1 (Kyiv, 1994), 55.

22 Franko, *Apokrify i legendy*, xxxviii–xxxix, 67–9.

23 Ibid., 67–80, 455–7.

24 Viddil rukopysiv Instytutu Literatury imeni Tarasa Shevchenka (Kyiv), fond 3, sprava 1608, s. 53.

25 This data is from the autobiographical notes by Teodor Kostraba in Viddil rukopysiv L'vivs'koi naukovoi biblioteky imeni Vasylia Stefanyka (hereafter referred to as VR LNB), fond 1, sprava 726/5.

26 Rudolf Stübe, *Der Himmelsbrief: Ein Beitrag zur allgemeinen Religionsgeschichte* (Tübingen, 1918), 1–5.

27 Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Istorychnyi Arkhiv Ukrainy u L'vovi, fond 182, opys 1, sprava 5, arkush 1.

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28 VR LNB, fond 1, sprava 726/5, arkush 26; also fond 1, sprava 726/7.
29 Verbytskii, 'O lystakh Bozhykh,' *Poslannyk*, 1895, no. 5, 5.
30 *Lyst iz'iavlenyi* (Kolomyia, 1881), 5.
31 Franko, *Apokrify i legendy*, 63.
32 *Lyst iz'iavlenyi*, 7.
33 Franko, *Apokrify i legendy*, 75–9.
34 The entries for the pseudonym 'Podorozhnyi' in Oleksii Dei, *Slovnyk ukrains'kykh psevdonimiv ta kryptonimiv* (Kyiv, 1969) do not help to establish the authorship of this publication.
35 Franko, *Apokrify i legendy*, 75.
36 *Lyst Bozhii* (Lviv), 4.
37 Ibid., 5.
38 Ibid., 6.
39 Ibid., 7.
40 VR LNB, fond 1, sprava 444/5.
41 Veselovskii, 'Opyty po istorii razvitiia khristianskoi legendy,' 106.
42 Hrushevs'kyi, *Istoriia ukrains'koi literatury*, vol. 5, book 1, 56.
43 Ibid., 57.
44 Ibid., 224.
45 Ibid., vol. 4, book 2, 220.
46 Sumtsov, *Ocherki istorii iuzhno-russkikh apokrificheskikh skazanii i pesen'*, 9.
47 Franko, *Apokrify i legendy*, xiv.
48 Sumtsov, *Ocherki istorii iuzhno-russkikh apokrificheskikh skazanii i pesen'*, 57.
49 Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1978), 10.
50 Sumtsov, *Ocherki istorii iuzhno-russkikh apokrificheskikh skazanii i pesen'*, 123.
51 Ibid., 12–17.
52 Iurii Kmit, 'Narodni "patsiri,"' *Litopys Boikivshchyny* 11 (1939), 37.
53 De Courtenay, 'Z sennykh widziadeł ludskości,' *Zapysky NTSh* 116 (1913): 245–9.
54 Volodymyr Hnatiuk, 'Kil'ka dukhovnykh virshiv,' *Zapysky NTSh* 56 (1903): 26.
55 Timotei Zaiats, 'Zapiski,' *Golos minuvshego* 1, no. 8 (1913): 158–9.
56 Hirniak, 'Z hir,' *Narodna Chasopys'*, 1 April 1891, no. 64, 2.
57 'Pidhirska molytva abo iak moliat'sia nashi seliany pry kintsy 19-ho stolittia,' *Narodna Chasopys'*, 4 April 1897, no. 17, 1–2.
58 Ivan Franko, 'Halyts'ko-rus'ki narodni prypovidky,' *Etnohrafichnyi Zbirnyk*, vol. 28 (1910): 309, 458.
59 Mykhailo Zubryts'kyi, 'Nechyste mistse,' *Zhytie i Slovo* 4 (1895): 360.
60 Ivan Franko, 'Liudovi viruvannia na Pidhiriu,' *Etnohrafichnyi Zbirnyk* 5 (1898): 192.

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61 Thomas M. Barrett, ‘Good News Comes to a Russian Village: The Peasant Articles of Kharkov and the Emancipation of the Serfs,’ *Peasant Studies* 17, no. 1 (1989): 32.
62 Franko, ‘Liudovi viruvannia na Pidhiriu,’ 197.
63 Verbytskii, ‘O lystakh Bozhykh,’ 4.
64 TsDIAUL, f. 146, op. 4, spr. 2503, 5.
65 Cited in Sumtsov, *Ocherki istorii iuzhno-russkikh apokrificheskikh skazanii i pesen'*, 10.
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67 Yuri M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN, 1990), 153, 158.
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69 Ivan Krevets'kyi, *Agrarni straiky i boikoty u Skhidnii Halychyni v 1848–49 rr.* (*Do istorii borot'by za suspil'no-ekonomichne vyzvolennia ukrains'kykh selians'kykh mas u Skhidnii Halychyni*) (Lviv, 1906).
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76 ‘Koliada patriotychnaia,’ *Russkaia Rada* 26, 1 January 1896, no. 1, 1.
77 Jan Słomka, *Pamiętniki włościanina. Od pańszczyzny do dni dzisiejszych*, 2nd ed. (Kraków, 1929), 29–30.
78 A typical example of the importance of the division of time into sacral and profane in the daily life of the peasantry can be found in Mykhailo Zubryts'kyi, ‘Tisni roky,’ *Zapysky NTSh* 26 (1898): 3.
79 ‘Vit Drohobycha,’ *Russkoie Slovo*, 1890, no. 8, or ‘Iz Sambora,’ *Russkoie Slovo*, 1904, no. 34.
80 ‘Iz Nyzhankovets' v liutom,’ *Vistnyk*, 1859, no. 12.
81 S. Boiko, ‘Pys'mo z Boikivshchyny do chesnykh hazdiv,’ *Russkaia Rada*, 1872, no. 3.
82 ‘My khochemo rozumnoho postupu,’ *Bat'kivshchyna*, 1891, no. 9, 53.
83 *Khliborob*. *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar dlia ruskykh selian*, 1911.
84 ‘Chas to hroshy,’ *Golos Truda*, 1909, no. 1.
85 Fedor Dosinchuk, ‘Pys'mo ot Deliatyna,’ *Russkaia Rada*, 1872, no. 21.

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86 See the song about potatoes in Zubryts'kyi, 'Tisni roky,' 3 – 'People, you did not know how to respect potatoes / when it was the biggest holiday you went to dig out them / you were cleaning them before the Morning Stars showed, you were cleaning / you did not know that I would like to die / you were grating during the biggest holiday.'
87 'Narodni vicha i manifestatsii,' *Dilo*, 1905, no. 282.
88 Hromadianyn, 'Trushovychi,' *Selians'ka Rada*, 1907, no. 16.
89 Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński, *Rok 1863 na Rusi. Ukraina, Wołyń, Podolie* (Lviv, 1903), 72, 222.
90 Compare *Zolota Hramota*, held at the Rare Books' Division of Vasyl' Stefanyk Library in Lviv with Barv. 5827 in VR LNB.
91 V.H. Boiko, *Ukrains'ki narodni kazky* (Kyiv, 1976), 417–20.
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For the Beauty of God's House: Notes on Icon Vestments and Decorations in the Ruthenian Church

SOPHIA SENYK

Any historic description of the interior of churches in Rus',[1] any list of the furnishings and precious objects of a church invariably mentions necklaces, pendants, rings, and similar ornaments on icons. The custom of decorating sacred images is common to many religions. In Christianity it is known both in the Catholic West and in the Orthodox East. The practice is ancient, with roots in the earliest centuries. Theodoret of Cyrus in the fifth century writes about the cult of martyrs in churches erected over their relics. People come to pray for health, for children, for a safe trip, asking the martyrs to offer their prayers to God. Those who have the opportunity, he adds, return with an expression of their thanks, leaving *ex votos* to testify to their cures: images in the form of eyes, of feet, of hands, in gold or in wood, according to the person's means.[2] As the use of sacred images in churches became diffused, the same practice of leaving offerings was applied to them

In the Catholic West this practice reached its apogee in the baroque period; it has declined in the twentieth century, especially after Vatican II. In Greece icons decorated with offerings from the faithful can still be seen in practically every church.

In Rus' the custom of decorating icons was known from the beginning of Christianization and remained popular ever since. Time, and especially the upheavals of the twentieth century, have swept away historic examples, some of them preserved in their original locations for centuries. This study, based chiefly on written sources, does not set out to give an exhaustive treatment of the subject, only to point out its diffusion and meaning. I have sought to collect examples primarily from Ruthenian lands, but limiting my study to these might lead to false conclusions, so I also cite Russian examples. I wish to emphasize

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that vastly more material from all parts of Rus' can be found than have been collected in this article.

Some Preliminaries

The scope of this essay is to show popular veneration of icons, but to understand the popular veneration properly, the wider context of icon veneration has to be mentioned briefly. Upon becoming a Christian land Rus' took over the Byzantine custom of vesting highly venerated icons with artistically worked covers of silver or gold, often studded with precious stones. Such an icon vestment (*riza*) left visible only the faces and hands of the persons portrayed on the icons, while everything else was covered (see p. 203). This custom was known throughout all of Rus' and continued to develop. In Ruthenian lands the icon vestment was often called *šata,* both terms originally meaning rich clothes, thus indicating their application on the icon as a precious vestment. *Riza* and *šata* are particular kinds of *oklad,* or, in Ruthenian lands, *oprava,* icon mounting; the same terms are used also to designate the metal mountings of Gospel books. The *oklad* or *oprava* of chased or *repoussé* metal may cover more or less of the icon surface: everything except faces and hands, or only the borders and the background, or the figures only partially. From written descriptions, hence, it is not always possible to know exactly the extent of these decorations.[3]

Together with the *oklad/oprava* we find besides frequently a mention of pendants (*priveski*), which can be a wide variety of objects, appended in various ways to the icon (see p. 204). Circles generally of gold or silver, sometimes studded with gems, covered the halos; these are *vency*, which I translate here as wreaths. The term *venec,* however, may also mean diadem; in other words it may designate a crown, and especially when a *venec* is mentioned without a *korona* it is not always clear whether an encircling halo or a diadem over the head is meant. A crown (*korona*) was placed over the heads of the person represented.

Other particular types of adornments of icons had specific names. A crescent-shaped decoration is the *cata* (translated here as crescent), usually gold or silver, often with gems: it hung from the wreath so as to lie on the breast of the person represented on the icon (see p. 205). *Rjasy* or *rjasny* were strands of pearls, sometimes interspersed with gems, with gold or silver ornaments on one end, and hung by gold or silver loops at the other from the headdresses of aristocratic women in medi-

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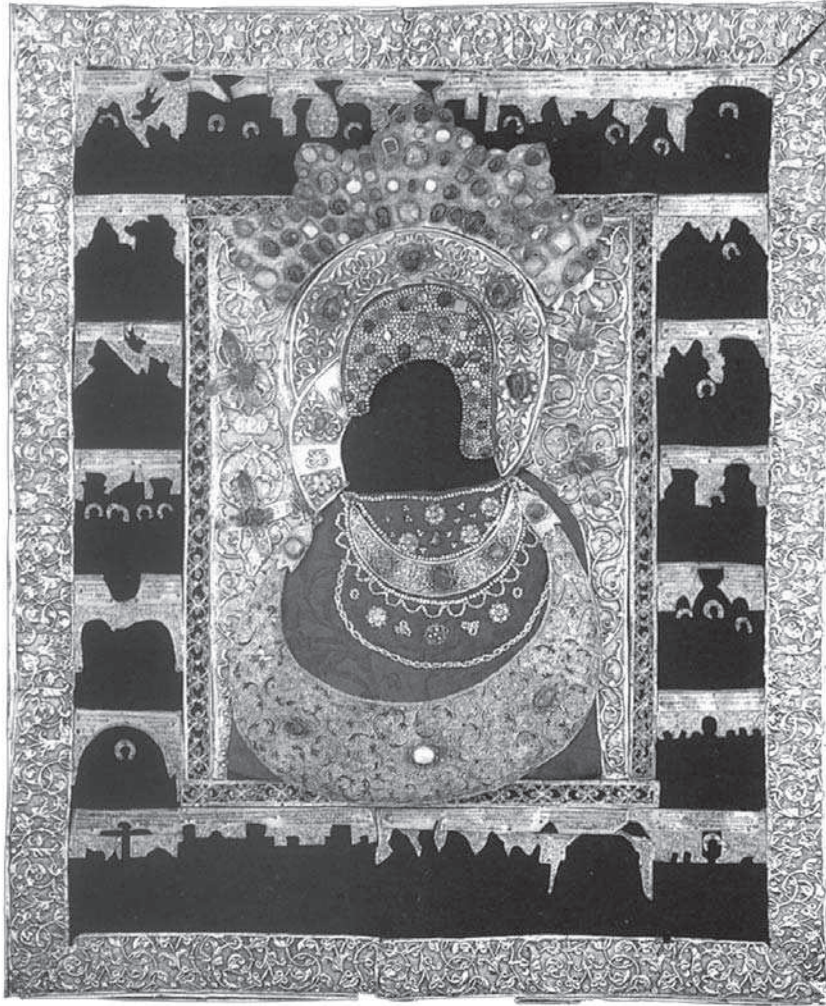

Icon mounting, late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, Suzdal. From *Russkoe prikladnoe iskusstvo XIII–načala XX v. Iz sobranija Gosudarstvennogo ob"edinennogo Vladimiro-Suzdal'skogo muzeja-zapovednika* (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1982), pl. 107.

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Adorned icon. From www.orth.kherson.ua, accessed 13 November 2001.

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Diadem and crescent (*venec* and *cata*), seventeenth century, Suzdal. From *Russkoe prikladnoe iskusstvo XIII–načala XX v. Iz sobranija Gosudarstvennogo ob"edinennogo Vladimiro-Suzdal'skogo muzeja-zapovednika* (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1982), pl. 57.

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eval Rus', following Byzantine custom. On icons of the Mother of God the *rjasy* were attached to the wreath.

In addition cloths of valuable materials were hung on the icon: over the icon and hanging along its sides (*ubrus*), hanging down from the icon (*pelena*), or covering the icon (*pokrov,* in Ruthenian lands also called *zavesa*). The icon with its adornments was often placed in a shrine, *kiot.* All adornments of a particular icon were not necessarily exposed together; they could be alternated according to the season and the feast.[4]

We shall comment on the significance of icon decorations in Rus' in the final part of this essay, but a few words need to be said here. If various elements of the icon adornments derive from pre-Christian cults or from aristocratic social form, nevertheless they were placed on the icons within the context of Christian liturgical or private worship.[5] The religious sense of these adornments derives from the Orthodox teaching on the veneration of icons, as developed during the iconoclastic controversy, especially by St John Damascene.[6] The teaching on the veneration to be paid to icons was formulated at the Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicea, 787.[7] The honour paid to the image, as the council repeats after St Basil, passes to the prototype.[8]

Icon Mountings

We shall see as we go on that people of all classes adorned icons, according to their means. In this sense the icon vestments of gold and precious stones provided by the wealthy and the coins or beads offered by the more humble are expressions of the same religious feeling. We begin hence with citing some examples of the gifts of the wealthy to churches; for the period before the seventeenth century they are almost the only examples mentioned in sources.

Around 1429 Bishop Aleksij of Luc'k made an inventory of the Saviour Monastery in that town. In its church there were four icons *kovani,* that is, with metal mountings, and the metals of course were precious. There were also three icons with wreaths; again, they have to be understood as made of gold or silver. Immediately after this two gold and three silver *hryvni* are mentioned. These are also adornments on icons, those just mentioned or others. If we recall the form of the *hryvnja,* when it refers to the adornment of princes, we may interpret them to be the same as what in Russia were known as *caty.* But the term *hryvnja/grivnja* and its diminutives could also mean any silver pendant, in particular any coin, as we shall see.

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In 1494 Archimandrite Joseph of the Sluck Monastery was elected bishop of Smolensk (he later became metropolitan of Kyiv); he then made the usual inventory of his monastery before turning it over to his successor. He lists the icons in the monastery church without giving any particulars about them, except to mention with reference to one icon of St Nicholas, the most venerated saint in Rus', that it has a metal mounting (*okovana*).[9]

A 1583 inventory of the Luc'k Monastery of the Mother of God lists in its church forty-three icons, on one of which there is 'silver of about three *zolotnyky*.'[10] Although this phrase is none too clear, it evidently refers to a silver *oprava.*

In the Žydyčyn Monastery church, Luc'k eparchy, in 1597 there were 'four icons with silver mountings on which there were precious stones.'[11] An inventory of the same church from 1621 lists five icons, probably the four of the earlier description and one other, adding some particulars: they are of Moscow workmanship, all have silver mountings, and all together on them there are twenty-four precious stones.[12]

Icons in the homes of the wealthy were similarly adorned. Among the possessions left by Bishop Meletij Xrebtovyč of Volodymyr and Brest at his death in 1593 there was an icon, 'quite large, in a silver [mounting], gilded, with precious stones.'[13]

In 1557 Archimandrite Sergij of the Suprasl' Monastery made a list of all the building and adorning of churches carried out during his term as superior. His list gives the cost in materials and work for making mountings and wreaths for various icons that already were in the church. For some of the mountings the wife of the monastery patron, Vasilisa Jaroslavna Xodkevyč, gave the money; others were mounted (*okovani*) at the monastery's cost.[14] There is no need to emphasize how costly these vestments were. Their costliness is the reason why in Ruthenian lands practically none of the older ones have survived.

Only very wealthy persons could afford to cover an icon with precious metals and stones. In the earlier centuries the Orthodox Ruthenian princes and magnates outfitted the churches under their patronage and other important churches with icons in silver mountings, as with other valuable furnishings. By the mid-seventeenth century almost all of these families had become polonized and had passed to the Latin church. Even when members of these families did continue to maintain Ruthenian churches on their estates, their support of them was reduced to a minimum. The rich gifts of their ancestors to these churches became the prey of robberies, raids, wars, and plain greed. The four Žydyčyn

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icons with mountings, for instance, are mentioned in an itemization of the goods carried off by neighbouring nobles in a raid on the monastery (and recovered, if they are indeed the same as those in 1621).

The heir of an estate might covet what his ancestors had given to God. The Počajiv Monastery was founded by the wealthy noblewoman Anna Hojska at the end of the sixteenth century beside the church in which she placed her miraculous icon of the Mother of God. This became the most venerated icon in Ukraine and from the first drew numerous pilgrims. By 1642 the icon was adorned with precious stones, three *hryvni* of pure gold with glazed decorations (*šmel'ci*), and eighteen *kopy* (that is, 1080 [!]) of large East Indian pearls, considered to be the most beautiful. All this and the monastery church's rich furnishings and vestments aroused the cupidity of Hojska's heir, Andrew Firlej, who tried to appropriate them.[15]

In another instance a widowed noblewoman, evidently Latin, simply seized all the property of a Ruthenian parish church on her land in the Hrodna district, putting an end to all services there. The church had been founded more than a hundred years earlier by her deceased husband's ancestors. The court case brought against her sons (she herself was no longer living in 1677) lists the church's furnishings carried off only summarily; even so, it tells us something about the vesting of icons. The church was dedicated in honour of the Mother of God, and the icon of the church's title was mounted in giltsilver; in addition, it was adorned with 'jewels and tablets,' added on, we may presume, gradually in the intervening decades.[16]

In 1708 Mohyliv was occupied by the Swedes. King Charles XII visited the churches and coveted what wealth he saw there; the Mohyliv burghers had correctly appraised the situation and had hidden the most precious church furnishings. The king's greed was roused by the silver mountings on icons, and he demanded that these and other silver be handed over, or he would give the town over to flames. Here is a listing of the loot from these churches (I omit the itemization of silver other than that on icons):

> From the brotherhood church a silvergilt mounting from the icon of the most holy Mother of God, three smaller mountings ... 100 large silver plaques. From the brotherhood's Epiphany Church one mounting from the icon of the Mother of God, thirty plaques, and various broken silver, tumblers, beakers, which had been collected to make a mounting for the icon of the Mother of God from the Olejna Gate, which icon is now in the

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> Saviour Church. From the St Nicholas Church the silver mounting of the icon of the megalomartyr Demetrius was given ... fifty large plaques ... Also from the other Mohyliv churches no small number of icon mountings, candle stands (*panikadyla*), censers, crosses, plaques, pendants, chalices, candlesticks, and other silver church objects were given.[17]

Our descriptions give only the material value of the icon mountings and decorations, but they were doubtless also of high artistic value: only the best was given to the church. The loss of aristocratic patronage, as happens everywhere, must have been accompanied by a decline in aesthetic standards and achievements.

After the loss to Ruthenian society of its magnate families through their passage to the Latin church wealthy burghers sometimes supplied rich icon mountings. A town councilman of Vilnius, Samuel Falinovič, in his testament of February 1663 willed, among other gifts, forty *kopy* to the Uniate Church of the Holy Trinity 'for the decoration of the image of the most holy Virgin.'[18] The sum willed leaves little doubt that a precious metal cover for the icon was intended.

With the rise of the Cossack elites in the Hetmanate, applied arts in Ukraine again flourished, as again there was a class able to patronize them. One wealthy Cossack official, Dmytro Horlenko, colonel (*polkovnyk*) of Pryluky, gave money for an icon of the Mother of God in a monastery church, Hustyn'. The monastery chronicle under 1697 records that Horlenko, 'like a zealous son of God's church, who loves its beauty, provided the *namistna* icon of the Mother of God with a gilded silver mounting.'[19]

Icon Adornments

Early Examples

We have already met with *hryvni* and pearls on icons. These and other adornments, usually given to icons that already had a metal mounting, are an old custom in Rus'. The Hypatian chronicle under 6767 (1259) describes how Prince Daniel of Halyč built and outfitted the church in his newly founded town of Xolm. He had icons for the church painted in Kyiv and when these were brought to Xolm he decorated them with precious stones. Precious stones need to be set in precious metal. These stones were probably set in the icons' mountings, although some kind of pendant cannot be excluded. If the prince adorned the icons with

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precious stones, he also provided mountings of precious metals for the icons.

Already by this time other persons were giving adornments to icons. The Hypatian and Laurentian chronicles under 1155 describe the icon vestment that Prince Andrew Bogoljubskij provided for the icon of the Mother of God that he brought from Vyšhorod to his new capital Vladimir. This mounting was made of thirty *hryvni* (at least twelve pounds) of gold, decorated with silver, pearls, and precious stones.[20] From the first this icon was venerated as miraculous, and a twelfth-century account of ten miracles adds some particulars about the form this veneration took. The eighth miracle is about a woman suffering from a heart condition, who is made well, and the ninth is about a woman in Tver′ undergoing a difficult childbirth, but who at last comes out well after giving birth to a healthy baby. Both women had prayed to the Mother of God and both had vowed to make an offering to the Vladimir icon. After their recovery the first woman sends her gold earrings and *rjasy* and the second gold earrings and *kosy,* some kind of plaited or tasseled stuffs.[21]

Two pendant-medallions (*kolty*) of silver, gilt, filigree, enamel, and precious stones from Rjazan′ in the second half of the twelfth century have been interpreted as made specifically to be hung from the wreath of some highly venerated icon.[22] Also from Rjazan′ is a thirteenth-century giltsilver crown decorated with precious stones and filigree for an icon of the Mother of God.[23]

Descriptions of similar offerings in Ruthenian lands in this early period are lacking. Inventories from the sixteenth century on, however, show icons already hung with all kinds of adornments, so the practice was of long and wide standing.

The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

From the sixteenth century we have some of the first descriptions of the interior of the Dormition Church of the Kyiv Caves Monastery. In an inventory of the monastery treasury of 1554, which evidently mentions only the most precious items, there is a list of icons mounted in silver, among which the following may be singled out: ‘a large icon of the Savior, mounted in giltsilver, on it fifteen stones, a gold *hryvna,* another one of silver, a costly veil with pearls sewn on … Icon of the most pure Mother of God Odigitria, mounted in giltsilver, with seven stones in the wreath, two silver *hryvni*.’ In addition, in the list of precious cloths,

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mostly to cover the graves of the princes buried there, we find the following: 'On the large icon of the Saviour red atlas with a cross of pearls. On the icon of the Mother of God two red damask cloths, on which there are pearl crosses and gilt crescents.'[24]

Under normal conditions inventories of churches were made every time a new bishop, parish priest, or, in the case of monasteries, superior, entered into office. Such an inventory of the Kyiv Lavra was made upon the accession of Archimandrite Nikifor Tur in 1593. There is a list of thirty-two 'small' icons, for the most part of the Mother of God, kept in the church treasury and put out for veneration on special occasions. All of them have gilded silver mountings, and are noted by some other particulars as well. On one icon of the Mother of God there are twelve gold *czerwony złoty* and thirteen ducats, on another 'eleven *czerwony złoty,* twelve ducats, and in the wreath two precious stones, one red and one green [a ruby and an emerald?].'[25] A few other descriptions may be added: an icon of the Mother of God 'with five plain gems'; a small icon of the Mother of God, with two small *hryvni*'; yet another icon of the Mother of God with 'two small *hryvni* and six stones in the wreath'; an icon of St Nicholas, with 'twelve white stones, two small *hryvni,* twelve silver disks'; a small icon of St Nicholas with two *hryvni*; finally an icon of the Mother of God, 'painted on gold, with four stones on the corners, with a silver gilded mounting, a giltsilver wreath in which there are four large stones, and two stones by the hand, two silver stars where the *hryvnja* is usually, with a gilded silver chain attached to the icon, and three giltsilver stars.'[26]

In 1654 Patriarch Macarius of Antioch travelled through Ukraine on his way to Moscow. His son, Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo, who accompanied him, took careful notes, valuable because of his competency in the matter, of local religious practices. In Paul's description of the Dormition Church at the Kyiv Lavra two large icons of Christ and of the Mother of God in the church's narthex are mentioned. The icons were set in carved and gilded shrines; on each icon there was a wreath of gold, silver, and precious stones. Both icons were hung with numerous gold and silver pendants: crosses, images, and precious objects. In the main body of the church the two *namistni* icons were even larger and more beautiful; they also were adorned with wreaths and with numerous pendants of gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls.[27] These gifts were made to the monastery over a period of time, reflecting a long tradition of adorning icons. The Kyiv Lavra, at which magnates and nobles chose to be buried, received gifts from the wealthiest families, as

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these adornments show. Elsewhere the gifts were similar, if not in the same profusion.

An inventory of the Kobryn' Monastery made in 1524 lists *hryvni* on various icons. The titular icon of the Transfiguration in the *namistnyj* row of the iconostasis, for instance, was adorned with a small silver *hryvna,* a large twisted *hryvna,* two more twisted *hryvni,* a flat *hryvna* 'not very large,' and yet another flat silver *hryvna*.[28] These metal decorations on the icons, perhaps not all of silver, since this is said explicitly only in two cases, were probably crescents, *caty.* Another icon of the Transfiguration was adorned with only two silver twisted *hryvni,* but one of these had a precious stone on it.

In a 1593 inventory of the Melec'kyj Monastery near Volodymyr Volyns'kyj we find the following in its main church: 'an icon of the twelve feasts, in a silver mounting, with a veil of red *kitajka* [a smooth fabric, wool or silk], on the veil a cross of pearls, with other pearls set around the cross, and on the veil also seventy-nine silver disks (*pukliky*)' (see p. 213).[29]

To the disks here and on the Kyiv Lavra icon we may cite an interesting Greek parallel. The patron of Thessalonika is St Demetrius, a wonder-working saint, and his church in that city was the centre of a widespread cult before it was turned into a mosque. There was always a brisk trade in Thessalonika in icons depicting St Demetrius, which gave rise to an affiliated industry, the mass production of stamped silver disks for the embellishment of those icons.[30]

In the seventeenth century descriptions of icon pendants become more numerous. The Bil'sk Church of the Birth of the Mother of God was founded by Prince Michael Semonovič of Hrodna, Bil'sk, and Kobryn'. Having lost its wealthy patrons by 1637, when an inventory was made, the church no longer possessed its original furnishings. On the icons we see no expensive vestments; there are, nevertheless, offerings from the faithful.

> On the *namistna* icon of the Mother of God seven plaques, corals, four strings of pearls, a gold ring, six crosses of various sizes, two agnuses in silver mounting, one and one half *łokot* of green *kitajka,* two crowns, on the Mother of God and on the Saviour. On the icon of Joachim and Anna a silver crown.[31]

In Brest in the 1640s a church custodian was accused of having appropriated three silver bands, corals, and a gold ring worth two *złoty.*[32]

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Fragment of a twelve-feasts icon, sixteenth century, Novgorod. From *Prazdničnyj rjad Sofii Novgorodskoj* (Leningrad: Avrora, 1974), pl. 26.

In the women's Ascension Monastery of Kyiv, by the Kyiv Lavra, Paul of Aleppo was impressed by the well-ordered monastic life. Patriarch Macarius celebrated in the wooden monastery church; there 'on the icons of the Lord, our Lady, the Ascension, and women martyrs there was a multitude of wreaths, small crosses, images, pendants, gold and silver chains with pearls and precious stones.'[33]

Icons in the church of the St Michael Golden-Domed Monastery were similarly decked out. An account of miracles wrought through the intercession of St Barbara, whose relics were this church's chief treasures, mentions in 1666 'silver and chains and other objects' on the icons there.[34]

L'viv Burghers and Their Offerings

At the annual election of officers of the L'viv Stauropegian Confraternity the outgoing officers had to give an account of their term, which included an inventory of the church. Inventories of the L'viv Stauropegian Confraternity offer material that spans the entire seventeenth century and illustrates every form of icon vestment and decoration.

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These inventories usually list the items without describing how they were placed in the church, but even so they provide a great deal of information, including at times particulars not found elsewhere, such as who brought these ornaments to church.

The earliest description dates from 1619.[35] Here the icons of the confraternity's main Dormition Church are grouped in two lists, those with gilded silver mountings and those without. Since in this inventory every icon is described individually, we can form a rather good idea of their adornments. I give a few from the first list, which has thirty-five in all, and follow them with some explanatory comments.

1. Icon of the Pantocrator, on the crown three stones, the metal cover glazed [*bljaxa z šmalcem*], covered with a pattern, with a metal disk and stud and a silver circle on the top.
2. Pantocrator, with a crown, gilded all over ...
6. The Holy Trinity, with three crowns, gilded ...
10. Icon of the most holy Mother of God, with two crowns [one on the Mother, the other on the Child], a gilded silver mounting, and two red gems and a third yellow gem, covered entirely with a patterned and glazed metal mounting ...
12. Icon of the most holy Mother of God, a large crown with four pearls and three gems, a *repoussé* metal mounting.
13. Icon of the Mother of God, with a crown and a neckband [i.e., *cata*] with six gems, glazed all over ...
18. Icon of the Mother of God only with a gilded mounting ...
20. St Nicholas, with two red gems, gilded ...
30. Ss Borys and Hlib, in a gilded mounting.

[Unnumbered] Icon of the most holy Mother of God, with a silver glazed pointed crown, on which there are quite a few gems, the headpiece and the neckpiece are set with pearls, Jesus Christ with a glazed silver crown, bordered with gilded silver.[36]

Among the icons without metal covers one, depicting Christ's Resurrection, also had five silver crowns on it.

This 1619 description can be compared with an inventory of the Dormition Church drawn up in 1637, which also gives us particulars that help us visualize the icons and their adornments. The brotherhood secretary, Constantine Medzapeta, lists the various types of adornments separately, and this time also gives some information about how they were acquired.

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One category of icon adornments are ten crowns and seven wreaths; I cite some examples.[37]

> 1. A giltsilver crown, with various plain gems, in a round circle, empty in the centre, and a second smaller crown similar to the first. This was given by *pan* Demian Poljuskyj, for his and his wife's salvation, for the *namistna* icon of the Mother of God; there is also a silver gilded tablet on that icon with his name. All together it weighs *hryvni.*

The amount the crowns weighed was left blank in the inventory. Obviously the adornment encircled the faces, with a crown on top. *Pan* Poljuskyj may have been concerned about his salvation, but he was certainly concerned about letting others know of his piety.

> 3. A giltsilver crown, one on the most holy Mother of God, a second smaller one on the Son of God, with small plain stones; these crowns were given by the *pani* Anna Holhanskaja for the icon of the most pure Mother of God in the narthex of the old church; it weighs in all four *hryvni*.
> 4. A giltsilver crown, topped as if with half-circles, and a smaller one for the Son of God for the same icon in the narthex of the old church, given by *pan* Simeon Dobranskyj for his salvation. It weighs two *hryvni*.

When several of the same kind of adornment, like these crowns, were given for the same icon, they were alternated, for instance, the more precious being placed on it on the greater feasts.

> 10. A giltsilver crown; a second smaller crown in the sanctuary of the new church, on the icon of the most pure Mother of God behind the altar, on which there are also several plain stones.

Now for a few description of the wreaths, which covered the halos on the icons:

> 1. A gold wreath, adorned with pearls, which *pani* Anna Holhanskaja gave for the icon of the most pure Mother of God in the narthex of the old church.

As we saw above, she also gave, at the same or at another time, a crown for the same icon.

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> 2. A wreath edged with green silk, with pearls scattered on it, for the icon of the Dormition of the most pure Mother of God in the large church, given by *pani* Langyšovaja.

Wreaths numbers 3 and 4 were alike, given by different persons for the *namistna* icon of the Mother of God in the new church. Both were edged with green silk and had pearls scattered over them.

Under the heading 'Pearls and small items' kept in the sacristy we find the following note: 'ten cloths with pearls on them. They are used to decorate the festal icons. They weigh all together six *lituv*.'

The inventory lists icons with silver mountings, most of which also had crowns. Among these we may identify some from the 1619 inventory, including that of the Mother of God with the head covering and neck set with pearls.

Another category in this inventory was cloths of expensive stuffs, velvet and silk variously worked, to drape particular icons on feasts.

The icon of the Mother of God in the old church, evidently the most venerated, was decorated also with thirty-two small silver plaques, a cross, and gilded bracelets. One plaque in the form of a heart with a dove on top was offered by a woman shopkeeper. These plaques or tablets were not attached to the icon itself; rather, we must imagine the icon in a *kiot*, in which the plaques were placed around the icon. They were votive offerings, generally given for graces received, most often cures.

There were also 'eyes, attached earlier,' that is, a silver *ex voto* in the form of eyes, then the offerings of that year.

> A small Muscovite cross was given by *dido* Semion. A poor woman gave another cross. One strand of corals was given by Her Ladyship Mčyxa, who lives on the Furas. Another strand of corals, interspersed with pearls, was given by a young lady, while a third strand is older.

Someone also gave a ring, and a former deacon gave a small silver cross for the icon of St Nicholas.

Just as interesting are the annotations added in 1658 about new silver plaques on the icon of the Mother of God in the old church.

> The first plaque was given by Paul the tailor. A servant from the Armenian street gave another plaque. A third plaque was also given, but it was not

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> noted by whom. Another plaque was also given. One pair of eyes, another pair of eyes from the wife of Paul Aleksandrovyč, a third pair from the cobbler's wife.

Three more plaques were added: by a woman, by 'someone from the Armenian street,' by 'Eliaš.'

The number of silver plaques shows both the piety and the prosperity of the ordinary Ruthenian L'viv population at this time; the crowns, wreaths, and other precious items were given by the more wealthy among them.

Still later inventories show the practice of placing decorations on icons in full vigour. The 1665 inventory groups items by kind; the following are icon ornaments.

> A gold chain, on which there are twenty-three ducats, pearls with gold ducats and corals, five other strings of pearls, with crystal mounted in silver, another string of pearls with corals and a gilded silver cross, another string of pearls with corals, corals with a gold cross, a string of corals with a gilded silver cross, a string of corals alone, a fifth set of corals with very small pearls, three silver crosses, five silver studs, and crowns.[38]

The 1668 inventory lists sixteen icons, six of them with silver mountings and ten without.[39]

A more detailed inventory was begun in 1666, but left unfinished; it gives a better idea of how these adornments on the icons looked. In the old church the following are noted:

> Small ornamented crowns on the icons of the Saviour and the Mother of God inside the church; silver gilded crowns on the icon of the Mother of God and Child; four small crowns with stones on the icon of the Pokrov.

In the large Dormition Church:

> In the sanctuary an icon of the Mother of God on which there are two small gilded silver crowns [on the Mother of God and on the Child] and seven white [silver?] plaques, with corals on which there are two gold rings and a gold cross, also two strings of pearls, and a piece of material

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> for carrying.[40] A dark red damask veil on the icon of the Mother of God, and a silk one on top, and on the Pokrov a silk veil with lace and a cloth over it.

The cloth 'for carrying' was for holding the icon when it was carried out in processions. Icons, like all sacred objects, are not handled lightly in Orthodox tradition; specifically, veneration is shown them by not handling them with uncovered hands. Other precious materials are listed in the sacristy and in the old church, some of them veils used for covering the icons. In the sacristy other icons were kept, with and without silver mountings.[41]

The icon in the sanctuary behind the altar, we have already noted, was the most venerated in the Dormition Church. The 1691 inventory describes it thus:

> One crown [on the Mother of God], also one crown on the Child, three plaques, two silver eyes, two strings of pearls, one string of corals, also one small cross. A plaque was given on the Sunday of the veneration of the Holy Cross [third Sunday of Lent] ... *Panna* Nastja gave a plaque.

The *Deisis*, which represents Christ with his Mother on the left and St John the Baptist on the right in attitudes of supplication, and which is sometimes enlarged by the addition of other saints on both sides, is traditionally on iconostases. The 1691 inventory mentions that there are crowns on the heads of the three figures of the Deisis. It also mentions a crown 'attached on feasts,' but does not specify on which icon it is attached.[42]

The plaques listed in the later descriptions are the same as those that must have been given as *ex votos* to the Latin churches in L'viv; a continuation of the 1691 inventory lists many more silver plaques, placed in the *kiot* of the icon. We find here several more *ex votos* in the shape of eyes and one in the form of a heart. This register also gives the names of the donors, mostly women, married and unmarried, and mostly from the town elites, but there appears also a woman who lives in the almshouse (*baba špytalnaja*) and a *pan* Vasylyj, soldier.[43] The *ex votos* were probably procured from the same local silversmiths who made them for the Latin faithful.[44]

Gifts of these items continued to be made. In 1702 a L'viv woman donated 'one Muscovite icon, on which there is a silver plaque.' The next year a certain Jan Odonsky gave 'a gold cross, on which there are

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stone plaques with reliefs of the Lord's Passion, to the icon of the Mother of God in the Balaban chapel.'[45]

Left-Bank Ukraine

From the Left Bank we have an interesting inventory of the church vestments and precious objects of the Novhorod Sivers'kyj Saviour Monastery from 1714. Here we find both expensive metal icon covers, the gifts of the wealthy, and more modest offerings brought by the people not only of the town itself, but also of the surrounding region, who came to pray at the monastery.

The *namistni* icons of the Saviour and of the Mother of God were in mountings and had gilded silver crowns. On the icon of the Saviour there was a silver crucifix on a chain, while that of the Mother of God had five strands of corals and one of red gems set in gold.[46]

Two descriptions from the inventory I quote in full.

> On the miraculous icon of the Kazan' Mother of God: a giltsilver *šata;* two strands, one of corals with pearls and the other only corals, on which there are ten small crosses; two silver plaques, one of them gilded; by it a silver hand and foot and eyes.

This icon was obviously in a shrine (*kiot*), in which the silver hand, foot, and eyes were placed. These are like the *ex votos* of both Greek and Western practice. They are unusual for Ukraine, where we very rarely meet with offerings depicting the part of the body cured. The other description follows:

> On the icon of the Kupjatyc'ka Mother of God there are five strands of red corals; on it there are also six small silver crosses, the sixth with a dark red glaze; three crystal agnuses; two red metal tokens; ten old silver *kopejki* (kopeks) and one gold.

The corals, crosses, and coins were given at various times by people of modest means who came to pray before these icons. The wealthier gave the silver and gilded crowns mentioned in the inventory.

The Kazan' and Kupjatyc'ka (in Kupjatyči, Belarus) icons were renowned as miracle-working. It needs to be stressed that the fame of wonder-working icons was not due to a material – we might say magical – understanding of the icons; the miracles were worked through the

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prayers of the Mother of God. We have seen this earlier. In the miracles of the Vladimir Mother of God neither of the women was able to come to pray before the icon itself, and one of them was in distant Tver'. The same is true here. Both of these icons in Novhorod Sivers'kyj were only copies, but venerated in equal measure as the originals.

Of course, an original miraculous icon was all the more regarded. The Kupjatyči icon took its name from the monastery, which was affiliated with the Orthodox Holy Spirit Monastery in Vilnius. An inventory of 1631 shows the veneration surrounding the original icon.

> The miraculous icon of the most holy Virgin, mounted in silver on both sides [i.e., front and back], gilded, with stones; on it are hung forty-two ducats and one gold piece of three *złoty;* a small gold cross with four gems, its worth by weight nine *złoty;* an ornamented gold chain weighing 3¾ *złoty;* seventeen different gold rings, some of them with gems, all together weighing twelve ducats; corals, and among them also pearls; one small giltsilver *hryvnja.*

In addition, in this simple wooden church of a monastery with very modest means small silver *hryvni,* which here must mean pendants or plaques, were affixed to all the other icons. A few of these descriptions follow:

> Icon of the Lord's Resurrection, with seven silver *hryvni* affixed. Icon of the Dormition of the most holy Virgin with twenty-three small silver *hryvni.* Three icons brought from Moscow, in silver mountings, gilded with Muscovite gold and a fourth without mounting, with two small silver *hryvni* … A small icon of the Saviour, on it three small silver *hryvni* … A large icon of the most pure Mother of God, on it thirteen small silver *hryvni,* five gems, the icon itself in a brass mounting, covered with painters' gold.[47]

Another widely venerated miraculous icon was in the village of Kaplunovka in Sloboda Ukraine, which in the eighteenth century formed part of the Belgorod eparchy. About this icon Bishop Epifanij Tyxors'kyj wrote in 1725:

> Many people come to the village of Kaplunovka to pray there; they have *molebni* [prayer services] sung, they give money for the singing, and they place adornments on the icon.[48]

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Epifanij writes 'place *privesy*'; this term includes not only pendants such as crosses or earrings, but also strings of corals and perhaps precious cloths. These *privesy* probably varied widely in value, being the gifts of ordinary faithful.

Galician Rus'

All the icon decorations mentioned above, except for one mounting, came from an Orthodox milieu. Galician Rus' was Uniate from 1700, but at least until the nineteenth century retained many of its traditional customs, above all in the countryside, in village parishes, and in the small and poor monasteries.

First, however, we turn to the Xolm eparchy, Uniate from the time of the union of Brest (1596). The 1687 testament of Bishop Jakov Suša gives an interesting glimpse into the customs we are studying. He mentions 'three small Muscovite icons in metal,' that is, in metal mountings, which he wills to the women's monastery in Xolm. He also mentions a silver lamp 'of the Xolm land' that he had made for his cathedral from his personal silver and from 'some small items from the most holy Virgin,' that is, he used for the lamp some of the silver pendants from the miraculous icon in the cathedral.[49]

In the Church of Christ's Nativity in Kaluš in the 1740s on the *namistni* icons there were seven silver crowns, six silver plates, four strings of small beads of coral, and four silk cloths. In the Resurrection Church of the nearby village Zahirja seven strands of coral hung on the icon of the Mother of God.[50]

A 1767 inventory of the very small and very poor women's Javoriv Monastery in the Peremyšl' eparchy is entirely in line with the descriptions of icon decorations we have already seen, although by this time Western-style religious paintings in oils were in the church side by side with older icons. The inventory lists four silver vestments for the icons of the Mother of God and of St Nicholas, as well as four crowns and a gilded silver wreath, and also numerous silver and gilded decorations, and strings of coral.[51]

In Smil'nycja in the same eparchy the church of the women's monastery in 1787 contained the following: three small silver crowns on the icon of the Holy Trinity, two silver crowns on the icon of the Mother of God, and a silver crown on the icon of the Saviour, one large and one small crown on the large icon of the Saviour, and silver *ex votos*.[52]

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Uniate Churches in Belarus

Interesting in describing the mixture of Western and Eastern elements, showing the effects of Latinization in the Uniate church, are the reports of a visitation of parish churches in the Cyryn' and Novhorodok deaneries in western Belarus in 1798.[53] Only a very few churches still possessed iconostases; by contrast, practically all had side altars, even in honour of Western saints, principally St Antony of Padua. The few icons (if that is the right word here) were placed over the altars or sometimes on it; in many churches there was also an icon on a movable stand. Only occasionally does the visitor note that a particular painting is on wood or on canvas, from which we can have at least some indication whether it is in Eastern or Western style. The decorations on many of these paintings, however, are the same as everywhere else in Rus'.

Invariably the icons were covered with veils, often three, of thin gauze, linen, or *kitajka.* In one village church a painting of the Mother of God over a side altar was covered with two such veils, of linen and of *kitajka.* Behind the veil on the image there were two silver crowns, six silver *ex votos,* six strands of pearls and one strand of amber beads (56). This adornment is quite rich for a village church, but is not unique.

The Pokrov icon over the main altar in the Sinežyce village church was reputed miraculous. Four veils, one gauze, two of taffeta, and one of gold-worked *kitajka* covered it. The icon was vested in a rich fabric cover and had three giltsilver crowns, twenty-one silver *ex votos* and plaques, four giltsilver rings, two silver signet rings with rubies, a decoration in the form of a bow of pearls, a small silver reliquary on a chain, a small silver portrait with precious gems, a bracelet with mother-of-pearl, two strings of corals, and twenty strings of pearls (70).

In the town of Turec the icon of the Pokrov over the main altar was covered with gauze and *kitajka* veils; on the icon there was only a silver crown and one silver *ex voto.* Another picture of the Mother of God in the sanctuary had two silver crowns, but it was the third icon of the Mother of God, over a side altar, that was most richly adorned. This had three veils: two of *kitajka* and one of gauze, and the icon itself was vested in a *šata* made not of metal, but of fabric, silver-worked and decorated with small silver stars, and with two giltsilver crowns and a sceptre. Around the icon, in the shrine, there were sixteen silver *ex votos* of various sizes (59).

In a number of other churches there were icons vested with *šaty* of fabric, as rich as could be afforded, though less expensive and probably

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easier to procure than metal mountings. In the town of Jeremiče, however, the icon of the Mother of God over a side altar is thus described: 'in a gilded bronze mounting, behind *kitajka* and gauze veils, on it two silver crowns, five small stars and as many larger, a pearl choker, a pair of diamond earrings, a silver plaque' (61).

In the town of Koreliče the icon of the Mother of God was in a shrine that could be closed. It was exceptionally in a silver mounting with gems and carnelians set in the form of flowers on it, and another smooth mounting [around the borders?]; on it there were as well two silver crowns, a silver crescent, sixteen silver *ex votos,* eleven strings of pearls, eleven strings of corals, a small cross, and a pearl ornament. All this was behind three veils: one of gauze and two of red *kitajka* with a yellow decorative fringe. The same church possessed an icon of the Pokrov over one of its four side altars; this was covered with three veils like those of the first icon, but had only a small crown and crescent, both silver, for adornment (63).

Icon Adornments in Russia

After earlier giving examples from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we now pass over to the sixteenth.

In Novgorod the most venerated icon was of the Sign (*Znamenie*) of the Mother of God, protectress of the city. In 1526 Archbishop Makarij, the later metropolitan of Moscow, had it restored and adorned it with a mounting and a necklace of pearls.[54]

In 1581, when the Jesuit Antonio Possevino travelled to Tsar Ivan IV to mediate a peace between Russian and Poland, his companion, Giovanni Campani, another Italian Jesuit, kept a travel account. Here several passages concern our topic.

Between Starica and Pskov, Campani writes, in the narthex of a monastery church he saw a 'most beautiful' bas relief representing St Nicholas. It was hung with gold crosses and gold ducats, which the faithful bring. In the Smolensk cathedral he saw the *namistna* icon of the Mother of God adorned with numerous pendants. And in a passage in which he describes for his Western readers how Russian monasteries and their churches usually look, he writes that icons, especially those of the Mother of God and of St Nicholas, are hung with many offerings.[55]

From the 1601 inventory of the St Cyril Belozero Monastery, of the many descriptions of icons and their adornments, I cite only one. The miraculous icon of the Mother of God *Odigitria* was given to the monas-

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tery in 1566 by Princess Efrosinija Starickaja. The icon seems to have come to the monastery already in its rich mounting, but the other ornaments may have been added in the intervening period. The mounting, wreaths on the Mother of God and the Saviour were all set with precious stones. There were besides on the icon a crescent richly adorned, a *grivna,* and below it another crescent; rows of pearls and precious stones on the right and left sides of the icon; *rjasy* hung by silver loops, each with four strands of pearls and a strand of mounted gems, each *rjasa* also with silver rosettes with gems in them, and the strands ending with giltsilver filigree globules; a silver chain with a cross, again richly decorated; a *pelena* for everyday use; another *pelena* for feasts; and an *ubrus.* An idea of the wealth on the icon may be had from the description of the *pelena* intended for everyday use: 'plain purple [*bagrjanyj,* a colour from crimson to dark red-purple] atlas, embroidered with gold, with pearls sewn on, the centre of green taffeta, with a red-purple cross.' The icon with all its adornments was set in a *kiot,* also richly and artistically decorated.[56]

Half a century later Paul of Aleppo gives descriptions of Russian churches. In the church in Kolomna the old miraculous icon of the Mother of God was adorned with a multitude of pendants of gold, silver, and pearls.[57] No other church decorations, however, could compare with the precious mountings, decorations, and cloths embroidered and with pearls and precious stones in the Holy Trinity-St Sergius Lavra.[58]

After seeing how icons in Belarusian village churches were adorned, we are not surprised to see equal profusion in Russian churches. Two descriptions of 1736 from the central Russian region give us an idea of this. In the village of Prečistenskoe the icon of the *Odigitria* behind the altar had a *repoussé* silver wreath and crescent, was draped around with a gold- and silver-embroidered cloth, and had a printed linen cloth hanging down from it. In the *namistnyj* row of the iconostasis to the right of the royal doors the icon of Christ's Resurrection had three small silver wreaths. To the left of the royal doors was an icon of St Nicholas, whose popularity in Rus' is seen in its adornments: a *repoussé* silver wreath, with three stones on it, five crescents of the same kind, two moulded giltsilver crescents, and as pendants twelve crosses, one gold ducat, three silver Polish talers, twenty-six silver and gilded kopeks, fifty-two small silver kopeks, and two silver rings. Another village church, in the Rjazan' region, dedicated in honour of the Smolensk icon of the Mother of God, had a copy of this icon behind the altar. This was

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adorned with a giltsilver wreath and crescent and thirty-two small silver *kopejki* as pendants. Two icons of St Nicholas are mentioned, but only with silver wreaths. Similar wreaths were on some other icons. On the left side of the iconostasis was another icon of the Mother of God in a metal mounting, with a giltsilver wreath and for pendants two silver crosses, a ten-kopek piece, and seven small kopeks.[59]

The Glinsk (Hlyns'k) Pustyn' today is in the Sumy oblast', Ukraine, but earlier was in the Kursk oblast' and eparchy. It possessed a miraculous icon of the Birth of the Mother of God, on which by 1724 there hung pendants brought as offerings by persons visiting this small remote monastery. In the nineteenth century and up to the revolution this icon was adorned with numerous silver and gold plaques, rings, and bracelets.[60]

The People and Their Gifts

All the examples of icon adornments cited tell us something about who brought these gifts and the reasons for bringing them. From princes to peasants the people tried to show their devotion or gratitude. The adornment of icons in little towns and even villages is often strikingly rich. Some of these offerings were brought perhaps by local landowners or wealthy merchants, but many others were the gifts of craftsmen, small shopkeepers, servants, as we saw in the examples from L'viv, and ordinary peasants. Some further examples about donors confirm the wide social range of the people bringing the gifts. Two examples come from the wills of Brest women. One will was made in 1625, when the woman had fallen sick in an epidemic then raging, and made over a plot of land to her parish church. The woman recovered and instead of the gift of land she had a silver crown made for one of the icons in the church.[61] The same motive of giving something precious for the adornment of a church is evident in the will of another Brest townswoman a few decades later. After making several dispositions in favour of her second husband, she bequeathed 'thirty Muscovite coins on a strand and twenty-seven corals with two silver crosses' for the icon of the Mother of God in the St Simeon church.[62]

In eighteenth-century Belarus the Orthodox population was dwindling in numbers and becoming largely plebeian; its adornments of icons therefore decreased in value. An inventory of the same Brest St Simeon Monastery church from 1752 lists no metal mountings on icons, but it does contain evidence of offerings by artisans, shopkeepers, and

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other townsfolk: on various icons there were twenty-three crosses and forty-four strings of corals.[63] Between 1625 and 1752 because of wars and accompanying troubles, like the confiscation of church valuables by the Swedes that we saw above, the church also lost its older precious furnishings.

It is striking that *ex votos* in the shape of limbs, eyes, and hearts are mentioned so rarely in the descriptions at our disposal, since they are an ancient Christian custom and widely diffused in Greece. In Rus′, it would seem, they are common only where Polish Latin custom had some influence, that is, in Ruthenian lands under Poland. The reason may be due to a different emphasis on these icon adornments in Rus′ than in either Greece or the West. Although they are sometimes made as votive offerings, that is, in fulfilment of a promise if the donor′s prayer is answered, as we saw in the very first examples from the twelfth century and as occurs in all later centuries, more often we see no such connection between prayer for a favour, most often a cure, and the gift. These precious objects were given for icons most often simply out of a desire to adorn the icon.

Authorities and Popular Piety

In view of general trends in the century of enlightenment, we might expect authorities to look askance at the placing of beads, coins, crosses, and *ex votos* on images of saints. Indeed, in the Russian empire the Holy Synod, under the prompting of Peter I, already in 1722 decreed that all pendants (not the mountings) were to be removed from icons; they were to be sold and the money used to procure whatever was necessary for the particular church in which they hung. Neither the Synod nor the tsar, it seems, believed that anyone would be in a hurry to carry out this decree. To make the ruling more acceptable, it was explained that foreign coins bearing who-knows-what images were not appropriate adornments to hang on icons. Since the people were not likely to stop bringing gifts of pendants to churches, the Synod did not forbid this outright; such gifts were to be entered scrupulously in registers, and those responsible were to see if they could not be put to some other use for that church. Finally, items of historic or artistic value were to be sent to the Synod for appraisal, and if found valuable, were to be preserved.

After two years only three monasteries and one eparchy had responded to the Synod′s call. Bishop Irodion Žurakivs′kyj of Černihiv wrote that he had collected such pendants (they all consisted only of

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corals, pearls, and small silver plaques and crosses) and asked to be allowed to return them to the churches and monasteries from which they came. Three monasteries had sent pendants to the Synod for appraisal: the Synod sent those from Solovki and St Cyril Belozero Monasteries back, and only those from the women's Ivanovskij Monastery in Moscow were ordered to be sold, with the money used for that monastery's construction.[64]

If we recall the excerpt from the inventory of St Cyril Belozero Monastery cited above, which gave only the merest glimpse of that monastery's rich icons and icon adornments, and then consider that the Solovki monastery must have received equally rich and numerous gifts from all ranks of the faithful, we have to conclude that even these monasteries sent only the merest token of their pendants for examination. Bishop Irodion as well was hardly forthcoming in stating that the churches in his eparchy had their icons adorned with nothing more valuable than corals and pearls. The icons at the Novhorod Sivers'kyj Monastery in his eparchy, for instance, as we saw, were adorned with various silver objects. Other monasteries and bishops simply ignored the call, and the Synod apparently gave up a hopeless task (with which, we may suppose, even its members did not agree). In any case, we hear no more of the matter. We have seen above that even coins with who-knows-what on them remained undisturbed on icons. The decree of 1722, after all, aimed only at eliminating metal decorations. It may have had a restraining effect on adornments on icons, but in sum went unheeded. On popular piety the decree had no effect. I cite a few further Ukrainian examples, but similar examples from Russia too can be collected.

An incomplete inventory of the Pokrov Church in Nova Sič from later in the eighteenth century lists the following: twenty icons in silvered brass mountings; fifty giltsilver crowns of various kinds; on the *namistna* icon of the Mother of God thirteen strings of small and three of large pearls with corals; on a smaller icon of the Mother of God fifteen strings of small pearls with two large and two small ducats and six strings of large pearls with red beads; ten strings of pearls with six buttons (not said on what icon); fifty strings of plain necklaces of large and small corals beads with two ducats and a piece of amber; one hundred and fifty ducats of various sizes, among them ten quite large, on four chains. Of the large number of silk and gold- and silver-embroidered cloths at least some must also have been used on icons.[65]

A visit of formerly Uniate churches in the Bila Cerkva district in 1790

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uncovered many wax pendants on icons in the shape of small rings and roughly shaped arms and legs.[66] They were removed, not because of an objection to them on principle, but because these crude objects disfigured the icons.

In the nineteenth century the adornment of icons with offerings brought by the faithful continued vigorously. In a series of articles on popular religious customs in Volyn', local celebrations on the patronal feasts of churches (*otpusty*) are described. As elsewhere in Ukraine, in many churches there were locally venerated icons regarded as miraculous. The people who came for these occasions from neighbouring villages participated in the services, listened to the sermons, and received the sacraments. They also offered 'ribbons, small crosses, scarves, cloths, paper wreaths, pearls, corals, and similar decorations and pendants' for the miraculous icon.[67]

In the Uniate church there were those who thought like the Holy Synod: the pendants on icons can be sold or melted down and put to better use. We have already seen Bishop Jakov Suša doing this; knowing something of his piety and traditional views we can readily believe that he only removed smaller, less valuable pendants. The Xolm icon was so highly venerated that it must have been surrounded by a large number of plaques and pendants, and a few would not be missed.

The case stood differently with another Uniate bishop, a contemporary of the Synod's decision, Theophil Godebskyj of Pinsk. Complaints of various kinds against him provoked a full-scale investigation by a commission sent by Metropolitan Leo Kyška. In the course of the investigation, the sacristan and the other priests at the Pinsk Cathedral related that Godebskyj had removed 'about forty silver *ex votos,* plus gold rings' from the icon of the Mother of God, supposedly to make an ostensory from them. The priests complained that an ostensory was the last thing needed in a Greek church and that the people were upset and angry that their offerings had been taken away.[68]

In the Austrian Empire Joseph II, who like Peter I set himself the task of reforming the church and eliminating superstitions, turned his attention also to religious images in both Roman and Greek Catholic churches. The metal covers, *ex votos,* and other adornments he considered a scandal to non-Catholics. An imperial decree of 9 February 1784 not only forbade such adornments in the future, but ordered their removal at once. The bishops were to see to it that in their dioceses all adornments on religious images were removed within three months.[69] Here too the order was not carried out immediately: we have seen silver adornments on icons in the Smil'nycja Monastery three years later; soon

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after the monastery itself was suppressed. More research is needed to examine how effective the order was in Galician Rus'.

Some Final Reflections

This essay is only exploratory, indicating the possibilities for further research. More examples of icon adornments can be gathered from all parts of Rus', together with more information about donors, and the Rus' custom needs to be placed in a wider context of religious practices.

The custom of adorning icons with precious metals, stones, cloths, and other items was brought to Rus' from Byzantium together with icons and their cult. The adornment of icons can be understood only within the context of theological reflections on the veneration of icons in response to the iconoclastic crisis in the Byzantine Empire. Once the cult of icons was reestablished, the teachings of the defenders of icons became part of the Orthodox tradition. The veneration shown by encasing icons in valuable mountings and adorning them with all the means at a person's disposal, it must be underscored, was veneration directed at the person represented.

A noted liturgist has written about a service found in manuscript Trebniks, 'when *peleny* are placed on an icon.' The prayer asks God to bless the donors – 'the women NN' – and to accept their gift as Christ accepted the cloths spread before him at his entry into Jerusalem.[70] The euchologion in question comes from Ruthenian territory and dates from the sixteenth century. The author's explanations for donating cloths for icons shows what false conclusions can be arrived at by looking at a religious custom superficially. He supposes the cloths to have had a strictly functional use, to protect the icon from grime, and that hanging cloths on icons was a strictly Ruthenian (*zapadnorusskij*) custom, late to arise. We have seen that the custom was known from early times throughout all Rus' – many more examples could be given from Russian territory than what I have cited here – and that the purpose of placing precious cloths, like other adornments on icons, was by no means utilitarian, but was intended to underline the icon's sacredness and to show devotion towards Christ, his Mother, or the saint represented.

The custom of making offerings for the adornment of icons was present in all social classes, from Rus' princes, who could afford to make incredibly valuable gold *rizy* and decorate them with precious stones, to peasants who offered their beads and scarves. Because faith in the miracle-working quality of icons depended not on the presence of

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a particular material object, but was referred to the holy person represented, any icon could be miraculous. It would be strange if the intercession of the Mother of God were confined, for instance, only to a particular material representation. Every district, if not every village, had its locally venerated miraculous icon. Only a few became more widely known and venerated.

A late example of a mounting offered for an icon illustrates this in a striking manner. In the 1840s a rolled-up oil canvas reproducing the Częstochowa icon of the Mother of God was found in a deposit in the Kyiv Lavra, left there no doubt because of its scarce artistic merit or material value. It was then hung in the bread bakery, where it soon became famed as miraculous. Several decades later a resident of a *sloboda* in the Xarkiv province, whose small son suffered from painful rheumatism, made a vow to make a mounting for this icon if his son became well. The boy's rheumatism left him, and the father in 1887 had a silver *riza* made for this late copy of a famed icon.[71]

The rich mountings, gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones on icons were part of the overall adornment of churches, for the sake of their beauty and for creating a heavenly atmosphere, together with the unfolding of the rites, the vestments, the chanting, and the incense. At the close of the liturgy of St John Chrysostom the priest asks God to 'make holy those who love the beauty of your house.' This applies to all who come to church and offer their prayers together with the priest, but it applies doubly to those who in some way contribute to that beauty, if only by placing their beads on an icon or lighting a candle.

In conclusion I would like to cite an episode from *The Possessed* (II/5) by F. Dostoevsky, which better than anything else expresses the sense of icon ornaments. A young woman on horseback sees the glass protecting an icon in the wall around a church shattered by some sacrilegious hand. She stops, dismounts, prostrates herself before the icon, and spontaneously takes off her earrings as an offering to replace the ornaments that had been stolen. Because not the material image, but the prototype represented is important, an outrage can be repaired only by an act of love.

NOTES

1 I use Rus' to refer to the entire territory inhabited by Eastern Slavs.
2 Théodoret de Cyr, *Thérapeutique des malades helléniques,* sec. viii. 63–4, Sources chrétiennes, 57/2 (Paris, 1958), 333.

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3 Various kinds of icon mountings are described and illustrated, some with additional ornaments, by André Grabar, *Les revêtements en or et en argent des icones byzantines du Moyen Age*, Bibliothèque de l'Institut hellénique d'études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise 7 (Venice, 1975).
4 For some very fine Russian examples of mountings, wreaths, crescents, and *rjasy,* see *Russkoe prikladnoe iskusstvo XIII–načala XX v. iz sobranija Gosudarstvennogo ob″edinennogo Vladimiro-Suzdal′skogo muzeja-zapovednika* (Moscow, 1982).
5 Cf. I.A. Sterligova, 'O liturgičeskom smysle dragocennogo ubora russkoj ikony,' *Vostočnoxristianskij xram. Liturgija i iskusstvo* (St Petersburg, 1994), 220; see also 227–9, for several archival photographs of icons with precious historic adornments.
6 *Patrologia cursus completus, Series graeca* [henceforth *PG*] (Paris, 1844–66), vol. 94; St John of Damascus, *On the Divine Images,* trans. David Anderson (Crestwood, NY, 1980).
7 Cf. Christoph von Schönborn, *L′icone du Christ: fondements théologiques élaborées entre le Ier et le IIe concile de Nicée (325–787)* (Fribourg, 1976); Ambrosios Giakeles, *Images of the Divine: The Theology of Icons at the Seventh Ecumenical Council* (Leiden, 1994).
8 *PG* 32:149; St Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit,* xviii.45; trans. David Anderson (Crestwood, NY, 1980), 72.
9 *Akty, otnosjaščiesja k istorii zapadnoj Rossii* (St Petersburg, 1846), 1:137.
10 *Arxiv jugo-zapadnoj Rossii* (henceforth Arxiv JuZR) I/1 (Kyiv, 1859) 183.
11 Ibid., I/6:159.
12 Ibid., 503.
13 Ibid., I/1:350.
14 *Arxeografičeskij sbornik dokumentov, otnosjaščixsja k istorii severo-zapadnoj Rusi* (henceforth *AS*) 9 (Vilnius, 1870) 49–52. This list is also cited in Nikolaj (Dalmatov), *Suprasl′skij Blagoveščenskij monastyr′* (St Petersburg, 1892), 52–7.
15 Arxiv JuZR, I/6:764–5.
16 *Akty izdavaemye Vilenskoju arxeografičeskoju kommissieju* (hencefoth AVK) 1 (Vilnius, 1865) 131–7.
17 AS, 2:LIX.
18 AVK, 9:494.
19 O. Bodjanskij, 'Letopis' monastyrja Gustinskogo,' *Čtenija v Imperatorskom Obščestve istorii i drevnostej rossijskix pri Moskovskom universitete* (henceforth COIDR), 1848, 8:64. The *namistna* (or *namisna*) icon of the Mother of God is that in the first, main row, of the iconostasis, just to the left of the central royal doors; to the right of those doors is the *namistna* icon of Christ.
20 Already by this time icon mountings were widely made in Rus'; for two

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large Novgorod examples from the twelfth century, see G.N. Bočarov, *Xudožestvennyj metall drevnej Rusi* (Moscow, 1984), 252–64.

21 *Skazanie o čudesax Vladimirskoj ikony Božiej Materi,* Obščestovo ljubitelej drevnej pis'mennosti, 30, 1878, 40–2. For a seventeenth-century example of *kosy* decorating an icon, see *Slovar' russkogo jazyka XVI–XVII vv.*, vol. 7 (Moscow, 1980), s.v. *kosy.*

22 Bočarov, *Xudožestvennyj metall*, 150–8, where he also cites a 1617 description of icon pendants then in the Novgorod St Sophia.

23 Ibid., 179–84.

24 S. Golubev, 'Materialy dlja istorii zapadno-russkoj pravoslavnoj cerkvi (XVI–XVII stol.),' *Trudy Kievskoj Duxovnoj Akademii*, 1878, 1:204–6.

25 *Czerwony złoty* are also internationally used ducats (*dukaty*)*;* no doubt two different types are meant.

26 Arxiv JuZR, I/1:375–7. In the last sentence the *hryvnja* is clearly the *cata.*

27 Paul of Aleppo, *Putešestvie antioxijskogo patriarxa Makarija v Rossiju v polovine XVII veka, opisannoe ego synom, arxidiakonom Pavlom Aleppskim*, ČOIDR, vyp. 4 (Moscow, 1897), 49–51.

28 AVK, 6:493.

29 Arxiv JuZR, I/1:366. The icon of the twelve feasts may have come from an old iconostasis, on which the entire row of the twelve feasts was painted on one board (*tjablo*). For an illustration of a sixteenth-century mounting on this kind of icon, see V.V. Filatov, *Prazdničnyj rjad Sofii Novgorodskoj* (Leningrad, 1974), pl. 26.

30 Cf. Julian Walter, 'St Demetrius: The Myroblytos of Thessalonika,' *Eastern Churches Review* 5 (1973): 172 n.4.

31 AS, 1:281. One *łokot* equals 57.6 cm.

32 AVK, 6:414–16.

33 Paul of Aleppo, *Putešestvie*, 4:58.

34 Feodosij Sofonovyč, *Xronika z litopysciv starodavnix* (Kyiv, 1992), 262.

35 Arxiv JuZR, I/12:11–13.

36 For an idea of what the headpiece and neckpiece set with pearls could have looked like, see illustrations 2 and 3 in Sterligova, 'O liturgičeskom smysle,' which shows the same kind of adornment on an icon of the Pokrov Monastery in Suzdal'. The Suzdal' pearl adornment dates from the second half of the sixteenth century, which is close in time to that of the L'viv icon, described in 1619, but obviously presented to the church some time before.

37 Medzapeta's inventory is printed in Arxiv JuZR, I/10:145–78.

38 Ibid., I/12:89–90.

39 Ibid., 93.

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40 Both passages ibid., 24.
41 Ibid., 28.
42 Ibid., 59.
43 Ibid., 60–1.
44 For more lists of strings of pearls, pendants, and other ornaments, see ibid., 89 (1865), 95 (1671), 98 (1677), 39 (twelve Moscow icons with silver mountings, 1688). In the 1688 inventory a blank space was left after 'Pearls,' leaving the strands on the icons uncounted.
45 Both ibid., 54.
46 The description is given by A.M. Lazarevskij, 'Riznica Novgorodsevers-kogo Spaso-Preobraženskogo monastyrja v konce XVII i načale XVIII veka,' *Izvestija Imperatorskogo Arxeologičeskogo obščestva* 5 (1865): 49–54.
47 AVK, 11:238–9.
48 Quoted in A.S. Lebedev, *Belgorodskie arxierei i sreda ix arxipastyrskoj dejatel'nosti* (Kharkiv, 1902), 22.
49 Slawomir Głódź, 'Testament biskupa Jakuba Suszy,' *Analecta Ordinis S. Basilii Magni* 16 (1979): 218–19.
50 Julijan Jar. Babij, 'Kalus'kyj dekanat tomu dvisti lit nazad,' *Nyva* (1939): 107.
51 Cf. Stanisław Nabywaniec, 'Diecezja przemyska greckokatolicka w latach 1772–1775,' *Premislia Christiana* 5 (1992–3): 247.
52 Ibid., 249. For our topic it is regrettable that here he or his source lists only silver articles, without mentioning what other adornments there might have been on the icons.
53 AS, 14: 56–125. In citing examples from this report I will indicate the page in parentheses in the text.
54 *Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej*, vol. 6 (St Petersburg, 1853), 284.
55 A.M. Ammann, 'Ioannis Pauli Campani S.I. Relatio de itinere moscovitico,' *Antemurale* 6 (1960–1): 19, 21, 26.
56 *Opis' stroenij i imuščestva Kirillo-Belozerskogo monastyrja 1601 goda* (St Peters-burg, 1998), 50–2, 238–9. For an illustration of somewhat similar, but not equally precious or artistically worked *rjasy,* see *Russkoe prikladnoe iskusstvo,* ill. 112. The *Odigitria* ('she who points the way') icon of the Mother of God has her looking forward, but with her right hand indicat-ing the Son (the Way) she is holding on her left.
57 Paul of Aleppo, 'Putešestvie', 147–8.
58 Ibid., 29–30; he singles out the icon of the Holy Trinity.
59 P.P. Pekarskij, 'Opis' starinnyx sel'skix cerkvej i pomeščič'ego xozjajstva,' *Izvestija Imperatorskogo Arxeologičeskogo obščestva* 5 (1865): 155, 157.
60 Ioann (Maslov), *Glinskaja pustyn'. Istorija obyteli i ee duxovno-prosvetitel'naja*

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dejatel'nost' v XVI–XX vekax (Moscow 1994), 55, 74; cf. 101–2, 107, 163, about its mounting, wreaths, and *kiot.*

61 AVK, 6:353–4.

62 Ibid., 447.

63 F. Titov, *Pamjatniki pravoslavija i russkoj narodnosti v zapadnoj Rossii v XVII–XVIII v.v.,* vol. 1, part 2 (Kyiv, 1905), 713.

64 *Opisanie dokumentov i del xranjaščixsja v arxive Svjatejšego Pravitel'stvujuščego Sinoda,* vol. 2, part 1 (St Petersburg, 1879), 107–12.

65 D.I. Javornyc'kyj, *Istorija zaporoz'kyx kozakiv*, vol. 1 (Kyiv, 1990), 139.

66 'Kievo-Sofijskij protoierej Ioann Vasil'evič Levanda,' *Trudy Kievskoj Duxovnoj Akademii,* 1878, 3:307.

67 V. Strumenskij, 'Mestnye blagočestivye obyčai i ustanovlenija u pravoslavnyx na Volyni,' *Volynskie eparxial'nye vedomosti,* 1904, 4:76–83.

68 *Litterae episcoporum historiam Ucrainae illustrantes,* ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, vol. 5 (Rome, 1981), 262 (1726).

69 Cf. Nabywaniec, 'Diecezja przemyska greckokatolicka,' 219.

70 A.I. Almazov, 'K istorii molitv na raznye slučai,' *Letopis' Istoriko-filologičeskogo obščestva pri Imperatorskom Novorossijskom universitete* 6 (=Vizantijskoe otdelenie 3; 1896), 383–5 (commentary), 410 (text).

71 *Kievskie podvižniki blagočestija,* 2:206–7. This is a reprint of Vladimir Znosko, *Xrista radi ierosximonax Feofil, podvižnik i prozorlivec Kievo-Pečerskoj lavry* (Kyiv, 1906).

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‘Social’ Elements in Ukrainian Icons of the Last Judgment through the Eighteenth Century

JOHN-PAUL HIMKA

In the heritage of Byzantine and especially post-Byzantine sacral art, the most complex iconography is that relating to the Last Judgment or, as it was called in Rus’, the Terrible Judgment (*Strashnyi sud*). The icon or wall painting of the Last Judgment was composed of numerous discrete, although thematically connected, elements or motifs, such as the Son of Man flanked by the Mother of God and John the Baptist, the throne of judgment upon which lay an open book, Adam and Eve worshipping on either side of the throne, paradise and the saints entering into it, hell and sinners being conveyed into it, and so on. Over time the number of elements tended to grow. Some of these elements in icons of the Carpathian region have seemed to Ukrainian art historians to be a direct commentary on the social conditions prevailing at the time when the icons were painted.

Icons and wall paintings of the Last Judgment were plentiful in the churches of the western outposts of Ukrainian (or Rusyn) settlement, extending from the Carpathian mountains northward to just beyond the foothills. This territory is today spread over western Ukraine (Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, and Transcarpathia oblasts), eastern Slovakia (the Prešov region), and southeastern Poland (around Przemysl and the former Lemko region). In the churches of this territory from the late sixteenth through the eighteenth century, it was customary to have a depiction of the Last Judgment on the northern wall (on the left-hand side as one entered the church), matched on the southern wall by another icon with multiple components showing the events of the Lord’s passion. Even before then, beginning at least in the fifteenth century, icons of the Last Judgment were found in the churches of this region, but they were more likely to be located on the western wall of the nave or on the eastern

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wall of the narthex (*babynets'*). About a hundred of such icons, fragments of icons, or wall paintings in churches have survived to our day, mostly in museums. I have been able to examine most of them *de visu*, and for some others I have serviceable reproductions.

'Vulgar Sociology'

In the communist era, many elements of the Last Judgment icons were read as direct responses to social oppression. The period in which the icons were produced was also the time of the prevalence of second serfdom in Ukrainian lands and of major social unrest (the Cossack revolts of the seventeenth century, the Haidamaka uprisings of the eighteenth).

Particularly influential in the Soviet period were the views of Pavlo Zholtovs'kyi, who was perhaps the most erudite student of early modern Ukrainian art in postwar Soviet Ukraine. In his view, 'the people's understanding of the theme of the "Terrible Judgment" connected it first of all with the idea of a just punishment for concrete social and everyday crimes. Such realistic motifs could only enter into ecclesiastical iconography on the basis of the struggle of the broad masses against social, national, and religious oppression, which grew continually from the middle of the sixteenth century.' 'Folk artists (*narodni khudozhnyky*)' of the eighteenth century in their Last Judgments concentrated on the sins and punisments for sins 'which they understand as the violation of the people's moral code.' The icons reflect 'various aspects of the people's existence, social and ethical views. In the first place punishment is meted out to those who oppress the people and do them material damage.' In hell are those who 'do material damage to the toiler-peasant.' The infernal scenes introduced 'many images from life, satirical and profoundly social.'[1]

Although the most cogent argument was made by Zholtovs'kyi in his 1978 survey of Ukrainian painting of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the tone had already been set by the six-volume history of Ukrainian art in the 1960s. In volume 2 (published in 1968), Vira Svientsits'ka wrote that the Ukrainian Last Judgment icons 'frequently acquire a sharp social and even satirical tone and testify to the connection of visual art with folklore.' She carried this thesis to an extreme. Last Judgment icons in Ukraine and Russia depict the so-called aerial tollbooths, which go back in Eastern theology to at least the fifth century. But Svientsits'ka wrote that the tollbooths 'can be seen as a sort of

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satire on the incredible number of various tollbooths with which all trade routes were furnished.'[2]

Although the views of Svientsits'ka and Zholtovs'kyi were dominant,[3] there was at least one art historian of the communist era who differed in his social reading of these icons, namely Vasyl' Lakata from Czechoslovakia. In Lakata's interpretation, 'representatives of the higher circles, feudal lords, enter into paradise. Even 'paradise' itself sometimes has the appearance of a Ukrainian feudal castle.' On the other hand, in hell 'for the most part we meet ... representatives of the lower classes of society – craftsmen of various professions, sorcerers, violators of the everyday norms, musicians, and so forth.' But the icons of the Last Judgment were also used for 'exposing the socio-political relations in the society,' so some representatives of the upper classes can also be found in hell.[4] Although Lakata's reading of the iconography is totally different from Svientsits'ka's and Zholtovs'kyi's, the approach is exactly the same.

This 'vulgar sociology' has already been exposed by Vladislav Grešlík,[5] and for most readers in the postcommunist era the problems of this approach to sacral iconography should be obvious anyway. Nonetheless, these ideas remain in currency among Ukrainian historians of art and culture, both because Zholtovs'kyi and Svientsits'ka were influential individuals who trained almost the whole cohort of the art historians working today in Western Ukraine and also because the views they formulated fit well with the currently dominant national approach to the sacral art of the early modern era.[6] As a number of recent studies have shown, the class paradigm and the national paradigm are much more intertwined than had been thought previously.[7]

What Is Being Done Here

In this essay I will inventory the 'social' elements in the icons. Of course, since the category 'social' is a projection back on a period and context that did not use it, the choice of what constitutes the 'social' motifs is subjective. When introducing these motifs I will also discuss the chronology of their appearance in the iconography. Next I will demonstrate other sources for many of these elements aside from the particular social context of early modern Ukraine. I will show that some of these motifs were common outside Ukraine and therefore may not have reflected specifically Ukrainian conditions. I will show that other 'social' motifs are easily explained as logical interpretations of texts con-

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cerning the Last Judgment or as natural iconographic developments of the theme. I will show, in other words, that many of the 'social' motifs could have been derived from sources other than specific social practices and attitudes in the region. Finally, having examined these issues, I will offer ideas about the relation of the Last Judgment iconography to the social realities of early modern Western Ukraine.

The 'Social' Elements and When They Appeared

The social elements in the iconography start out modestly in the fifteenth century. There are three fifteenth-century Last Judgment icons. The earliest, from Vanivka,[8] shows nothing of relevance, but the portion of the icon where we could expect something has been damaged. On the second oldest, from Polana,[9] we find a usurer (*rizoimets*) and silver-lover (*sribroliubets*) in hell. On the third, from Mshanets,[10] there is a tavernmaid near hell, with a devil holding on to her shoulder. Usurers and other greedy sinners remained a staple feature of the iconography after that, and so did the tavernmaid. In later icons, the devil is whispering to the tavernmaid to cheat her customers[11] and male tavern-keepers were also shown on their way to hell.[12]

From the sixteenth century on these two elements underwent some elaboration. The sinners in hell now included, in addition to the indeterminate greedy, various specific craftsmen: especially millers, but also tailors, weavers, goldsmiths, coppersmiths, blacksmiths, and others. The miller was usually depicted with a millstone hanging around his neck (see p. 239), and often the other craftsmen bore the tools of their trade. As various inscriptions specify, these artisans were considered to be, like the tavernmaid, cheaters. A mid-sixteenth-century icon shows the punishment of an 'unjust miller.'[13] An eighteenth-century icon from Bukovina shows members of various professions being individually tormented. Above the torments is the inscription: 'Recompense for all false craftsmen – witch, weaver, tailor, blacksmith, cobbler, miller.' The torment for the cobbler is a spike up the anus.[14] Another Ukrainian icon from outside the Carpathian region shows, according to the inscription, 'weavers who received at a good price and took extra of what was weaved by cheating on their promise and oath.'[15] To these craftsmen was also added a generic 'rich man,' particularly popular in the eighteenth century.[16]

In the first half of the sixteenth century the tavernmaid became part of a much larger scene including customers, musicians, especially

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Miller in hell. Lipie, first half of 17th century. Photo courtesy of the author.

pipers, and dancers. In some eighteenth century tavern scenes there were card games featured (see p. 240). Also in eighteenth-century icons smokers were included in hell. The elaborated tavern scene and the gamblers and the smokers seem to have had a moral rather than a social edge to them.

An innovation of the sixteenth century was the scene of the death of the rich man (see p. 241), accompanied by a scene depicting the death of poor Lazarus. Here, according to Svientsits'ka, 'social contrasts' were emphasized,[17] or, in the words of Vasyl Otkovych, 'the representatives of the ruling class are exposed from the positions of Christian morality.'[18] The image first appeared in the first half of the sixteenth century in the Vilshanytsia icon[19] and appeared rather frequently thereafter. In the Bahnovate icon, from the second third of the sixteenth century,[20] the following inscription is placed above the dying rich man: 'The rich man who is merciless to us is in this world, he uses his belongings, but after death he will receive fiery torments.' Svientsits'ka, in the introduction to an album on medieval Ukrainian painting, avers that 'the social utopianism of the painter, and of the one who commissioned it, is expressed in this inscription.'[21]

In the second half of the sixteenth century officials and landlords appear in the icon. The earliest example seems to be the icon from Vovche, which shows 'unjust judges and merciless landlords' walking single file into hell escorted by a demon at the front and rear of the line, all followed by a bagpiper (see p. 241).[22] Officials occasionally appeared

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Card game in a tavern. Kožany, 1790s. Photo courtesy of the author.

thereafter,[23] but not as often as the motif of the merciless landlord. On a seventeenth-century icon, a lord with fur-trimmed clothing is depicted riding on the back of a devil. The inscription reads: 'The lord is going to hell on a devil.'[24] More commonly in the seventeenth century, lords, often with their wives, were shown riding into hell on a handcart pushed by a demon (see p. 242).[25] Merciless landlords figure in late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century icons in different ways: one from Bukovina shows devils ploughing with landlords in harness (see p. 242),[26] another a devil stabbing a moustached landlord with a pitchfork,[27] another a devil carrying a landlady on his back.[28]

Certainly there seems to be sufficient material to make the argument that the icons of the Last Judgment were sensitive barometers of the socio-economic contradictions in the early modern Ukrainian countryside. And yet ...

Imported Motifs

One problem with the pure historical-sociological approach to the icons is that a number of these motifs were widespread in Byzantine and post-Byzantine iconography and therefore may just reflect an imported iconographic tradition rather than the specific conditions of early mod-

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Death of a rich man. Dolyna, 1560s. Photo courtesy of the author.

Unjust judges and merciless landlords. Vovche, end of 16th century. Photo courtesy of the author.

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Landlord and his wife off to hell in a hand cart. Lipie, first half of 17th century. Photo courtesy of the author.

Devils ploughing with lords. Pohorilivka, 18th century. Photo courtesy of Valerii Helchuk.

ern Ukraine. According to Miltiadis K. Garidis, who studied the sinners on many different post-Byzantine Last Judgment icons, the twelfth-century Torcello mosaic had a rich man and greedy persons receiving punishment. A twelfth-century fresco at Kastoria identifies a usurer and a tradesman who used short weights. The same appear in a fourteenth-century Last Judgment from Cyprus, but also a dishonest miller, and someone who appropriated another's land. Several icons from late fourteenth- to early fifteenth-century Crete show cheating millers, thiev-

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ing tailors, a usurer, an untrustworthy weaver, an unjust judge, and peasants who took others' land.[29] The fourteenth-century fresco at Dečani in Serbia also shows 'the tortures of him who tilled alien land.'[30] (Cf. the Roztoka icon, which puts in hell 'someone who plowed past his boundary.') A thirteenth-century Last Judgment from a Greek village shows a tailor with his shears, a falsifier of weights with a scale, and a rich man.[31] In short, many of the social sinners in the Ukrainian Last Judgments were stock figures of the iconography across a large swath of the Orthodox world.

Motifs Particularly Appropriate to the Last Judgment

The proliferation of 'social themes' in Last Judgment icons is better understood as the elaboration of themes that flow out of the Gospel. One of the most important texts for Orthodox eschatology and Last Judgment iconography is Mt. 25:31–46. Traditionally, the Last Judgment icons show a book lying open on the throne prepared for judgment, and that book is open to Mt. 25:34: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' The second Sunday before Lent, Meatfare Sunday, is devoted to the Last Judgment, and the Gospel reading for that day is precisely Mt. 25:31–46. The emphasis of this Gospel pericope is on acts of mercy performed for 'the least of these my brethren.' Those who fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, took in the stranger, clothed the naked, and visited the sick and imprisoned were destined for the heavenly kingdom; those who did not were consigned to 'everlasting fire.' Two seventeenth-century icons depict these acts of mercy. (The motif is fully preserved in the Roztoka icon, but only a fragment is visible in the icon of the Museum of the History of Religion in Lviv.)

Sermons circulating in early modern Ukraine interpreted the Meatfare-Sunday gospel in terms that illuminate the thinking behind our 'social motifs.' Probably the most widely circulated sermon for Meatfare Sunday was taken from an eleventh-century Greek homiliary, the so-called Pseudo-Callistus. A Slavonic version of the 'teaching gospel' in which it appeared was one of the earliest works published on Ukrainian territory, by Ivan Fedorov, and it went through many editions, including one reworked by the famous religious thinker and language codifier, Meletii Smotryts'kyi. Here are some of the things that sermon had to say: 'For every person who is poor, orthodox, humble, and grateful is Christ's brother, also because Christ himself lived in poverty and need.'

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'Woe to sinners, but even greater woe to the merciless.' The merciful preserved 'love, which is the root of all virtues,' while the merciless 'were in love with hate, which is the origin of all evils and the main enemy of love.' 'People of mercy and brotherly love are like the merciful and mankind-loving God, while people without mercy, who hate their brothers are like the merciless, mankind-hating devil.' 'For whoever has much and does not perform mercy is a predator and usurer, even if he did no harm to anyone; because all that which the rich man possesses beyond his means and as surplus and he does not lend to the needy and poor, it is just as if he snatched it and took it away from those in want and poverty.'[32] A sermon in the same vein can be found in the teaching gospel published by the Orthodox churchman Kyryll Trankvylion Stavrovets'kyi in 1619. The sermon is Trankvylion's own composition. In it he says: 'Because you did not perform acts of mercy for the poor, he sends you to Gehenna. Even if you were not a fornicator or robber, nonetheless just for the lack of mercy the Lord sends him to torments … For he did not say to them "You have killed, commited adultery," but instead that you did not perform acts of mercy for those in need, for my lesser brother.' Among those specifically damned in Trankvylion's text are merciless rich people (*nemylostyvykh bohatyrev*).[33] These sermons did not have a direct connection with iconography, but they reveal the kind of theological thinking that led to the depiction in Last Judgment icons of 'merciless landlords.'

The case of the element 'death of the rich man' is particularly interesting as it shows some of the logic of iconographic development. The scene in the Carpathian icons derives from two closely related sources. One is the death of the righteous man and the sinner. In this scene David is usually shown playing on the lute while an angel receives the righteous man's soul; meanwhile personified death slays the sinner, devils receive his soul, and an inscription quotes Psalm 33:21, which in the Septuagint reads: 'The death of sinners is evil.'[34] This motif in the form that contains no direct reference to any rich man, that just contrasts the death of a righteous man with a sinner, is found in a number of the icons we are examining (e.g., a sixteenth-century icon in the National Museum of the Przemysl Land,[35] Ruska Bystrá, Roztoka). This is a motif that has Byzantine precedents[36] and can also be found, although not fully articulated, in the Kyivan Psalter of 1397.[37]

The second source of the 'death of the rich man' is the story of Lazarus and the rich man in Lk. 16:19–31. This textual source is also the basis of the first, iconographic source described above.[38] The beggar

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Lazarus 'was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom'; the rich man also died, but ended up in hell. Because of the tale's information about the afterlife, it was one of the sources of knowledge about the Last Judgment, and the rich man of the Lazarus story was depicted in hell in all the classic Byzantine images of the Last Judgment, such as Torcello. In the Vilshanytsia icon, which is the earliest surviving icon with the 'death of the rich man,' the same Byzantine figure is shown separately in hell.

In short, the pairing of the death of Lazarus and the death of the rich man developed as a representation of the death of a righteous man and the death of a sinner via the traditional inclusion of the rich man from the Lazarus tale. In an icon from Radelychi[39] from the second half of the sixteenth century, the inscription near the figure of death is an unsurprising combination of texts: 'The death of the rich sinner is evil.' (see p. 246) Obviously, to look at the motif 'death of the rich man' simply as a social commentary is mistaken.

Conclusions: Society and Iconography

Every one of the 'social' elements present in the Ukrainian Last Judgment icons can be explained in terms other than the modern category of social motivations. All can be easily interpreted as developments within the traditional iconography and theology of the late medieval and early modern era. So much of the literature on Ukrainian icons is so caught up in national and social paradigms that it fails altogether to connect this sacral art with religious thoughts and attitudes.[40] Modern views of nation and class are projected onto the past and these become the sole guide to past cultural phenomena. The Last Judgment icons have become the subject of any commentary at all in Ukrainian art history only because they contain elements such as I have enumerated that can be picked up by the radar of a class-conscious or nationally conscious history. The elements of the icon that refer to theological issues – the ascension of the monks, the bosom of Abraham, the resurrection of the dead, the vision of Daniel – have traditionally attracted little attention in Ukraine. Only in Poland[41] and very recently in Ukraine[42] has a more comprehensive and less paradigmatic approach been taken towards the Last Judgment icons.

That said, this study has not disproven the validity of the social interpretation of the iconographic elements. Perhaps that task is impossible. The fact remains that the social elements in these icons were

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'The death of the rich sinner is evil.' Radelychi, second half of 16th century. Photo courtesy of the author.

mainly accreted in a period when the burdens of serfdom were increasing sharply and signs of discontent were rife. The icons were painted by simple craftsmen and erected in rural churches, wooden structures with an almost exclusively peasant congregation. We cannot really reconstruct what it meant to those seventeenth-century painters and worshippers when they painted a 'merciless landlord' sitting finely dressed

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in a handcart, being pushed by a demon into the fires of hell. Were they thinking about the merciless mentioned in the Gospel or about their own lord of the manor? Perhaps there was a convergence and the question is not helpful at all.

NOTES

I would like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for supporting the research on which this essay is based. I would also like to thank Anne-Laurent Caudano and Srdja Pavlovic for their research assistance.

1 P.M. Zholtovs'kyi, *Ukrains'kyi zhyvopys XVII–XVIII st.* (Kyiv, 1978), 112, 114, 285.
2 *Istoriia ukrains'koho mystetstva v shesty tomakh*, vol. 2: *Mystetstvo XIV–pershoi polovyny XVII stolittia* (Kyiv, 1967), 232.
3 Last Judgment icons gave the painters an opportunity 'to express sharp social protest against oppression in feudal society.' H.N. Lohvyn, *Po Ukraini. Starodavni mystets'ki pam"iatky* (Kyiv, 1968), 297.
4 Vasyl' Lakata, 'Try "ostanni sudy" v fondi Muzeiu ukrains'koi kul'tury,' *Naukovyi zbirnyk Muzeiu ukrains'koi kul'tury v Svydnyku* 6, no. 1 (1972): 294–5.
5 Vladislav Grešlík [Vladyslav Hreshlyk], 'Do stanu doteperishnikh doslidzhen' ikonopysu na Skhidnii Slovachchyni,' *Pravoslávny Teologický Zborník* 20, no. 5 (1997): 249. But cf. his article 'Niekol'ko poznámok k ikonám 16. storočia na východnom Slovensku,' in Jaroslaw Giemza, *Zachodnioukraińska sztuka cerkiewna. Dzieła – twórcy – ośrodki – techniki: Materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji naukowej 10–11 maja 2003 roku* (Łańcut, 2003), 148–50.
6 For example, a new and in many respects very good monograph on early modern Ukrainian iconography explains the entrance of 'folkloric elements' into the icons thus: 'These tendencies reflected the social-historical processes that transpired under the sign of humanistic and state-building ideas.' Mariia Helytovych, *Ukrains'ki ikony 'Spas u Slavi'* (Lviv, 2005), 10.
7 See especially Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (Princeton, 1998), and Andriy Zayarnyuk, 'Framing the Ukrainian Peasantry in Habsburg Galicia, 1846–1914 (with Focus on the Sambir Area)' (PhD dissertation: University of Alberta, 2003).
8 This is held in the National Museum in Lviv, inventory no. 34503/I–1179.

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The icon is reproduced in Ilarion Svientsitskyi-Sviatyts'kyi [sic], *Ikony halyts'koi Ukrainy XV–XVI. vikiv*, Zbirky Natsional'noho muzeiu u L'vovi (Lviv, 1929), plates 19, 13.

9 National Musem in Cracow, inventory no. Ic 25. Reproductions in Janina Kłosińska, *Ikony*, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, Katalogi zbiorów, 1 (Cracow, 1973), 155, and Romuald Biskupski, *Ikony w zbiorach polskich*, Skarby sztuki w Polsce (Warsaw, 1991), plate 22.

10 National Museum in Lviv, inventory no. 34505/I–1181. There are many reproductions, but the best is Hryhorii Lohvyn, Lada Miliaieva, and Vira Svientsits'ka, *Ukrains'kyi seredn'ovichnyi zhyvopys* (Kyiv, 1976), plates XLVIII–XLIX (but the accompanying text incorrectly gives the icon's provenance as Mshana rather than Mshanets).

11 The icon from Lipie from the early seventeenth century in the Historical Museum in Sanok, Poland, inventory no. S/3437 (old number 976), shows a devil urging the tavernmaid not to pour a full portion. The icon from the 1650s in the East Slovakian Museum in Košice, Slovakia, bears the inscription: 'A devil whispers in the ear of the tavernmaid that she add extra to the bill and not pour a full portion of beer.' The Lipie icon is reproduced in colour in Romuald Biskupski, *Ikony ze zbiorów Muzeum Historycznego w Sanoku* (Warsaw, 1991), plate 69, and in Biskupski, *Ikony w zbiorach polskich*, plate 81.

12 For example, in the icon of uncertain provenance from the late sixteenth–early seventeenth century in the Museum of Religion in Lviv, inventory no. L'v MA–2115/ Zh 442.

13 The mid-sixteenth-century icon of Ruska Bystrá in the Museum of Ukrainian-Rusyn Culture in Svidník, Slovakia, inventory no. 1141/60. This icon is copiously illustrated in Štefan Tkáč, *Ikony zo 16.–19. storočia na severovýchodnom Slovensku* (Bratislava, 1982), plates 49–57.

14 Icon from Pohorilivka in the Chernivtsi Oblast Museum of Art in Ukraine. Exactly the same scene occurs in an eighteenth-century mural in the church in Poienile Izei in the Maramures region of Romania. An early fourteenth-century Bulgarian icon showed a monk subjected to the same punishment, but for homosexuality. Miltiadis K. Garidis, *Études sur le Jugement dernier post-Byzantin du XVe à la fin du XIXe siècle: Iconographie – esthetique* (Thessalonika, 1985), 87.

15 Zholtovs'kyi, *Ukrains'kyi zhyvopys XVII–XVIII st.*, 285 n. 33.

16 The oldest rich man in hell is in the Vilshanytsia icon from the first half of the sixteenth century in the National Museum in Lviv, inventory no. 30675/I–1914.

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17 *Istoriia ukrains'koho mystetstva*, 2:232.

18 V.P. Otkovych, *Narodna techiia v ukrains'komu zhyvopysu XVII–XVIII st.* (Kyiv, 1990), 44.

19 Oleh Sydor, 'Ikona Strashnoho Sudu z Vil'shanytsi. Z materialiv do zvedenoho kataloha zbirok NML,' *Litopys Natsional'noho muzeiu u L'vovi*, 2, no. 7 (2001): 86.

20 National Museum in Lviv, inventory no. 36454/I–2122. The scene is illustrated in *Istoriia ukrains'koho mystetstva*, 2:256, fig. 174.

21 Lohvyn et al., *Ukrains'kyi seredn'ovichnyi zhyvopys*, 21.

22 National Museum in Lviv, inventory no. 25380/I–1743. Reproduction in Svientsitskyi, *Ikony*, plates 35, 24.

23 Unknown provenance, late sixteenth-early seventeenth century, Museum of the History of Religion, Lviv, inventory no. L'v MA–2115/Zh 442. Roztoka, seventeenth century; on this icon see my 'The Icon of the Last Judgment in the Village of Roztoka, Transcarpathia,' in *Zachodnioukraińska sztuka cerkiewna*, pt. 2, *Materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji Łańcut-Kotań 17–18 kwietnia 2004 roku*, ed. Jarosław Giemza (Łańcut, 2004), 363–80.

24 Volosianka (Hajasd), Budapest Museum of Ethnography (Néprajzi Múzeum), inventory no. 87 194. Reproductions in Bernadett Puskás, *Between East and West: Icons in the Carpathian Region in the Fifteenth–Eighteenth Centuries* (Budapest, 1991), plate 38, and Fejös Zoltán, Lackner Mónika, and Wilhelm Gábor, eds, *Images of Time: Catalogue: Millenary Exhibition at the Museum of Ethnography 31 December 2000 – 31 December 2001* (Budapest, 2001), 142.

25 Lipie, first half of seventeenth century. Plavie, seventeenth century, National Museum in Lviv, inventory no. 6492/I–1334; there is a reproduction of the relevant detail in P.M. Zholtovs'kyi, *Ukrains'kyi zhyvopys XVII–XVIII st.* (Kyiv, 1978), 113. Topol'a, seventeenth century, Museum of Ukrainian-Rusyn Culture, Svidník, Slovakia, inventory no. 671/70; discussion and black-and-white reproduction in Lakata, 'Try "ostanni sudy."' Uncertain provenance (Jedlinka?), 1650s, East Slovakian Museum, Košice. Świątkowa Mała, Poland, Church of St Michael the Archangel, 1687. According to Vira Svientsits'ka and Vasyl' Otkovych, the Mala Horozhanka icon shows 'a devil driving "merciless landlords" to hell in a cart.' The icon does depict a devil carting naked souls into hell, but there is no inscription identifying the occupants of the cart as lords. Mala Horozhanka, end of sixteenth-early seventeenth century, Branch of the Lviv Art Gallery in Olesko. V.I. Svientsits'ka and V.P. Otkovych, *Ukrains'ke narodne maliarstvo XIII–XX stolit'. Al'bom*, Svit ochyma narodnykh myttsiv (Kyiv, 1991), commentary

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to plate 23. There is a similar scene without inscription in Kamianka Strumylova, 1587, National Museum in Lviv, inventory no. 14537/I–1979; reproduction in *Istoriia ukrains'koho mystetstva*, 2:269, fig. 186.

26 Pohorilivka. See above, note 15.

27 Wall-painting, Chotyniec, Poland, 1735, Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God.

28 Roztoka. See above, note 24.

29 Garidis, *Études sur le Jugement dernier*, 86–9.

30 Pavle Mijović, *Dečani*, 3rd ed. (Belgrade, 1970), plate 39.

31 Garidis, *Études sur le Jugement dernier*, 89.

32 [Meletii Smotryts'kyi,] *The* Jevanhelije učitelnoje *of Meletij Smotryc'kyj*, intro. David Frick, Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature, Texts 2 (Cambridge, MA, 1987), 26–7.

33 Kyryll Trankvylion [Stavrovetskii], *Ievanheliie uchytel'noie albo kazania na nedilia prez rok i na praznyky hospodskiie* (Rokhmaniv, 1619), 18v–21.

34 In the King James Bible (Psalm 34:21) this same passage reads: 'Evil shall slay the wicked.'

35 M.P.H. 1134. Reproduced in colour in Biskupski, *Ikony w zbiorach polskich*, plate 37.

36 Rainer Stichel, *Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild spät- und nachbyzantinischer Vergänglichkeitsdarstellungen: Die Anfangsminiaturen von Psalterhandschriften des 14. Jahrhunderts, ihre Herkunft, Bedeutung und ihr Weiterleben in der griechischen und russischen Kunst und Literatur*, Byzantina Vindobonensia 5 (Vienna, 1971), 23.

37 The illustration of the death of a righteous man accompanies Psalm 127. It shows an angel accepting the soul of the dying man. Two black demons are also around the bed. *Kievskaia psaltir' 1397 goda iz Gosudarstvennoi Publichnoi biblioteki imeni M.E. Saltykova-Shchedrina v Leningrade [OLDP F6]* (Moscow, 1978), 183.

38 Stichel, *Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild*, 129.

39 National Museum, Lviv, inventory no. 22996/I–1698.

40 See John-Paul Himka, 'Episodes in the Historiography of the Ukrainian Icon,' *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 29 (2004): 149–67.

41 Janina Kłosińska, 'Dwie ikony Sądu Ostatecznego w zbiorach Sanockich,' *Materiały Muzeum Budownictwa Ludowego w Sanoku* 6 (December 1967): 30–45.

42 Sydor, 'Ikona Strashnoho Sudu z Vil'shanytsi.'

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Between 'Popular' and 'Official': *Akafisty* Hymns and Marian Icons in Late Imperial Russia

VERA SHEVZOV

The phenomenon of miracle-working icons in late imperial Russia, especially those of Mary, the Mother of God, was representative of a large area of overlap between official and popular Orthodox cultures, however such a distinction might be drawn. The miracle-working Kazan icon of the Mother of God, for instance, which was associated with the fate of the Russian Empire with respect both to its eastern and western frontiers, was celebrated annually on 22 October. As an officially recognized national holiday, this day saw many business and government offices closed and liturgical services conducted throughout the empire. At the same time, the Kazan icon was an extremely popular image, with a copy found in most homes and certainly in most churches. Common Orthodox believers could immediately recognize an image of the Kazanskaia icon. Moreover, believers throughout Russia recognized numerous copies of the original Kazan icon as no less miracle-working. It was not uncommon for believers such as those from the village of Beketovki in the Simbirsk diocese collectively to decide – though sometimes not without official resistance – that an icon among them carried 'the special grace of God' and to choose to turn to it in their prayers.[1]

Despite their prominence in Russia's Orthodox culture, miracle-working icons of Mary, the Birth-Giver of God (*Bogoroditsa*), have seen surprisingly little academic or theological attention, especially when compared to the vast scholarship on the parallel phenomenon of Marian apparitions in the Christian West.[2] In this article, I turn to the world of miracle-working icons of Mary in order to explore the space they occupied in that culture. In particular, I am interested in how these icons were perceived and described, the experiences and sensibilities believers associated with them, and the place believers accorded them in a

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sacred history that they understood as still unfolding in their personal and communal lives.

I have chosen a unique body of texts in order to examine these issues – namely, *akafisty* hymns in honour of icons of the Mother of God that were composed in Russia during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Illustrative of the standing of such Marian icons between official and popular Orthodox cultures, these hymns belonged to the genre of liturgical music and services that developed from the original Byzantine *akafist* hymn in honour of the Mother of God composed perhaps as early as the fifth century.[3] A poetic homily whose historical roots stretched back to psalmody, the original *akafist* included features of the imperial panegyric with its developed rhetoric of praise. Having itself begun as a popular hymn celebrated only locally, eventually the *akafist* entered the official annual liturgical cycle of the church and was (and continues to be) chanted during matins on the fifth Saturday of Great Lent. Several centuries passed, however, between the appearance of the *akafist* as a unique liturgical text and its establishment as the prototype of a genre of laudatory hymnody.

By the time Russia appropriated the original *akafist* hymn from Byzantium, it was used not only as a liturgical hymn chanted publicly, but also in the more private monastic rule of prayer.[4] Characteristically, in the nineteenth century Ignatii Brianchaninov portrayed St Sergius of Radonezh's well-known vision of Mary as taking place during his reading of the *akafist* hymn in front of an icon of the Mother of God.[5] Indeed, by the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the *akafist* hymn in honour of the Mother of God belonged to both the collective and private rituals associated with the special veneration of Marian icons. For instance, in the Church of St Elijah in the provincial capital of the Voronezh diocese, a locally revered copy of the Tikhvin icon of the Mother of God hung over the Royal Doors. Every Wednesday the icon was lowered by rope for public veneration and the parish priest chanted the *akafist* hymn before it.[6] In other places, the *akafist* hymn often formed part of the service that priests conducted when, upon request, they visited private homes with a specially revered icon of the Mother of God.

Having entered central Russia by means of its southern and western Slavic neighbours, the *akafist* as a genre took some time to take creative root.[7] It is worthy of note that before the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, out of some forty-seven publications of prayer books that contained *akafisty* to Christ, the Mother of God, and various

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saints, only two prayer books with *akafisty* appeared in Moscow.[8] The vast majority were composed and published in the Ukraine, where they appeared with increasing frequency in the seventeenth century.[9] The *Spiritual Regulation* (1721), which formed the foundation of Peter the Great's church reform efforts and established the order of church governance in Russia up until the 1917 revolutions, expressed a certain distrust of the proliferation of these hymns. The *Regulation* recommended a careful examination of the *akafisty* that had been composed in the Ukraine in order to insure that they 'corresponded to sacred Scripture and contained nothing contrary to the Word of God, or anything indecent or senseless.'[10]

Yet, already by the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, there were signs that the genre was taking hold in central Russia as well. Between 1798 and 1801 at least eight new *akafisty* appeared in print. From the mid-nineteenth century through the first decade of the twentieth century, the *akafist* genre experienced a golden age with the Russian Orthodox Church publishing some 130 *akafisty*. Even this figure, however, did not reflect the full range of activity with respect to the genre. Not only had the church's censors denied publication of some 300 more such hymns, but others were composed locally and remained in manuscript form, never making it to the central offices of synodal censors.[11]

Among the numerous *akafisty* that the Holy Synod approved for publication during this period were those honouring seventeen different icons of the Mother of God.[12] Some twenty other icons of Mary had also inspired the composition of *akafisty*, but the Holy Synod denied requests for their publication.[13] Since *akafisty* had also been composed and used locally in manuscript form, it is difficult to determine the precise number of Marian icons enjoying such hymns in their honour.[14] Since 1917, *akafisty* to several more icons, some of which had existed only in manuscript form before 1917, have appeared in official publications of the Orthodox Church in Russia as well as abroad, thereby testifying to the genre's ongoing endurance.[15]

The nebulous space occupied by such hymns in the landscape of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Russian Orthodoxy can be seen by their liturgical use, their composition, and the varied appraisals they received from churchmen. The *Typikon* – the liturgical manual that described how liturgical services were to be ordered – still prescribed only the original *akafist* in honour of the Mother of God. In this sense, they were not part of the most basic or 'core' liturgical order. Yet *akafisty*

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by that time had become a routine part of Orthodox communal and private prayer life. They offered a popular mode of prayer since believers could now frequently hear and privately recite *akafisty* to Christ, saints, and various icons of the Mother of God. In many churches, the chanting of *akafisty* became a feature of the liturgical cycle, often attached to the matins service.[16] The archbishop of Kherson, Inokentii (Borisov – d. 1857) – author of at least six *akafist* hymns – reportedly followed such a practice.[17] Meanwhile, in their reports to diocesan and synodal authorities about specially revered icons of Mary, local clergy and civil authorities often stated that believers gathered before them in order to sing *akafisty* without the presence of clergy. [18]

Some scholars have alluded to the popular nature of these hymns by characterizing the proliferation of *akafisty* hymns as a 'truly all-ecclesial phenomenon.' In support of such an assertion, they cite the diverse authorship of such hymns – including bishops, priests, professors of theological academies, and 'simple lay people.'[19] While indeed both men and women from various social backgrounds were among the composers of these hymns, such a characterization is somewhat misleading. In order to be published and thereby gradually enter general church use, these texts had to undergo the scrutiny of ecclesiastical censors. Not only did these censors hold the texts to strict theological standards, they also looked for historical accuracy and poetic talent. As a member of the St Petersburg Ecclesiastical Censorship Committee wrote in 1888, 'compositions known as *akafisty* consist of an exposition of sacred facts. They are successful only in those cases when the pious sensibilities of an author are combined inarguably with poetic talent.'[20] Censors frequently cited 'feeble thought' and lack of originality among the reasons for declining a petition to publish a new *akafist*. Moreover, authors had to demonstrate a fluency in Church Slavonic. Obviously, such strict standards limited the pool of potential composers. At the same time, the works of both lay people and clergy were scrutinized. In 1890, for example, the bishop of Tobolsk, Iustin, submitted an *akafist* that he had apparently composed in honour of the locally revered 'Tobolsk' icon of the Mother of God. The St Petersburg Ecclesiastical Censor Committee denied permission for publication because of numerous grammatical and stylistic errors, and even questioned whether the bishop was its author as indicated.[21] Finally, the composers of these hymns also had to be attuned to the spiritual and emotional processes involved in the Orthodox practice of icon veneration. Indeed, as the author of the most extensive study of *akafisty* in prerevolutionary Rus-

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sia, Aleksei Popov, noted, the composer of an *akafist* had to be no less than 'a psychologist of sacred Christian dispositions.'[22] The well-known Russian writer, Anton Chekhov, confirmed this view in his literary depiction of a composer of *akafisty* in the short story 'On Holy Night.' The story presents the composition of *akafisty* as a gift and distinguishes it from the art of writing sermons and histories. 'Neither wisdom nor holiness will help here if God has not granted this gift.'[23] In such a view, the art of composing *akafisty* called for theologically able and spiritually gifted individuals, and thus practically speaking could not be a popular or all-ecclesial activity.

Nevertheless, while the term 'popular' might be misleading in terms of authorship, it does apply to the use and content of these hymns. As already noted, *akafisty* hymns at this time were very much a part of both communal and private prayer and more importantly did not demand the presence of a priest. Believers could chant these hymns privately or collectively before icons of the Mother of God located in their homes or in chapels just as easily as they could attend public liturgical celebrations led by clergy honouring such icons. Moreover, believers reportedly highly regarded *akafisty* in general. As Inokentii, the archbishop of Kherson, wrote, 'The people like these sorts of things and delight in them. Not everything, after all, is to be preached; spiritual nourishment can also be given in this manner … Experience has shown that among Orthodox people these are one of the most favoured readings.'[24]

Not all clergy shared Metropolitan Innokentii's enthusiasm for this genre. Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov – 1783–1867), for instance, felt that newly composed *akafisty* had not yet received a 'full ecclesial character' and therefore discouraged their use. He believed that instead of directing energy towards augmenting the liturgical order with newly composed *akafisty*, more attention should be paid to carrying out properly the already established order.[25] Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii – 1864–1936) followed his predecessor in criticizing the *akafist* as a widely used genre of hymnody, advocating the use of only some of the more ancient hymns, especially the original one to Mary. Parish clergy also voiced frustration at believers' preference for newly composed *akafisty*, especially in honour of icons of the Mother of God, over the ancient, established hymns. Metropolitan Antonii viewed growth in the composition of *akafisty* hymns as a form of catering to the 'secularized tastes of contemporary Christians' that in fact testified to a decline in the realm of liturgical creativity. Disapproving of their emotionalism, 'religious utilitarianism,' and concern with the mundane affairs of life, Metropolitan Antonii questioned their

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spiritual benefit.[26] The St Petersburg Spiritual Censor Committee frequently felt that *akafisty* in honour of particular icons of the Mother of God were not needed, preferring instead that clergy and believers make use of the ancient *akafist* in honour of the Mother of God.[27] In a similar vein, even when the Censor Committee may have approved a new *akafist*, the Holy Synod sometimes denied its publication, either giving no reason or stating that with the existence of the general *akafist* in honour of Mary, such hymns were superfluous.[28]

Akafisty hymns, then, can be read in two ways. On the one hand, they may be seen as prescriptive texts meant to edify and direct believers' thoughts and sensibilities with respect to the Mother of God and her icons. In this regard, they represented approved forms of Marian devotion and icon veneration. On the other hand, as hymns of thanksgiving, praise, and petition, they can also be viewed as descriptive, as attempts poetically to articulate and celebrate experiences and feelings that were common among all types of Orthodox believers. Indeed, believers from all social backgrounds in late nineteenth-century Russia testified to the influence of such icons on them. In her memoirs, Thaisia, the abbess of Leushino (1840–1915), who was of noble lineage, recounted the role the icons of the Tikhvin and Kazan Mother of God played in her embarking on the monastic life.[29] In 1890, a group of residents from the Kherson diocese wrote the Holy Synod about their experiences with an icon of the Mother of God. 'Just meditating on this icon,' they maintained, 'leads us to some sort of indescribable reverential disposition during which we experience joy.'[30] In this respect, *akafisty* were texts behind which stood the collective voice of believers.

A Celebration and Contemplation of Sacred Stories

Akafisty in honour of Marian icons can be fully appreciated only against the backdrop of the phenomenon of miracle-working icons of the Mother of God in general. As already noted, the phenomenon of miracle-working icons of Mary, at least as manifested in late imperial Russian Orthodoxy, is difficult to classify. On the one hand, it belonged to the official realm of Orthodox Christianity. Members of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, in their attempts to defend the veneration and use of icons in general, had placed such icons within the parameters of official church life by drawing extensively upon reports of miracles associated with icons.[31] Stories of spiritual and physical healing, conversion, and divine protection figured into the whole theological justification of icon

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veneration alongside purely Christological considerations. By the late nineteenth century, from among Russia's numerous honoured icons of the Mother of God, at least some twenty-six had been brought into the centre of church life.[32] Not only were these icons listed in various published Menologia as miracle-working, but several of them, such as the Kazan and Vladimir icons of the Mother of God, enjoyed full liturgical services that were included in the Menaion.

On the other hand, despite their prominence, specially revered or miracle-working icons remained in certain ways at the periphery of institutional church life. Claims of miraculous occurrences raised the issue of discernment, which in a hierarchically structured ecclesial community almost always invited tension. They begged the definition of spiritual authority by raising questions about what type of event merited the designation of 'miracle' and whether the icon was a special bearer of God's grace, as well as who in the church could actually make such decisions. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such tensions over particular icons were more frequent than might be expected. Ecclesiastical authorities often attempted to diffuse tensions that arose by discouraging believers from specially revering icons because of perceived miracles. For instance, beginning in 1888, a parish in the Riazan diocese became involved with diocesan officials and the Holy Synod in a discussion that lasted some twenty years over their desire openly to specially venerate an icon of the Mother of God in their church. These parishioners had three requests: that the icon be kept in a location in the church to which they had easy access; that private prayer services be allowed before the icon; and that a chapel be constructed in its honour. Despite numerous appeals, in 1905 synodal officials still had not granted parishioners their requests since these officials believed there was insufficient evidence to warrant such honour.[33]

The seventeen icons of the Mother of God to which *akafisty* were composed clearly belonged to the former grouping that had gained widespread official ecclesiastical recognition. Many of these icons were indigenous to Russia. Their narratives were complex and usually wove together numerous stories. Generally, their foundational narratives – the stories that initially set these icons apart – took place before the reign of Peter the Great, namely, from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries. In many cases, at least one episode in the 'lives' of these icons was associated with the collective fate of the Russian people.

The life of the one of the most famous of these icons, the Vladimir icon, for instance, is associated with Russia's Byzantine legacy and the

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rise of Moscow. According to its narrative, the evangelist Luke painted the icon on a board from the table upon which Jesus ate during his youth. Such a past put the Vladimir icon on a par with other images of Mary in Eastern and Western Christendom that had been attributed to the brush of the evangelist Luke, thereby placing Russia in the line of authentic heirs of the Christian tradition. In the twelfth century, the patriarch of Constantinople reportedly gave the icon as a gift to Grand Prince Iurii Dolgorukii, who placed the icon in a monastery located in Vyshgorod outside of Kiev. His son, Andrei, subsequently interpreted various signs that he perceived from the icon as Mary's intent that her icon be moved to another locality. Such an intent fit with his own thoughts to move north from the Kievan principality into the Suzdal lands in order to establish his independence. Without his father's knowledge, one night he did take the sacred image and left Vyshgorod. The icon 'settled' near Vladimir, from where in 1395 it was 'summoned' to Moscow and was credited with saving the city from the forces of Tamerlane.

The story of the Tikhvin icon, as another example, might be seen as anticipating the shift of the centre of Orthodoxy from Byzantium to Russia. The Byzantine empress, Evdokia, reportedly brought the icon from Jerusalem to Constantinople in the fifth century. Specially venerated in Constantinople, it had a church constructed in its honour. Seventy years prior to the fall of Constantinople it disappeared from that city and appeared mysteriously in Russia's Novgorod region, reportedly floating in the air restlessly searching for a place to 'settle.' Once a group of Russian merchants visiting Constantinople had an audience with the patriarch and told him about this icon. The patriarch asked them to describe it in detail and he indicated that he believed it to be the same icon that had disappeared from Constantinople. The story relates how the patriarch lamented the icon's disappearance saying that it had disappeared several times in the past but had always reappeared. 'Now, for our pride and our false ways, she has left us forever.'[34] Many of the narratives behind Russia's other indigenous miracle-working icons of Mary – including the icons named Bogoliubov, Feodorov, and Tikhvin – involved a similar mixture of accounts of personal religious experiences and vignettes concerning the fate of local communities and the Russian nation.[35]

The narratives behind other indigenous icons, however, including those named Tolga, Joy of All Who Sorrow, and Georgian, never became associated with the fate of the Russian nation.[36] Their rise to prominence appears to have depended in part on the positions of

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persons who became involved with them. For instance, the story of the Tolga icon of the Mother of God involved the fourteenth-century bishop of Iaroslavl, Prokhor, and the founding of the Tolga monastery in that diocese. The icon named Joy of All Who Sorrow enjoyed the immediate attention of the patriarch of Russia, Ioakim, since it was his sister, Evfimiia, who in 1648 was healed by prayers before this icon. While indeed having originated in Georgia, the 'Georgian' icon of the Mother of God found its way to Russia following the Persian annexation of Georgia in 1622. According to its 'life,' a Russian tradesman living in Persia had purchased the icon and sent it to his employer, the merchant Gregorii Lytkin of Iaroslavl. Lytkin, in turn, following directives he received in a dream, sent the icon to the Krasnogorsk Monastery in the Arkhangel'sk diocese. In 1650, the metropolitan of Novgorod and future controversial patriarch, Nikon, took special interest in the icon and established an annual feast in its honour.

In addition to those icons whose 'lives' were native to Russia, several miracle-working icons inherited from Byzantium, copies of which were esteemed in Russia, also had *akafisty* composed in their honour in the late nineteenth century. These icons – Iveron, Quick to Hear, Three-Handed, and It is Truly Meet – were associated primarily with Athonite monastic communities (those of Iveron, Dochiarios, and Hilandarion, and the Church of Protaton in the small Athonite town of Karyes, respectively).[37] Finally, the 'lives' of three of the seventeen miracle-working icons in honour of which *akafisty* had been published in the nineteenth century – Quench My Sorrow, Burning Bush, and Unexpected Joy – were less clear about their origins.[38] Little is known about the early episodes in the 'life' of the icon of the Mother of God named Quench My Sorrow because in 1771 a fire destroyed parish records housed in the Moscow church in which the icon was kept. The icon named the Burning Bush appeared to have gained its prominence more because of its thematic association with fire (and preservation therefrom) than because of any one particular founding 'event.' The icon named Unexpected Joy stood out among the rest by iconographically depicting the narrative that stood behind it – a dialogue between an icon of Mary and a nameless thief who, on account of this encounter, repented of his ways.[39]

Arising from a deep conviction that God works in history – in the life histories of individuals as well as in the collective histories of communities – these stories prompted believers to reflect on the ways of divine providence. While entire liturgical services in honour of some of these

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icons could be found in the late nineteenth century Menaion, *akafisty* transposed the icons' stories into hymns which, as a form of prayer, brought the potential for a deeper influence on believers than could be had with a story's simple oral recounting. *Akafisty* also allowed for more frequent reflection on themes and stories than that allowed by an annual service.[40] By calling on believers to remember experiences associated with particular icons, *akafisty* drew them in as 'witnesses,' to respond to perceived divine interventions. As one hymn proclaimed, 'Never will we remain silent ... about your wondrous works.'[41] After recounting one episode from the life of the Bogoliubovo icon of the Mother of God, the *akafist* in its honour stated, 'And so, participating in this joy in our minds, we call out to the Heavenly Queen in gratitude.'[42] Yet, while *akafisty* may have primarily voiced thanksgiving and praise, they also exhorted believers to respond in a variety of other ways: humility, attentiveness, compunction, repentance, and petition among them. 'Beholding the glorious and manifold wisdom of God in the world and in our life,' read the *akafist* in honour of the icon named Unexpected Joy, 'let us put away earthly vanities ... and lift up our minds and hearts to the heavens.'[43]

Moreover, by repeatedly referring to all 'Russian people' who turn to the Mother of God and her icon in times of distress and illness, *akafisty* had the ability to engage the believer in a wide array of personal and communal religious experiences by recollecting these experiences in public and private worship. Accordingly, these hymns were composed mainly in the collective 'we,' helping to make the experiences of individuals and groups of believers in the past relevant to all who came afterward to pray before the icon. *Akafisty* also portrayed a set of feelings and responses attributed to those whom the icon had affected in the past and thereby called believers to emulate that example of 'right praise' and 'right disposition.'

Finally, in addition to recollecting the experiences associated with the icons, some *akafisty* in honour of Marian icons also contemplated the original story of the woman who visually was portrayed on them. The Akhtyr icon of the Mother of God, for example, portrayed Mary, the Mother of God, standing by the crucified Christ. Though Mary in this icon was in the background, her figure loomed larger than the Cross in the foreground. Before drawing attention to Mary's saving work through her icon, the *akafist* recalled her inner agony at the sight of her suffering Son and reminded believers that it was at this point that Christ showed her to be the mother of all of humanity through adop-

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tion, by referring to Mary as the mother of John. From then on, the hymn assured, her concern for the sufferings of the human race had not ceased.[44] *Akafisty* such as these were semantically enriched by their presentation of thematic similarities between Mary's own life experiences and believers' experiences with her icon.

Affirming the Relationship between Mary and Her Icon

Akafisty in honour of Marian icons retained certain similarities with the original Byzantine *akafist* hymn. They, too, for instance, contained twenty-five verses, and the first word of each *kondak* and *ikos* in the *akafisty* to icons corresponded to the first words in the original. This feature also accounted for thematic and poetic similarities and even repetition among such *akafisty* in honour of Marian icons. In addition, numerous stanzas within any given *akafist* did not address the icon in question, but focused mainly on praising Mary's role in salvation history, namely in such events as the Annunciation, the birth of Jesus, and the Crucifixion. Moreover, the vast majority of the laudatory refrains beginning with the word 'Rejoice' addressed Mary directly and only occasionally mentioned her icon. *Akafisty*, therefore, set the stories of icons of the Mother of God in a broader context of Mary's own life and of her perceived role in the Christian community and in salvation history.

At the same time, *akafisty* hymns reported many details that identified the icon with particular historical events, often more so than did the liturgical service in honour of that icon. The liturgical hymns for the feast of the Kazan icon, for instance, do not directly speak about the Kazan icon itself. While they speak of Mary's icon in general, they do not recount the details of its story. In 1867, the 'life' of the Kazan icon found a new hearing in sacred song when a state official (*stats-sovetnik*) named Nikolai Elagin petitioned the Holy Synod to review for publication an *akafist* hymn he had composed in honour of this icon. In his petition, Elagin claimed he was encouraged to compose the *akafist* by persons who desired to have a hymn in honour specifically of this icon that would recall many more details of its story.[45]

Based mainly on Mary's image as mother of all of humanity, *akafisty* depicted these icons as signs of her maternal love. Desiring to protect and liberate people from sorrows and illnesses, Mary had 'given the power of wonder-working' to certain of her icons.[46] Such icons were presented as tokens of her loving kindness and signs of her mercy. The *akafist* in honour of the Iveron icon of the Mother of God, for instance,

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described Mary as 'issuing forth an inexhaustible source of mercy from her icon' in order to rescue persons from their misfortunes.[47] Several *akafisty* portrayed the icon as Mary's 'gracious pledge' of good will toward the human race.[48]

Many *akafisty* made a point of reminding believers that within the constellation of Orthodox saints, Mary's relationship with icons was unique and was established during her own lifetime. The hymns recalled and acknowledged faith in the words that had been attributed to Mary when she first saw the icon painted by the Evangelist Luke: 'My grace and power shall be with this image.'[49] By so doing, they affirmed Mary's presence through the icon, and justified the hopes with which believers approached it.[50] The hymns amplified the 'special' character of the icon by depicting it as surrounded, carried, and hailed by the angelic hosts.[51]

While these hymns praised and gave thanks for Mary's love, compassion, and maternal boldness before her Son and God, they ultimately directed that praise and thanksgiving to God. The hymns indicated that God was the ultimate source of all 'life-bearing power.' Mary's role, therefore, as protectress, guide, and intercessor was shown to be divinely established, and her own gifts divinely given.[52] Moreover, because of her aid, believers repented and hastened to God. Accordingly, these special icons were just as much signs of God's own loving kindness as they were of Mary's. God issued forth his divine power or strength through these icons and manifested miracles;[53] God's power was also said to protect all those who came before Mary in faith. Mary, in turn, was shown enlightening souls with the 'light that knows no evening' and guiding them to the light of the Trinitarian God.[54] *Akafisty* depicted believers discerning this truth and thereby associating the appearance of these icons with a visitation by God as well as by Mary.[55] On this level, *akafisty* were hymns of adoration of God, inspired by attentiveness to the works of God in human history.

Honouring the Relationship between the Icon and the Faithful

While *akafisty* that honoured Marian icons related beliefs and sentiments about Mary, they also asserted certain Orthodox teachings about icons and spoke about the relationship the faithful enjoyed with them. Such hymns about icons and their veneration were not common in Orthodox liturgical services, except for the feast celebrating the victory

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of icons on the first Sunday of Lent. *Akafisty* linked Mary, the Mother of God, with the celebration of icons by depicting her as 'exalting' their veneration.[56] While not delving into the details of the Christological justification for the veneration of icons, these hymns reminded believers of how that veneration 'worked.' In so doing, they served a pedagogical purpose as well as a celebratory one.

Akafisty frequently repeated that by coming before the icon of Mary, believers were entering into Mary's 'presence' and, through her, into the presence of God.[57] In doing so, these hymns repeated the iconophilic maxim that the honour given to an image is transferred to its prototype – a maxim, they explained, that was not always understood by those 'eloquent orators' who insisted that such veneration was idolatrous.[58] As the *akafist* in honour of the icon named Unexpected Joy stated, 'by gazing on the image [of the Mother of God] with our bodily eyes, our minds and hearts are lifted up to its prototype.'[59]

Akafisty also commented on the special relationship between a particular miracle-working icon of Mary and its copies.[60] The *akafist* in honour of the Kazan icon of the Mother of God, for instance, described how by means of copies, the light of miracles that had shown on the Kazan land now shone throughout all of Russia's cities. The hymn depicted the icon as a 'light-bearing candle' that received 'the immaterial fire of grace.' This icon, in turn, 'lights new lamps in its copies, which share the same power of grace.'[61] While Mary was the prototype behind every iconic depiction of her, a miracle-working icon also became a 'prototype' once believers started making copies of it. Eventually believers recognized many of these iconic copies also as 'miracle-working.' As the *akafist* in honour of the Iveron icon of the Mother of God noted regarding the bringing of a copy of the Athonite 'original' to Russia at the request of Patriarch Nikon in the seventeenth century, 'Mother of God, it was your good will ... to grant your grace to the new monastic community in Russia, just as you had granted it to Athos, through a copy of your revered image.'[62]

This perceived relationship between miracle-working icons and copies thereof gave added significance to the apparently limited number of icons in honour of which *akafisty* were published. Among the hundreds of specially revered icons of Mary in Russia were numerous copies of the miracle-working 'prototypes.' Local diocesan bishops and the Holy Synod regularly received reports from believers who claimed to have perceived special 'signs' or experienced healings from their prayers before a particular image of the Mother of God, named Kazan, Tikhvin,

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Vladimir, and so on. Therefore, practically speaking, while an *akafist* might have been composed with the story of the 'original' miracle-working icon in mind, it was meant to be prayed before any icon of that same iconographic type. Chanting the *akafisty* in honour of the 'original' Kazan icon before a locally revered copy of the same image would thus fulfil a profound unifying function. It would link the locally revered icon with its miracle-working prototype, making the 'life' or 'story' of the former a continuation of the latter. It would also connect the lives of those persons praying in one locality with those in another who prayed before the same icon.

Extolling Experiences with Miracle-Working Icons

In late imperial Russia, believers frequently described their experiences with specially revered icons in their correspondence with diocesan and synodal officials about the icon. They described dreams in which they were divinely guided to locating such icons;[63] they spoke of icons darkened by soot and age that one day had miraculously lightened. [64] They also testified to icons mysteriously illumined by a glowing light. They described incidents in which persons had been healed by drinking either water that had been used in cleaning such icons or oil from the lamps that burned before them.[65] Such letters often articulated a wide range of emotions, from apprehension and awe before what appeared to be a divine revelation to joy at the notion that such a revelation had occurred in their midst. As the peasant Anna Savina from the village Korneikhi (Tver diocese) wrote in 1864, her experiences with a Bogoliubovo icon of the Mother of God 'filled her with both fear and joy' and left her unsure whether she should share them with anyone else.[66] In 1890 believers from Ovidiopol in the Kherson diocese wrote that it was not possible for them to judge whether the icon of the Mother of God named Kiev-Pechera was miracle-working since that was a divine, not a human matter. Nevertheless, they could testify that they experienced some 'inexplicable inspirited disposition in which [they] felt joy.'[67]

Akafisty gave credence to such experiences and feelings by articulating them in poetic form. They repeatedly noted, for instance, that for nonbelievers the phenomenon of miracle-working icons could only seem 'strange and doubtful.' Just as 'most eloquent' or 'faulty-minded' orators found themselves confounded by the mystery of Mary's virginity, so, too, they could not explain the power that flowed from her

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icon.[68] Yet, these hymns also noted the wonder and trepidation that often came upon believers in the face of these icons. According to the foundational story of the Akhtyr icon of the Mother of God, for instance, a priest, Daniil Vasiliev from the Kharkov diocese, found an icon of the Mother of God while he was trying out a new scythe in his fields.[69] The *akafist* recounted Fr Daniil's 'storm of confusion' when he found the icon; he was unsure how to interpret his discovery. His prayerful response was mingled with fear.[70] Similarly, the *akafist* in honour of the Feodorov icon of the Mother of God described the prince of Kostroma as shuddering in awe when he encountered this icon.[71] In a somewhat different tone, the *akafist* in honour of the Vladimir icon of the Mother of God described the spirit of the main protagonist, the prince Andrei Bogoliubskii, as 'kindled' when he witnessed miracles that took place from prayer before this icon.[72]

While signs of divine presence demanded recognition and response, *akafisty* conceded the difficulty in finding the words to respond appropriately. *Akafisty* commented that the human mind could not always comprehend the events taking place and was not sure how to praise the Mother of God. 'The most eloquent orators fall as mute as fish' in their attempts to describe and praise the wonders they have witnessed or of which they have heard.[73]

Despite the acknowledged limitations of human words, *akafisty* described a variety of transforming effects that icons had on the faithful. They recollected accounts of healing and deliverance. These icons were 'canopies' under which persons could seek haven and protection.[74] They carried the power to heal both bodily and spiritual afflictions. Just seeing the icon could result in such alleviation.[75] Engaging believers in mind and heart, such icons were praised for eliciting marvel, faith, and compunction of heart at the thought of all the events with which it was associated.[76] Gazing at the icon, a person's thoughts were 'lifted up' from the mundane.[77]

Akafisty also recounted stories in which believers 'consumed' or 'absorbed' the power of divine grace by means of drinking the water in which an icon had been washed. In the *akafist* in honour of the Akhtyr icon mentioned above, we learn that one night the priest Daniil had a dream in which the Mother of God directed him to wash the icon in order to free it from the dust that had settled on it. Daniil awoke and did as directed. When he again fell asleep, he had another dream in which he was on his way to empty into the river the water with which he had washed the icon. Along the way, he encountered a maiden (whom he

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recognized as the Mother of God) who directed him to return home with the water and to preserve it. She stated it would heal the sick, which it reportedly proceeded to do.[78] A locally composed *akafist* to the Kursk icon of the Mother of God spoke of a similar phenomenon. A certain archimandrite whom a novice had poisoned came with faith before this icon. Having drunk the oil from the vigil light that burned before it, he was saved.[79]

Despite reports of miraculous events, it was clear from the hymns that icons in and of themselves did not heal. That healing took place by the grace of God, of which believers partook through faith and love. Such a view resonated well with sentiments expressed by believers in their letters when they spoke of such icons as manifestations of God's mercy. *Akafisty* reasoned that just as God (and Mary) gave such icons to people out of divine love and compassion, so healing took place through a mutual response of love and faith from believers. Therefore, while the hymns poignantly expressed the anxiety, grief, and devastation that often led believers to seek out such icons, they also stressed the faith, love, and repentance that were at work. Mary and her icon were described as facilitating receptivity and response: they 'ignite our hearts with love, and kindle within us the fire of prayer.' They established believers in faith and 'warmed ... the cold hearts' of those who fell down before them.[80]

Retaining a favourite theme of Byzantine panegyric as well as of the Hesychast tradition – light – these *akafisty* also depicted miracle-working icons aglow by 'immaterial light' and as the 'burning ember of God's grace, illumining the entire world.'[81] Radiating a 'still and joyful' light, these icons enlightened persons like 'the rays of the sun' and, in so doing, affected both the personal and collective welfare of believers.[82] Such icons manifested their power to persons who found themselves in the darkness of misfortune, driving away the 'evil spirits in [their] thoughts.'[83] The light of Mary's icon was said to repel demons.[84] In this way, Mary, through her icons, helped to create a clean and right spirit and to purify the mind. By 'overshadowing' her icon, she cast out evil spirits from human intentions.[85]

These special icons were also described as guiding persons towards the path of salvation by influencing both heart and mind. *Akafisty* frequently referred to such icons as 'divinely guided' and 'heavenly' stars that guided the lost to the fulfilment of God's commandments and that illumined those 'in the darkness of ignorance' with divine knowledge.[86] In particular, the 'rays of miracles' were said to influence believ-

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ers by direct witness or by word of mouth.[87] The gifts and blessings received by others illumined the way for those who, on account of their passions, 'aimlessly wandered on the sea of life.'[88]

Protecting the Boundaries

One prominent theme in *akafisty* hymns that believers did not generally raise in their letters and petitions concerning specially revered icons of the Mother of God is that of boundaries or 'enemies.' Usually believers were concerned with the proper placement and veneration of specially revered icons and therefore dwelt more on events that had taken place in their local communities – healings, visions, and natural disasters such as plagues or storms. The potentially antagonistic 'other' in such contexts tended to be ecclesiastical officials who questioned the veracity of the reports. Only during times of war did broader collective thinking about foreign enemies become evident on the local level. Most of the icons for which *akafisty* had been composed, however, were associated with times of war or strife and therefore spoke of Mary and her icons extensively in this context.

Akafisty repeatedly praised the role of Mary as 'terror of the enemies' and of her icons in protecting the Orthodox community by guarding its boundaries.[89] They were presented as having helped to defeat the enemy during times of national crisis. The enemy – usually foreign invaders such as Tatars, Swedes, Poles, or French – brought not only the threat of national defeat but also a threat to the Orthodox faith. Consequently, deliverance from the enemy suggested a victory of the 'true faith' and the 'chosen nation.' The same 'light' from the icon that spiritually illumined the faithful also reportedly disgraced the 'infidels.' In the case of the Vladimir icon of the Mother of God, its power was manifested through the 'light of miracles' during the thirteenth-century Tatar invasion led by Batu when the icon showed itself to be indestructible.[90] Similarly in recalling the battle on the field of Kulikovo against the Mongols in 1380, the *akafist* in honour of the Don icon of the Mother of God recalled how this icon flashed like lightning before the enemy, instilling fear in them.[91]

The understanding of 'victory' in this context, however, was not limited to the idea of routing the enemy. Often these *akafisty* pointed to or expressed hope for some sort of transformation on the part of the enemy, be it a momentary perception of truth or full-fledged repentance.[92] In recalling a period of civil disobedience incited by the slaying

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of Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii, the *akafist* in honour of the Vladimir icon of the Mother of God noted how the very sight of the icon 'humbled the hearts' of the rebels and brought them to their knees.[93] Moreover, the authors of these hymns also thought about what these victory stories meant for Orthodox believers. The *akafist* in honour of the Don icon of the Mother of God reminded believers that although the threat of attack had passed, a 'warm dawn of repentance' now called for the faithful to 'believe correctly and live righteously.'[94] The *akafist* in honour of the Tikhvin icon of the Mother of God had believers reflect on past military victories as a source of hope for Mary's protection from enemies seen and unseen.

Conclusion

As a form of popular Orthodox hymnody, *akafisty* hymns in honour of various icons of the Mother of God shared many of the features that scholars have attributed to the phenomenon of secular popular music.[95] *Akafisty* hymns both reflected and were made available to construct collective ways of being Orthodox in late imperial Russia. While composed by a select group of individuals whose combined talents and knowledge could not necessarily be easily found among the average believers, the authors did not work in isolation. As with popular music in general, presumably composers of *akafisty* hymns had experiences that were common to others and had 'absorbed some of that common meaning.'[96] Accordingly, in terms of content, these hymns brought stories of healings, conversions, and victories associated with these icons into the liturgical realm. They recollected how these icons came to be specially honoured. What had been shared orally among believers, recounted during sermons, and recorded in manuscript or published form now was transposed into liturgical poetry and could be prayed and internalized on a new level.

At the same time, as already noted, these hymns were addressed to particular nationally known images. It might well be maintained that such hymns only served to reinforce the divide between local and national identities, between the sacred worlds of common believers and the world of official Russia and the associations it made. Yet, the reverse might also have been true. By recognizing the widespread phenomenon of miracle-working copies and by speaking in the collective 'we,' *akafisty* may very well have also helped to merge these worlds into an indistinguishable whole.

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NOTES

A version of this article appeared as 'Poeticizing Piety: The Icon of the Mother of God in Russian *Akafisty* Hymns,' *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 44, nos 3–4 (2000): 343–73. I thank that journal's editor for permission to include it here.

1 Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv (RGIA), fond (f.) 796, opis' (op.) 183, delo (d.) 2539 (1902).

2 For examples of the numerous studies of Marian apparitions in the West, see David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (New York, 1993); William A. Christian, *Visionaries: The Spanish Republic and the Reign of Christ* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996); Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in a Secular Age* (New York, 1999); Sandra Zimdars-Swartz, *Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje* (Princeton, NJ, 1991). For discussion of the phenomenon of Marian apparitions from the Catholic point of view, see the vast scholarship by Rene Laurentin, including *The Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Today* (Dublin, 1991); *The Church and Apparitions: Their Status and Function* (Milford, OH, 1989); *Pilgrimages, Sanctuaries, Icons, Apparitions: An Historical and Scriptural Account* (Milford, OH, 1994). Although articles about Mary in the Orthodox East in general and in Russia in particular mention the phenomenon of Russia's miracle-working icons, few scholars have as yet pursued this phenomenon in any depth. See, for instance, Sergei Averintsev, 'The Image of the Virgin Mary in Russian Piety,' *Gregorianum* 75, no. 4 (1994): 611–22; and Dimitry Grigorieff, 'The Theotokos in the Orthodox Tradition and Russian Thought,' in *Mary and Ecumenism: Papers of the 1981 International Congress of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (London, 1982), 22–9. For a recent discussion of miracle-working icons from a psychological approach, see Daniel Rancour-Laferriere, *The Joy of All Who Sorrow: Icons of the Mother of God in Russia* (Moscow, 2005), 222–37.

3 The term *akafist* comes from the Greek word meaning 'not sitting' and refers to the posture of those present during the hymn's recitation. Scholars in prerevolutionary Russia tended to date the composition of the *akafist* hymn to the seventh century, to the reign of Emperor Heraclius. See S.V. Bulgakov, *Nastol'naia kniga dlia sviashchenno-tserkovno-sluzhitelei* (1913; reprint Moscow Patriarchate, 1993), 1:579; N.I. Florinskii, *Istoriia bogosluzhebnykh pesnopenii* (Kiev, 1881); Filaret (Gumilevskii), Archbishop of Chernigov, *Istoricheskii obzor pesnopevtsev i pesnopenii grecheskoi tserkvi*, 3rd ed. (1902; reprint, Sviato-Troitskaia Sergieva Lavra, 1995), 185–8; A.P.

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Lopukhin, ed., *Pravoslavnaia bogoslovskaia entsiklopediia ili Bogoslovskii entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, vol. 1 (Petrograd, 1900–11), cols 374–81. The precise dating and authorship of this hymn, however, has been a subject of controversy. See Vasiliki Limberis, *Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople* (New York, 1994), 89–90. In Russia's religious imagination, the popular hymn was traced to a much earlier time, to the hymns of the apostles who had gathered on the occasion of Mary's death or dormition. See Grigorii D'iachenko, comp., *Obshchedostupnyia besedy o bogosluzhenii pravoslavnoi tserkvi* (Moscow, 1898), 1123.

4 For a study of the translation of the original Byzantine *akafist* hymn into Old Church Slavonic, see Antonina Filonov Gove, *The Slavic Akafist Hymn: Poetic Elements of the Byzantine Text and Its Old Church Slavonic Translation*, Slavistische Beiträge, Band 224 (Munich, 1988). For a brief but concise survey of the history of the publication of *akafisty* in Ukraine and Russia, see S.A. Vengerov, ed., *Russkiia knigi* (St. Petersburg, 1897), 1:99–106.

5 Ignatii Brianchaninov, *Asketicheskie opyty* (Moscow, 1993), 2:186.

6 E. Poselianin, *Bogomater'. Polnoe illiustrirovannoe opisanie Eia zemnoi zhizni i posviashchennykh Eia imeni chudotvornykh ikon* (St Petersburg, 1911), 380–1. For other examples when clergy chanted the *akafist* hymn before locally revered icons, see RGIA, f. 796, op. 154, d. 553 (Tavrida, 1873); op. 187 ch. 2, d. 6985 (Kharkov, 1906).

7 For the most comprehensive study of the history of the *akafist* hymn in Russia, see Aleksei Popov, *Pravoslavnye russkie akafisty, izdannye s blagosloveniia Sviateishago Sinoda* (Kazan, 1903).

8 M. Kozlov, 'Akafist kak zhanr tserkovnykh pesnopenii,' *Akafistnik* (Pskov, 1994), 1:9. Among others, *akafisty* known to Russia at this time included hymns to the Most Holy Trinity, to the Dormition of the Mother of God, to the Life-Giving Tomb of the Lord, to the Passions of Christ, to the Cross of Christ, and to numerous saints.

9 For use of *akafisty* hymns in the Ukraine and later among Uniate congregations, see S. Ponomarev, *Akafisty: Bibliograficheskaia zametka* (St Petersburg, 1890), 1–3.

10 P.V. Verkhovskoi, *Uchrezhdenie Dukhovnoi Kollegii i Dukhovnyi Reglament* vol. 1 (1916; reprint 1972), 1:34.

11 Popov, *Pravoslavnye russkie akafisty*, 425–44. This development has been attributed to a reaction to Western influences of rationalism and to the revived interest in the Hesychast tradition in Russia at the end of the eighteenth century. See Per-Arne Bodin, 'The Akafist Hymn in Russia,' in *Cultural Discontinuity and Reconstruction: The Byzanto-Slav Heritage and the Creation of a Russian National Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (Oslo,

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1997), 69–71. I question, however, Bodin's assessment that the reading of the *akafist* could fulfil a similar function as the recitation of the Jesus prayer (p. 70). These two genres of prayer were in fact very different, with the *akafist* drawing much more on the faculties of the imagination. Bishop Ignatii Brianchaninov, however, encouraged the recitation of the *akafist* to the Most Sweet Jesus as preparation for the recitation of the Jesus Prayer. See his 'Ob Akafistakh,' *Dushepoleznoe chtenie* (November 1869), 69.

12 According to Popov and Vengerov, the Holy Synod approved publication of *akafisty* to the following icons of the Mother of God: Utoli Moia Pechali (Quench My Sorrows) (1860), Iverskaia (1861), Vsekh Skorbiashchikh Radost' (Joy of All Who Sorrow) (1863), Kazanskaia (1869), Skoroposlushnitsa (Quick to Hear) (1877), Pochaevskaia (1883), Tikhvinskaia (1883), Neopalimaia Kupina (Burning Bush that Was Not Consumed) (1884), Tolgskaia (1884), Troeruchitsa (Three-Handed) (1884), Feodorovskaia (1885), Bogoliubskaia (1886), Vladimirskaia (1886), Dostoino Est' (It Is Truly Meet) (1887), Gruzinskaia (Georgian) (1897), Znamenie-Novgorodskaia (Novgorodian 'Sign') (1892), Nechaiannaia Radost' (Unexpected Joy) (1893). It is noteworthy that by the end of the nineteenth century some of these *akafisty* had already seen several editions. For instance, the *akafist* in honour of the icon of the Mother of God, named Joy of All Who Sorrow, saw nine editions between 1863 and 1872.

13 Although Popov, *Pravoslavnye russkie akafisty*, briefly summarizes the reasons the censor committees and the Holy Synod gave for not allowing the publication of numerous *akafisty*, he does not offer a close reading of the rejections concerning Marian icons. Such an exercise might also yield some insight into the Orthodox understanding of the phenomenon of Marian miracle-working icons.

14 For example, see RGIA, f. 796, op. 171, d. 2545, l. 1.

15 These include icons of the Mother of God named: Akhtyrskaia, Neupivaemaia Chasha (Cup that Never Empties), Donskaia, Kaluzhskaia, Kurskaia Korennaia, Sporitel'nitsa Khlebov (Multiplier of Grains), Vsetsaritsa (Queen of All), Derzhavnaia (She Who Reigns), Sporuchnitsa Greshnykh (Surety of Sinners). *Akafisty* in prerevolutionary Russia were usually published in pamphlet form. Some of the *akafisty* to icons of the Mother of God can be found in compilations such as *Sobranie akafistov s kanony*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1913). These texts have also been more recently reprinted. As examples, see *Akafistnik*, 2 vols (Pskov, 1994); *Akafisty Presviatoi Bogoroditse* (Moscow, 1994); *Akafisty Presviatoi Bogoroditse, chtomye v razlichnykh nuzhdakh* (Moscow, 1999); *Sbornik akafistov* (Moscow, 1992). Some of these have also been published abroad in English translation. *Akafisty* for the

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icons named Iveron, Joy of All Who Sorrow, Kazan, Pochaev, Quick to Hear, She Who Reigneth, Surety of Sinners, Unexpected Joy, and Vladimir, have all been translated by Isaac E. Lambertsen and are published by St John of Kronstadt Press. Other *akafisty*, such as that in honour of the famous nineteenth-century miracle-working icon of the Mother of God named Kozel'shchina, also exist but are not as easily accessible. Because of numerous publications in which these *akafisty* can be found, I will simply cite the title of the *akafist* and the number of the *ikos* or *kondak.*

16 Z., 'Tserkov' i khram,' *Tserkovno obshchestvennyi vestnik* 12 (1912); Verkhovskoi, *Uchrezhdenie Dukhovnoi Kollegii i Dukhovnyi Reglament,* 2:374.

17 Filaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, *Sobranie mnenii i otzyvov Filareta, Mitropolita Moskovskago i Kolomenskago, po uchebnym i tserkovno-gosudarstvennym voprosam*, vol. 5, part 1 (Moscow, 1887), 246.

18 As examples, see RGIA, f. 796, op. 154, d. 553, ll. 6–8 (Tavrida, 1873); op. 180, d. 2938, l. 1 (Voronezh, 1899); op. 182, 2 st., 3 ot., d. 2564, l. 1 (Orenburg, 1901).

19 Kozlov, 'Akafist kak zhanr tserkovnykh pesnopenii,' 10; N.P. Sablina and O.V. Gubareva, 'Ot vsekh predel zemli nasheia,' *Akafisty russkim sviatym* (St Petersburg, 1995), 1:8.

20 RGIA, f. 807, op. 2, d. 1766, l. 34.

21 RGIA, f. 796, op. 171, d. 2545.

22 Popov, *Pravoslavnye russkie akafisty,* 450. One such person in particular was known for his composition of *akafisty* hymns. A.F. Kovalevskii (d. 1901) composed and published more than twenty *akafisty* during his lifetime; five of these hymns honoured icons of the Mother of God. Kovalevskii also composed four others in honour of Marian icons, but these appear to have remained in manuscript form at least until 1917. Graf G. Miloradovich, 'Slagatel' akafistov A.F. Kovalevskii,' *Russkii arkhiv* 4 (1902): 740–1.

23 A.P. Chekhov, 'Sviatoiu noch'iu,' in *Sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow, 1961), 14:118–29.

24 Quoted in Vengerov, *Russkiia knigi*, 100.

25 Filaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, *Pis'ma Mitropolita Moskovskago Filareta k namestniku Sviato-Troitskiia Sergievy Lavry Arkhimandritu Antoniiu*, *1831–1867* (Moscow, 1883), 3:267. Vengerov, *Russkiia knigi,* 100; Filaret, *Sobranie mnenii i otzyvov*, 247.

26 Antonii (Khrapovitskii), Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Kazan, 1900), 2:250–1; 'Ob Akafistakh,' *Dushepoleznoe chtenie* (November 1869), 67.

27 RGIA, f. 807, op. 2, d. 1219; f. 796, op. 147, d. 1683.

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28 As an example, see RGIA, f. 796, op. 172, d. 2603; op. 174, d. 3030; op. 181, d. 3082.
29 Abbess Thaisia, *Abbess Thaisia of Leushino: The Autobiography of a Spiritual Daughter of St. John of Kronstadt* (Platina, CA, 1989), 85–7. For more on Abbess Thaisia, see Brenda Meehan, *Holy Women of Russia* (Crestwood, 1997), 83–124.
30 RGIA, f. 796, op. 171, d. 1562, l. 1.
31 See especially the fourth session of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. *Deianiia Vselenskikh Soborov* (1908; reprint, St Petersburg, 1996), 1: 415–90.
32 Sergii, Archbishop of Vladimir, *Russkaia literatura ob ikonakh presviatyia Bogoroditsy v XIX veke* (St Petersburg, 1900), 40.
33 RGIA, f. 796, op. 169, d. 1513.
34 Poselianin, *Bogomater'*, 362.
35 *Skazanie o chudotvornoi ikony Bogoliubskoi Bozhiei Materi. Dlia narodnago chteniia* (Moscow, 1882); M.P., *Feodorovskaia chudotvornaia ikona Bogomateri* (Nizhnii Novgorod, 1900); and *Skazanie o chudotvornoi ikone Tikhvinskoi Bogomateri* (St Petersburg, 1889).
36 *Skazanie o iavlenii chudotvornoi i mirotochivoi ikone Presviatoi Bogoroditsy, imenuemoi Tolgskoiu, i chudesakh ot neia byvshikh* (Moscow, 1883); I.F. Tokmakov, *Istoricheskiia svedeniia o chudotvornoi ikone Bogomateri 'Vsekh Skorbiashchikh Radost',' proslavivsheisia v Moskve, i o prochikh spiskakh ee v Rossii* (Moscow, 1890); A. Shmakov, *O chudotvornoi ikone Bozhiei Materi 'Gruzinskoi' i chudesakh ot nee* (Moscow, 1900).
37 *Chudotvornaia Iverskaia ikona Bozhiei Materi na Afone i ee chudotvornye spiski v Moskve* (Moscow, 1898); K.D. Korobovksii, comp., *Skazanie o ikone Bogomateri imenuemoi Troeruchitsa i o predstatel'stve i blagodeianii rodu khristianskomu, okazannyia chrez sv. ikony Bozhiei Materi* (Kiev, 1915); *Skazanie o chudotvornoi ikone Bozhiei Materi, imenuemoi 'Skoroposlushnitsa,'* 12th ed. (Moscow, 1910). For the story of the icon named It is Truly Meet, see *Slava Bogomateri*, 410–12.
38 *Ikona Bozhiei Materi 'Utoli moia pechali,'* 5th ed. (Moscow, 1899); I. Protopopov, *Ob ikone Bozhiei Materi 'Neopalimyia Kupiny'* (Moscow, 1870); *Chudotvornaia ikona Bogomateri, imenuemaia 'Nechaiannaia Radost''* (St Petersburg, 1914). For the unique depiction of the Mother of God in the icon Burning Bush, see A.N. Vinogradov, *Sravnitel'noe opisanie i kratkoe ob'iasnenie ikony Prisnodevy Bogoroditsy 'Neopalimyia Kupiny'* (St Petersburg, 1877).
39 As already noted, in addition to having published *akafisty* in honour of seventeen icons of the Mother of God in the nineteenth century, the Orthodox Church in Russia has since published several others. The narratives

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behind two of these icons – Don and Kursk – are situated in medieval times and very much resemble those for which *akafisty* had been published in the nineteenth century. The other icons in this post-1917 grouping, however, were Russia's 'modern' miracle-working icons whose 'lives' originated from the eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

40 Services to the following icons of the Mother of God could be found in the Menaion*:* Iveron (12 February; 13 October); Vladimir (21 May, 23 June); Tikhvin (26 June); Pochaev (23 July); Kazan (22 October); Joy of All Who Sorrow (24 October).

41 *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia, imenuemyia 'Bogoliubskaia,'* Kondak 9.

42 Ibid., Ikos 9.

43 *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',*' Kondak 8.

44 *Akafist Presviatoi Bogoroditse Akhtyrskoi*, Ikos 1, Kondak 2.

45 Popov, *Pravoslavnye russkie akafisty*, 251.

46 *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' iavleniia Eia ikony Tikhvinskiia*, Kondak 10; *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' chudotvornyia Eia ikony Kazanskiia,* Kondak 12.

47 *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' chudotvornyia Eia ikony Iverskiia*, Kondak 10; *Akafist v chest' ikony, imenuemoi Kaluzhskaia*, Ikos 1; *Akafist v chest' ikony, imenuemoi 'Neupivaemaia Chasha,'* Ikos 1.

48 *Akafist Presviatoi Bogoroditse Akhtyrskoi*, Kondak 6; *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' chudotvornykh ikon Eia 'Vzyskanie Pogibshikh' i 'Vsekh Skorbiashchikh Radost',*' Kondak 12; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornoi ikony Iverskiia*, Ikos 6.

49 *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse pred Eia ikonoiu, imenuemoiu 'Utoli Moia Pechali,'* Kondak 4; *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Vladimirskiia,* Ikos 1.

50 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Kazanskiia,* Kondak 8; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Vladimirskiia*, Ikos 1; *Akafist pred ikonoiu 'Utoli Moia Pechali,'* Kondak 4.

51 *Akafist v chest' iavleniia Eia ikony Tikhvinskiia*, Ikos 1; *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Tolgskiia*, Ikos 4.

52 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia Eia ikony Iverskiia,* Kondak 12; *Akafist radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',*' Kondak 9; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Vladimirskiia,* Ikos 8.

53 *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse iavleniia radi chudotvornyia ikony Eia 'Feodorovskiia,'* Ikos 7; *Akafist radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',*' Ikos 7.

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54 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Tolgskiia,* Kondak 12; *Akafist iavleniia radi chudotvornyia ikony Eia 'Feodorovskiia,'* Kondak 3; *Akafist radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',* Ikos 7; *Akafist v chest' iavleniia Eia ikony Tikhvinskiia,* Kondak 3; *Akafist pred Eia ikonoiu, imenuemoiu 'Utoli Moia Pechali,'* Ikos 7.
55 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Tolgskiia,* Ikos 2.
56 *Akafist Znameniiu Presviatyia Bogoroditsy Kurskiia*, Ikos 10.
57 *Akafist iavleniia radi chudotvornyia ikony Eia 'Feodorovskiia,'* Ikos 4, Kondak 12; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Kazanskiia,* Kondak 8.
58 *Akafist radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',* Ikos 9; *Akafist pred ikonoiu 'Utoli Moia Pechali,'* Ikos 7.
59 *Akafist radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',* Kondak 5.
60 *Akafist Presviatei Vladychitse nashei Bogoroditse, chestnomu obrazu Eia 'Znamenie' ezhe v velitsem Novegrade,* Kondak 7; *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse pred ikonoiu Eia, imenuemoiu 'Troeruchitsa,'* Kondak 7.
61 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Kazanskiia*, Ikos 11. For other references to the copy phenomenon, see *Akafist chestnomu obrazu Eia 'Znamenie' ezhe v velitsem Novegrade*, Kondak 7; *Akafist pred ikonoiu Eia, imenuemoiu 'Troeruchitsa,'* Kondak 7.
62 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornoi ikony Iverskiia*, Ikos 8.
63 As examples, see RGIA, f. 796, op. 145, d. 604 (Tver, 1864); op. 151, d. 662 (Kursk, 1870); op. 175, d. 1994 (St Petersburg, 1894).
64 Examples include RGIA , f. 796, op. 167, d. 1445 (Ekaterinoslavl, 1886); op. 175, d. 2002 (Chernigov, 1894); op. 175, d. 1939 (Poltava, 1894).
65 As examples, see RGIA, f. 796, op. 166, d. 1539 (Ekaterinoslavl, 1885); op. 175, d. 1824 (Chernigov, 1894); op. 182, d. 2513 (Vladimir, 1901).
66 RGIA, f. 796, op. 145, d. 604, l. 1.
67 RGIA, f. 796, op. 171, d. 1562, l. 2.
68 *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' iavleniia chudotvornyia Eia ikony, imenuemyia 'Skoroposlushnitsa,'* Ikos 9; *Akafist v chest' iavlenia ikony Eia Tikhvinskiia,* Ikos 9.
69 For the story of this icon, see *Istoriia iavleniia Akhtyrskoi chudotvornoi ikony Bozhiei Materi i sobornago Pokrovskago khrama, gde ona nyne nakhoditsia* (St Petersburg, 1879).
70 *Akafist Presviatoi Bogoroditse Akhtyrskoi*, Kondak 4; *Akafist chestnomu obrazu Eia 'Znamenie' ezhe v velitsem Novegrade,* Kondak 4. Discovery of an icon was common in the 'lives' of many miracle-working icons. Believers considered such icons extraordinary not because they were found, but because they perceived a sign in the unusual manner or location in which it had appeared to them.

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71 *Akafist iavleniia radi chudotvornyia ikony Eia 'Feodorovskiia,'* Kondak 2.
72 *Akafist v chest' ikony Vladimirskiia*, Kondak 2; *Akafist Presviatei Bogoroditse v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Pochaevskiia*, Ikos 3.
73 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornoi ikony Iverskiia*, Ikos 9; *Akafist iavleniia radi chudotvornyia ikony Eia 'Feodorovskiia,'* Ikos 9. Such language parallels that of the original *akafist* hymn.
74 *Akafist Znameniiu Presviatyia Bogoroditsy Kurskiia*, Kondak 1.
75 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Pochaevskiia,* Kondak 8.
76 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia, imenuemyia 'Bogoliubskaia,'* Ikos 6; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Kazanskiia*, molitva vtoraia; *Akafist radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',*' Kondak 5, Ikos 7; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia Eia ikony Tolgskiia,* Ikos 4.
77 *Akafist iavleniia radi chudotvornyia ikony Eia 'Feodorovskiia,'* Kondak 8.
78 *Akafist Presviatoi Bogoroditse Akhtyrskoi,* Ikos 5. It is noteworthy that the *akafist* in honour of the Iveron icon of the Mother of God recounts how before beginning to make a copy of the original icon which was to be sent to Russia, Athonite monks at the Iveron Monastery had washed the board with water with which the original had been washed. Frequent references to washing of perceived miracle-working icons with water suggest that there might have been an actual rite by which this was done similar to that which existed for relics. See I.A. Sterligova, 'O liturgicheskom smysle dragotsennogo ubora drevnerusskoi ikony,' in *Vostochnokhristianskii khram, liturgiia i iskusstvo*, ed. A.M. Lidov (St Petersburg, 1994): 222.
79 *Akafist Znameniiu Presviatyia Bogoroditsy Kurskiia,* Ikos 9.
80 *Akafist pred ikonoiu Eia, imenuemoiu 'Troeruchitsa,'* Ikos 11; *Akafist chestnomu obrazu Eia 'Znamenie' ezhe v velitsem Novegrade,* Kondak 12.
81 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornykh ikon Eia 'Vzyskanie Pogibshikh' i 'Vsekh Skorbiashchikh Radost',*' Ikos 11; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornoi ikony Iverskiia*, Ikos 11; *Akafist v chest' iavleniia chudotvornyia Eia ikony, imenuemyia 'Skoroposlushnitsa,'* Ikos 11.
82 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia Eia ikony Tolgskiia,* Ikos 7.
83 *Akafist pred ikonoiu 'Utoli Moia Pechali,'* Ikos 11; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornoi ikony Iverskiia*, Ikos 11; *Akafist radi chudotvornogo Eia obraza 'Nechaiannaia Radost',*' Ikos 6.
84 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Tolgskiia,* Ikos 4.
85 *Akafist pred ikonoiu 'Utoli Moia Pechali,'* Ikos 7, 11.
86 *Akafist v chest' iavleniia Eia ikony Tikhvinskiia*, Kondak 5; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia, imenuemyia 'Bogoliubskaia,'* Ikos 6; *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia Eia ikony Tolgskiia*, Ikos 3; *Akafist pred ikonoiu 'Utoli Moia Pechali,'* Ikos 11.

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87 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Pochaevskiia*, Ikos 8.
88 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia Eia ikony Kazanskiia*, Kondak 5.
89 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornoi ikony Eia Iverskiia*, Ikos 2.
90 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Vladimirskiia,* Ikos 6.
91 *Akafist v chest' ikony Donskiia*, Ikos 4; *Akafist iavleniia radi chudotvornyia ikony Eia 'Feodorovskiia,'* Ikos 11.
92 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Pochaevskiia*, Ikos 6.
93 *Akafist v chest' chudotvornyia ikony Eia Vladimirskiia,* Kondak 4.
94 *Akafist v chest' ikony Donskiia*, Kondak 8.
95 The following brief discussion is based on the observations of Mark Mattern in his *Acting in Concert: Music, Community, and Political Action* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1998), 15–21; Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life (*Cambridge, 2000), 109–64.
96 Mattern, *Acting in Concert*, 18.

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