Orthodox Christian Social Thought and Asceticism

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For the award of Doctor of Philosophy

Institute of Theology and Liberal Arts,

St. Mary's University, Twickenham, London

September 2024

Contents

Note: In accordance with the regulations for PhD by published works, the main body of this essay (excluding appendices) is 12,102 words. Ethical approval is not required.

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Abstract for *Orthodox Social Thought and Asceticism* by Dylan Pahman for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at St. Mary's University, Twickenham, London, 19 September 2024

This thesis summarizes the objective, research methods, and methodology of my work on Orthodox Christian social thought and asceticism. It reviews the state of scholarship before detailing the contributions of my published works in three sections: theoretical, historical, and interdisciplinary. Across these three categories, my research develops asceticism as a uniquely Orthodox Christian contribution to Christian social thought, understood in terms of moral and theological guidance for modern economies and in light of modern economics. It then concludes with a summary and appendices exploring other relevant published works not considered for this PhD and avenues for future research.

Orthodox Christian Social Thought and Asceticism

Linking Essay

Introduction

Objective

The objective of my research in these published works that form the basis of this PhD is to explore, analyze, and expand upon asceticism as a specifically Orthodox Christian contribution to modern Christian social thought, through theoretical, historical, and constructive interdisciplinary studies in dialogue with social science and philosophy. Section A lays the theoretical groundwork for the integration of asceticism into Christian social thought as a uniquely Orthodox contribution. Section B establishes the historical precedent, not just in theory but in fact, of Orthodox asceticism as a mode of social and economic engagement. Section C explores interdisciplinary applications, demonstrating several practical uses of integrating Orthodox asceticism into Christian social thought more broadly.

The links between these sections run as follows: Section A analyzes the concept of Orthodox Christian asceticism both as a social principle and a principle of spiritual development, grounded in both the Gospel and natural law. Building upon A's frameworks, Section B provides historical evidence that supports the theory: Christian asceticism throughout history has both functioned consistently with my theoretical analysis and has proven its social and economic significance, justifying its study in the first place. Section C builds on both A and B to explore the value of Orthodox asceticism for constructive, interdisciplinary work with economics, political theology, history of economics, personalist moral philosophy, psychology, philosophy, and economic history. Each of these sections summarizes and, occasionally, expands upon the

contributions of the relevant published works. The research itself is contained within the public works, any elaboration is designed simply to bring out their relevance as a coherent body of work.

Research Question

My initial research question was simply, "Does the Orthodox Christian tradition have any comparable social principle to subsidiarity in Catholic social thought or sphere sovereignty in Neo-Calvinist social thought?" Once I answered this in the affirmative, identifying asceticism as this Orthodox social principle, I moved on to "What, then, is asceticism?"; "What is the history of asceticism as a social principle in Orthodox Christianity?"; and "How might Orthodox asceticism be applied to issues of modern Christian social thought today?" Combined into a single question, we may restate these as follows: "How might Orthodox Christian asceticism serve to conceptually and historically augment Christian social thought today, bringing the Orthodox tradition up-to-date with other traditions in our contemporary social and economic contexts for the purpose of future constructive, ecumenical, and interdisciplinary scholarship and application?" This requires a definition of asceticism, historical study of its relation to economic and social life, awareness of common ground between the Orthodox and other Christian traditions, and constructive applications to present issues.

Methodology

My primary influence in terms of general academic methodology is Bradley and Muller's (1995) *Church History: An Introduction to Research, Reference Works, and Methods*. However, since this project, though historically-informed, is instead constructive in nature, I have adapted

their method. The key takeaway from Bradley and Muller is rigorous integration of primary and secondary source evaluation and citation, note-taking, outlining, and writing. Thus, even my theoretical papers in Section A and my constructive applications in Section C both include detailed surveys of the relevant scholarship and ground constructive insights in historical sources.

This, furthermore, accords with the Orthodox emphasis on Tradition, especially but not limited to the Church Fathers. Constructive Orthodox scholarship is possible—and needed—but it risks losing its Orthodox character if it cannot demonstrate its continuity with the *consensus patrum* (see also Florovsky 1974a). As a result, not only is Section B necessary to this project, but proper historical method is essential for and central to any scholarship in Orthodox Christian theology. As for theology in general, I endorse the (Ps.-)Dionysian dialectic, characteristic of Eastern Christian theology in general, between the *via negativa* or "apophatic way" and the *via positiva* or "cataphatic way" (for an accessible introduction, see Lossky 1978, 31-35). This, incidentally, is simply asceticism as I define it below (see Section A) applied to religious epistemology, but further exploration of that connection lies outside the scope of this project.

Last, while my research is fundamentally qualitative, one paper (Pahman 2018a) in Section A and C does integrate insights from quantitative social science research with qualitative theological frameworks. This is not quantitative in the sense of conducting original empirical studies, but rather in learning from the studies of others and pointing toward further avenues for future empirical research in the light of new conceptual frameworks born of this interdisciplinary work.

State of Scholarship: The Problem of Orthodox Christian Social Thought

1. Ecumenical Context

Compared with other Christian traditions, Orthodox Christian social thought is underdeveloped and under-systematized. To be clear, by "Christian social thought" I herein and in all my research refer specifically to the moral-theological reflection on the problem of the working poor since the rapid and abundant economic growth beginning with the Industrial Revolution (sometimes referred to in the nineteenth century as the "Social Question"), not all social ethics in general. We could credit what Waterman (1991) has called "Christian Political Economy" as the beginnings of Christian social thought at the turn of the nineteenth century, as well as the early Evangelicals in England (see, e.g., Lewis 1986; Turnbull 2023) and the first Christian Socialists (see, e.g., Christensen 1962; Emmett 2023), especially F. D. Maurice (see Pahman 2023a). 1891, however, marks a significant starting point for both Roman Catholics and Neo-Calvinists with the publication of the first modern papal social encyclical, Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, and Abraham Kuyper's lecture at the First Christian Social Congress in the Netherlands on "The Social Question and the Christian Religion" (see Ballor 2016 for both), though in both cases theological reflection and Christian labor associations preceded them. The Roman Catholic social thought tradition since Leo XIII has been the most comprehensive and systematized, as exemplified by the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*[1] (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace[2] 2006), grounding the principles of the common good, solidarity, and subsidiarity in the one central principle of human dignity, itself grounded in natural law. From those principles, it proceeds to detail a uniquely Roman Catholic perspective

[1] Henceforth, *Compendium*.
[2] Henceforth, Pontifical Council.

on the importance of the family, work, economics, politics, international relations, and the environment, *inter alia*.

2. A Note on Authority in the Orthodox Church

In the Roman Catholic Church, distinction is made between official Catholic social teaching and broader Catholic social thought. For example, Boileau (2003, 242) states,

> Catholic social thought should not be restricted only to what is called Catholic social teaching … which comes only from the popes and conferences of bishops. It should include Catholic nonofficial social thinking…. There are many other thinkers, usually neglected, such as von Ketteler, Sturzo, and John A. Ryan. They all frequently acted in the past as precursors, stimulators, and developers of the official teaching.

If we were to apply a similar distinction of (modern) Orthodox social thought as compared to Orthodox social teaching, very few documents would qualify as social teaching, and no codification exists of any such documents. The next subsection, however, will examine the most prominent documents of Orthodox social teaching. The following sections after that, by contrast, focus on sources of modern Orthodox social thought, and it is to this broader category, inclusive of but not limited to official teaching, that my published works in this thesis contributes.

Further clarification is needed, however. While the Ecumenical Patriarch is regarded as *primus inter para* ("first among equals") in lieu of Rome, his position is not analogous to the Pope of Rome inasmuch as the Orthodox Church has always fundamentally disagreed with

Rome's self-conception. If it were simply the same, the major (though not only) barrier to full communion with Rome would be gone. The Ecumenical Patriarch has a primacy of honor and serves as primary representative of the Church to the world, but his primacy is not one of authority over all other bishops. He presides over councils, but the authority of the Church is ultimately conciliar, not patriarchal, and even then decisions of councils must stand the test of time; clearly reflect—or at least not contradict—the decrees and canons of past pan-Orthodox councils, the *consensus patrum*, and Holy Scriptures; and be accepted by the whole Church, including the laity. As Meyendorff (1983, 134) notes, "The 'primacies' of some [Orthodox] Churches are defined—first morally, then jurisdictionally—as tools for securing unity of the churches: such definitions can only be made through ecclesial consensus (i.e. conciliarity) and, obviously, cannot create 'super-bishops' invested with power over the other churches." Thus, an Orthodox patriarchal encyclical on social issues, even from the Ecumenical Patriarch, would not be of comparable authority to a papal social encyclical in the Roman Catholic Church. Only the decisions of councils, universally accepted, could rise to an analogous place of authority.

As for that place of authority, one must note that even Roman Catholic teaching specifically on political and economic matters is not considered infallible (though teaching on moral and theological matters within Catholic social teaching documents would be) and furthermore that technical questions are left to those with the vocation and expertise to contribute to Catholic social thought: "the Church does not intervene in technical questions with her social doctrine, nor does she propose or establish systems or models of social organization" says the *Compendium* (Pontifical Council 2006, §68; see also John Paul II 1987, §41). "This is not part of the mission entrusted to her by Christ. The Church's competence comes from the Gospel: from the message that sets man free, the message proclaimed and borne witness to by the Son of God

made man." So, too, Orthodox social thought should seek to apply the Gospel to the ever-evolving "new things" of our time, to borrow the phrase from *Rerum Novarum* (Leo XIII 1891), integrating the best of human science and knowledge for the sake of prudential guidance for Christians, and all people of goodwill, today.

3. Official Documents

While attempts have been made to produce a systemized body of modern Orthodox Christian social teaching by both the Moscow Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, neither statement successfully establishes clear principles rooted in the Orthodox tradition to ground their moral pronouncements.

Moscow's statement (Department 2000), though well-sourced in the canon law tradition and evidencing at least some basic familiarity with modern economics, contains clear seeds of the problematic "Russian world" (*Russkiy mir*) doctrine at the heart of the Moscow Patriarchate's support for the invasion of Ukraine, to the extent that it too-closely associates nationality and ethnicity. This, at the very least, presents a rhetorical problem in any appeal to its other teachings. Another document (Department 2008) intriguingly draws upon the Orthodox distinction between the image and likeness of God in humanity to engage with modern human rights discourse, including the concept of socio-economic rights. Unfortunately, the human rights record of Russia stands in contrast to the practical potential of this otherwise interesting statement (see Our World in Data 2024, https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/human-rights-index-vdem?tab=chart&country=~RUS). Nevertheless, as for some time these were the only official documents of Orthodox social thought, my research has engaged them as positively as possible.

The Greek statement, *For the Life of the World* (Hart & Chryssavgis 2020), a revision of a document from the multi-jurisdictional[3] 2016 Council of Crete, helpfully affirms the image of God, natural law, human dignity and freedom, the sacramental and Eucharistic vocation of humanity, and even the universal ascetic calling of all Christians in all vocations. It also rightly notes the well-established tradition of God as the ultimate owner of all goods, the basis of what in Roman Catholic social thought is referred to as the "universal destination of goods," though the Orthodox statement disappointingly does not balance this with any comparable affirmation of the relative good of private property, which is acknowledged as a basic socio-economic right by Roman Catholic social teaching, such as in the *Compendium* (Pontifical Council 2006, §176), grounded in natural law and human freedom. As this final version of this Orthodox statement is a recent document, my published works in this thesis have not engaged with it, and some extended commentary here is needed.

Unfortunately, this statement simply lacks any basic competence in modern economics, using terms such as "free market," "capitalism," "consumerism," and "colonize" interchangeably and without comparable nuance to, for example, John Paul II (1991, §42). It even employs the Marxist terms "wage slavery" and "late capitalism" (see Mandel 1975). The former derives from the debunked labor theory of value (acknowledged in Orthodox social thought as debunked by empirical evidence as early as Bulgakov 2000, 119, originally published in 1912). The latter derives from a deterministic historical-material dialectic opposed to many of the moral principles

[3] Though often referred to as "pan-Orthodox," the 2016 Council unfortunately did not succeed in including representatives from every Orthodox Patriarchate. Thus, if we wish to be literal, "poly-Orthodox" would be more accurate, as *pan* means "all." The Council, furthermore, made no binding statements and has not been universally affirmed. This revised document (Hart & Chryssavgis 2020) also has no binding authority. Just to be clear, however, this is not a criticism: on prudential matters that require interdisciplinary competence, the fewer binding teachings, the better, outside of general principles. The statement is still important, and my treatment of it here is a recognition of that importance.

the statement affirms (such as human freedom). Neither are supported by modern economic science.

Furthermore, this statement fails to make any clear distinctions between the ancient Roman and Byzantine economies and our contemporary economic context, assuming a positive correlation between inequality and poverty that does not hold in modern economies (on which, see Pahman 2017a, discussed in Section C below),[4] and describing present labor markets in terms more reminiscent of the nineteenth century, as if now-common legal protections, organization, labor mobility and competition, increased means and higher rates of human capital acquisition, and social safety nets did not already exist. At the same time, the statement makes no mention of relevant economic principles well-established by empirical research since Adam Smith, such as the division of labor, comparative advantage, and gains from trade. It even claims (Hart & Chryssavgis 2020, §41), without substantiation, "Whole schools of economics arose in the twentieth century at the service of … inequality, arguing it is a necessary concomitant of any functioning economy. Without fail, however, the arguments employed by these schools are tautologies at best…." Which schools it refers to are neither specified nor are their supposed tautological arguments detailed.[5] Nevertheless, it further suggests that "new economic models" may be needed, but as the standard models are not rehearsed, it is impossible to discern what would be "new" about these proposed new models, which also are not explored. By implication

[4] This can easily be observed by comparing OECD data on inequality (https://data.oecd.org/inequality/income-inequality.htm) with poverty rates (https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm#indicator-chart). If anything, there seems to be a weak, negative correlation, meaning the more inequality (higher Gini coefficient), the lower the poverty rate tends to be.

[5] Note 4, above, also seems relevant here. To the extent any schools of economics have argued that poverty alleviation and inequality are negatively correlated, the data we have seems to bear that out. This suggests that it is not merely a matter of tautological argumentation employed to protect the powerful but a valid conclusion from the relevant empirical realities. So, too, Soloviev (Solovyov 2005, 388-389) and John Paul II (1987, §15) both note that not all forms of equality are just, implying that one cannot simply assume justice from a state of equality, nor injustice from inequality.

of the surrounding context, it would seem any such "new" model would be state-driven, as the statement repeatedly emphasizes the need for specifically political action, at the neglect of other sectors of society, including even the Church herself.

Last, the statement fails to employ even its own stated principles in its section on "Poverty, Wealth, and Civil Justice," with the exception of a few passing references to human dignity, instead resorting to biblical and patristic prooftexting. Readers are left wondering whether the vocation of the businessperson, banker, entrepreneur, financier, or investor are truly regarded of equal dignity to all others, or if, rather, an outdated aristocratic class prejudice against the ancient middle class of merchants and traders informs the document's pronouncements as much or more than timeless Orthodox principles and doctrine (contrast this with Harakas 1992, 150, which affirms the good of business-related vocations). This leads to the repetition of vague, politicized platitudes and unsubstantiated assertions, when well-informed pastoral guidance is truly needed for the sake of the poor today. For example, the statement (Hart & Chryssavgis 2020, §36) claims,

> Global corporations are often able to reduce their expenditures and increase their profits by removing their operations to parts of the world where labor is inexpensive precisely because workers are desperate and local governments are more eager to attract foreign investment than to institute humane labor policies, or even to secure the most basic protections for workers. This has the dual effect of lowering wages in the developed world and fortifying poverty in the developing world.

This "dual effect" is not borne out by the data, nor is any data cited. In fact, the result in such cases has not been "wage slavery" but economic development, enabling governments in poor countries to improve working conditions, build infrastructure, and ultimately reduce poverty. According to Brookings, India, for example, has now eliminated extreme poverty (see Bhalla & Bashan 2024).

Together, despite many more nuanced and helpful treatments of other topics, these shortcomings leave its economic prescriptions both theologically ungrounded and economically impracticable.

It is clear from these official documents that the Orthodox Church currently lacks clear principles and frameworks specifically for social-economic moral guidance, as well as for the interdisciplinary work necessary to someday develop its own systematic outline of Christian social thought. The observation of Fr. John McGuckin (Pereira 2010, 8), in the preface to a volume of mostly historical studies on philanthropy meant to make progress toward "an Orthodox liberation theology without Marx,"[6] still sums up the state of the question today:

> Orthodoxy … does not have a discretely packaged "social theory" (comparable, let us say, to the extensive range of social-theological documents produced by the Roman Catholic tradition in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries). But if it does not have a detailed social dossier, Eastern Orthodoxy certainly has a "way of thinking" about such central matters; for they are fundamental to the Evangelical *Kerygma*.

[6] This is how Fr. John described it at a later meeting of the Sophia Institute, at which I originally presented Pahman 2013, discussed in Section A below.

My research seeks to elevate asceticism as one such missing social principle essential to this timeless "way of thinking," or *phronema*, alongside those the Orthodox Tradition shares in common with other Christians, especially but not limited to natural law, for the purpose of the interdisciplinary work our contemporary world needs to better care for the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40) in our economic contexts today.

4. Pre-Revolutionary Modern Orthodox Social Thought

Arguably, the main reason for this deficiency of Orthodox contributions to modern Christian social thought, however, is not lack of resources or interest within the Orthodox Tradition but the 70 years of militantly atheistic communism that wreaked havoc on Eastern Europe in the twentieth century, as well as internal turmoil, including civil war, in both Greece and Lebanon, along with continued marginalization in other Middle Eastern nations. Orthodox exiles in the West more often focused their work on ecumenical relations and how to preserve Orthodox identity in non-Orthodox societies.

Yet, to reiterate, the Orthodox Church does not lack its own resources for Christian social thought. In addition to the guidance of the Church Fathers, Orthodox theologians, philosophers, and other cultural commentators set to work, just like their Western counterparts, in speaking to the challenges of the modern world, including modern industrialized economies, beginning with the Russian Empire. As Ivanov (2020) notes, much of the restructuring of Russian society in the eighteenth century, including care for and education of the poor, was led by Orthodox hierarchs and theologians, and while this history is full of contradictions and failures as well as genuine progress, it bids us at least to put aside the Orientalizing myth of the Orthodox as nothing but impractical, navel-gazing mystics (on which, see also Pahman 2014, discussed in Section B

below). While much of the ecclesiastical spirit of reform died with the Decembrists in 1825,[7] Fr. Georges Florovsky (1974b, 136) nevertheless noted, "'Social Christianity' was the basic and favorite theme of the whole religious thinking in Russia in the course of the last century [i.e., the nineteenth], and the same thought colored also the whole literature of the same period." One can see this, for example, in Alaskan Orthodox advocacy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on behalf of native peoples ad against economic and political exploitation, at times appealing to natural law (see Oleska 2010, 285-339).

Parallel to developments in the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions, a key foundational text first emerges in the last decade of the nineteenth century, Vladimir Soloviev's *The Justification of the Good* (Solovyov 2005).[8] While, as Fr. Stanley Harakas (1992; 1983b; 1963-1964; see also Frank 1989, 171-181) thoroughly demonstrated, the Orthodox tradition shares the common ground of natural law with other Western traditions, and Soloviev also affirms it, it is with Soloviev that the category of the economy is first addressed as its own separate sphere of social life, rather than subsumed into the family or state, as was traditionally the case in Christian moral theology more generally before the nineteenth century. That is not to say that no theological or moral reflection on economic issues and practices can be found before the nineteenth century, East or West, but only that since most businesses were either family businesses or state enterprises, one cannot find a distinct social category of "the economy" alongside family, state, and church. Significantly, Soloviev distinguished between Church, state,

[7] The Decembrists, seeking to take advantage of the interregnum after the death of Emperor Alexander I, and maintaining allegiance to his presumed successor, Konstantin, over the newly crowned Emperor Nicholas I, demanded a liberal constitution. However, after they murdered Nicholas's negotiator, the emperor ordered his men to turn their cannons on the crowd, suppressing the revolt.

[8] I use the spelling "Soloviev" in my text here because, even though it admits of multiple transliterations into English, such as "Solovyov" and "Solovyev," "Soloviev" was his preference (see Wozniuk 2013). Notably, Soloviev's writings contribute to Orthodox social thought, but are not official teaching, unlike *Rerum Novarum*, which marks the beginning of modern Roman Catholic social teaching.

and economy, grounding each in their own moral principle, based in turn on its own moral affective motivation. To Soloviev, the Church organizes our relation to God on the basis of piety, grounded in the affection of reverence. Government organizes our relations with our neighbors on the basis of altruism, grounded in the affection of pity. And the economy organizes our relations with the material world, including our bodies, on the basis of asceticism, grounded in the affection of shame. In this context, Soloviev (Solovyov 2005, 288, emphasis original) also plants the seeds of later Orthodox environmental theology in his claim that "*matter has a right to be spiritualised*." At the same time, he (Solovyov 2005, 309) helpfully acknowledged disciplinary boundaries to moral philosophy in our economic life, stating, "The important domain of human material relations is studied on its technical side by political economy, financial and commercial law, and falls within the scope of moral philosophy only in so far as *exchange* becomes *fraud*." There are a number of aspects of Soloviev's social thought that seem bound to his context (his emphasis on the *zemstvo*, or peasant commune, as the proper organization of economic life, for example). Others are too idealistic, for example assigning each moral principle to only one perfectly corresponding social sphere (even though the Church, for instance, has always cared about altruism and asceticism, in addition to piety). Nevertheless, his identification of asceticism as the proper moral mode of engagement with our economic life is foundational for my own research, as is his insistence that modern economic science has an essential role to play, even if he was sometimes too skeptical of its claims.

That said, Soloviev's conception of asceticism as exclusively concerned with material life is too narrow both in terms of the ascetic tradition of the Church and the standard definition of economics since Lionel Robbins (1932, 12-15; see also Pahman 2016a, discussed in Section C

below), who explicitly defined the science in non-materialist terms.[9] Nevertheless, the next generation of Orthodox thinkers influenced by Soloviev had a more traditional, and thus more expansive, understanding of asceticism, with Fr. Sergei Bulgakov (1994) opposing it to the (false) heroism of the Russian intelligentsia and Fr. Pavel Florensky (1997, 190-230, 284-330; see also Slesinski 1984, 164-169) identifying and analyzing asceticism's internal, self-transcending dialectic.

Bulgakov is also notable for formerly being a Marxist economist before his religious conversion back to traditional Orthodox Christianity and his eventual ordination as a priest. He published a religious critique of Marxism (Bulgakov 1979), a fascinating book exploring the philosophical insights of modern economics (Bulgakov 2000), and possibly the first Orthodox response (Bulgakov 2008) to Max Weber's (1992) famous *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, notably emphasizing the civilizational and economic importance of Orthodox monks (and hence, asceticism) throughout history.

More recently, Payne and Marsh (2009; see also Payne 2014) have even built upon Bulgakov's controversial Sophiology to argue for a normative Orthodox Christian alternative to mainstream economic science. I differ from them in this on both accounts: I neither advocate building on Bulgakov's Sophiology—because it is still commonly considered, rightly in my assessment, theologically problematic—nor constructing an Orthodox Christian alternative to modern economic science. Rather, my work (especially Pahman 2016a, discussed in Section C below) seeks to develop principles and frameworks for interdisciplinary scholarship with, but not limited to, modern positive economics, as this approach better promotes scientific advancement

[9] Robbins gives the example of a student who wants to study both philosophy and mathematics, but who does not have the time to do both. The scarcity of time, though immaterial, still makes the student's decision a suitable object of economic analysis: It involves the allocation of a scarce resource, for limited ends, that has alternative uses. Or put simply, it involves opportunity cost.

and constructive, cross-disciplinary integration through its less-adversarial posturing. As then-Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (1986, 204) put it, "Today we need a maximum of specialized economic understanding, but also a maximum of ethos so that specialized economic understanding may enter the service of the right goals." To be fair, however, Payne and Marsh may still be insightful for normative political economy informed by Orthodox Christian theology, and Sophiology need not be limited to Bulgakov's version (see, e.g., Solovyev 1948, 145-207; Florensky 1997, 231-283). More theologically-sound appropriations of the concept may be possible but thus far have been outside the scope of my research.

5. Twentieth-Century Resources

Additional twentieth-century sources for Orthodox social thought add philosophical (Frank 2010; 1994; 1989; 1987; Yannaras 1996); mystical, practical, and monastic (Skobtsova 2003; Evdokimov 1998, esp. 135-156); economic (Tsirintanes 1950); geopolitical (Malik 2015); historical (Florovsky 1974b; Meyendorff 1978); sacramental (Schmemann 1982; Evdokimov 1998, esp. 91-94, 171-176, 227-243); civic action (Harakas 1983a); ethical (Harakas 1983b; 1992); social-typological (Webster 1983); and political (Yannaras 2021) dimensions, often prominently involving asceticism in the course of pursuing their other objectives. Few of these are focused exclusively or even primarily on economic life, however, but their insights still remain applicable, and several of them inform my own work.

6. Environmental Theology

In more recent years, the Orthodox Church has emerged as a leader in environmental theology, most prominently in the work of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. Pope Francis

(2015, §§7-9) even cited Bartholomew in his environmental social encyclical *Laudato Si'*. From an economic point of view, Orthodox environmental theology often neglects the insights of modern economics, as Butler and Morriss (2013) which I edited, have demonstrated, too-often politicizing the very serious problem of environmental care, which has an essentially economic aspect to the extent that we do not live in a world of infinite resources and would not face an ecological crisis if we did. Their work highlights the need for more careful Orthodox Christian social thought to inform and work together with environmental theology, and they (Butler & Morriss 2013, 61-90) offer a better-economically-informed alternative, grounded in St. Maximus the Confessor's doctrine of the *logoi* of all things and the three ascetic/spiritual states of the slave, the steward, and the son (on which, see Pahman 2018a, discussed in Sections A and C below).

Though Butler and Morriss are critical of him, Bartholomew (2008, esp. 145-172) essentially states similar concerns while admirably exercising restraint in areas where he lacks economic expertise, acknowledging, for example, that globalization and economic growth have had important positive benefits, such as increased abundance, international cooperation, and the reduction of poverty, in addition to raising serious challenges (similarly, see also Anastasios 2003, 179-199), such as inequality, global inclusion, and environmental care. He also grounds his recommendations in the Incarnation, the concept of the world as our common household (*oikos*), and the centrality of human dignity—another area of common ground with Roman Catholic social thought (on which, see also Pahman 2019, discussed in Sections A and C below). Yet while restraint from non-experts is admirable, Orthodox Christianity still largely lacks the broad literature of other traditions in which the competencies of economists, business theorists,

and other social scientists have been integrated with Orthodox theological principles for the sake of pastoral guidance in our present economies.

7. Answers to Weber

One particular type of exceptions to this deficit of interdisciplinary scholarship are worthy of note, however: responses to Max Weber. Dobrijević (2006) uses post-Cold War Serbia and Montenegro as a case study to answer Weber's claim that Protestantism is uniquely compatible with modern capitalism, highlighting the Orthodox ascetic spirituality and culture of work, while also emphasizing the importance of human dignity and freedom. Makrides (2019) offers a broader survey that complicates negative, unidimensional appraisals of the compatibility between economic development and the Orthodox East, also with reference to Weber, among others. For context, and by contrast, Ćeranić, Šarović, and Krivokapić (2023, 199-200), drawing upon Weber, conclude that due to Orthodox asceticism (incorrectly conceived as exclusively "extra-worldly") and the principle of *symphonia* (cooperation between Church and state), "the core values of the Orthodox religion are not compatible with those on which capitalism is based." This is consistent with much of the sociological literature on Orthodoxy and economics since Weber, which still seems too dependent on his (mis)characterizations of the Christian East. In contradiction to this sociological approach, Gotsis and Katselidis (2022) develop a positive, personalist business ethics based on the Orthodox understanding of creation, human dignity, and ascetic and monastic spirituality. From these, the need to address the common thread of Weber with reference to economic history and development in the Christian East is clear, on which see Pahman (2014), discussed in Section B below.

8. Political Theology

While adjacent to Christian social thought, Orthodox political theology also deserves some attention, as there now exists a growing literature in the last two decades, and some of this either touches on or has implications for our economic life. Perhaps the most well-known book-length work is theologian Aristotle Papanikolaou's (2012) *The Mystical as Political*. Among its virtues, it features a serious attempt to engage the contributions of Western Christians to the discipline, including an Orthodox articulation of personalism and the common good, grounded in the doctrine of *theosis* or deification, which Papanikolaou refers to as "divine-human communion." Unfortunately, he mistakenly rejects natural law (on which, again see Harakas 1992; 1983b; 1963-1964), thus limiting the book's relevance both in terms of applying the Orthodox Tradition to the present day and ecumenical dialogue and cooperation, specifically regarding a doctrine that has important applications for economics as well as politics.

Several edited volumes have followed upon Papanikolaou's book, often in association with the Fordham Orthodox Christian Studies Center, cofounded and directed by Papanikolaou and historian George E. Demacopoulos. Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou (2017) and Stoeckl, Gabriel, and Papanikolaou (2017) are examined in Pahman (2017a), discussed in Section C below, so I will not detail their contents here, other than to say that those chapters that touch on economic matters unfortunately cite no economists and evidence little competence in the discipline. Rowan Williams (2021, 185-194), in his study of the *Philokalia*, dedicates a brief chapter to "Justice, Distance, and Love," importantly examining the possibility of ascetic and contemplative political practice in dialogue with the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. And a more recent volume edited by Grosshans and Kalaitzidis (2023) largely suffers from the same deficiencies as those critiqued in Pahman (2017a), evidencing a continuing need for more

developed Orthodox social thought to augment the growing, nuanced, and diverse literature of Orthodox political theology. Nevertheless, it is at least worth noting that Riboloff (2023) mentions economic liberty as desirable in passing reference. Such economic liberty includes a number of basic socio-economic rights and generally correlates with economic growth and poverty alleviation.

9. Recent Constructive Orthodox Social Thought

Last, there has been some more constructive work, such as Galadza (2006), who combines Orthodox liturgical theology with Radical Orthodoxy (Milbank et al.) in order to offer a critique of capitalism and consumerism. Unfortunately, Galadza also does not cite any economists and as a result unhelpfully critiques many caricatures of modern economic realities, neglecting the non-specialist restraint called for by Soloviev (Solovyov 2005, 309), Anastasios (2003, 179-199), and Bartholomew (2008, 145-172).

Patitsas (2008) has built upon St. Basil the Great's theology of philanthropy to develop an Orthodox engagement with modern microlending. Though his assessment of modern economics is more negative than my own, he does so from a position of honest engagement and sophisticated critique, rather than the sort of dismissive generalizations too common in *For the Life of the World* (Hart & Chryssavgis 2020) or found in Galadza (2006). That is, Patitsas's critique can be constructively engaged in a way that the Greek Archdiocese of America's statement and other uninformed critiques unfortunately cannot.

Building on the life and work of Sergei Bulgakov, Paul Evdokimov, and St. Maria Skobtsova, Plekon (2012) emphasizes the personalistic nature of their respective social thought,

uniting theory and action to engage the challenges of communism, the Great Depression, and fascism in their times and offering promise for our challenges today.

Building on the concept of society as a household in Bulgakov and non-essentialist, relational identity in Florensky, Siewers (2013) argues for the importance of traditional marriage as an institution of intergenerational sustainability for social justice.

In one of the only monograph-length works specifically on Orthodox social thought, Jensen (2015, which I edited, and whose contribution is noted by Merdjanova 2023) helpfully combines economic, social-scientific, and spiritual analysis of the phenomenon of consumerism, pointing to the insights of Orthodox liturgical, sacramental, and ascetic literature as a better way of patterning our consumption and answering the challenge consumerism poses today. Jensen's short book demonstrates the potential of asceticism in particular to address contemporary economic issues from both a theologically- and economically-informed perspective.

But what, then, is asceticism, and what might it have to offer not only for the Orthodox, but for Christian social thought in general, today? How can Orthodox Christians better integrate the insights of modern economics into their economic morality? And what principles do the Orthodox share in common with other Christian traditions, upon whose work they could build? Filling these gaps in the literature has been the primary focus of my research, including my published works submitted for this PhD and considered in the following sections of this essay.

Section A: Theoretical Work (Pahman 2019; 2018a; 2017b; 2016b; 2013)

The foregoing has established asceticism as a recurring aspect of modern Orthodox Christian social thought. Moreover, we can add that asceticism receives little-to-no examination or even mention in the modern social thought of other Christian traditions, despite their own

venerable ascetic spirituality. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Pontifical Council 2006), for example, never mentions "ascetic" or "asceticism," never mentions "fasting," only once mentions "self-sacrifice" (§239, in the context of family education, and then only quoting John Paul II 1981), only once mentions "self-discipline" (§486, in the context of environmental care), only twice mentions giving "alms" (§184, both in the same sentence and, significantly, in the context of care for the poor). While some such passing mentions can be found in other modern Roman Catholic social documents, no extended treatment or application of asceticism to my knowledge exists. My research on asceticism in the Orthodox Tradition clearly has something unique to offer to the broader ecumenical conversation, something that ought to be a matter of common ground between all Christian confessions.

In my published work, I demonstrate that asceticism is a dialectical process essential to both spiritual development and social flourishing. In theological terms, it is the means by which Christians die and rise daily with Jesus Christ, thus embodying the heart of the Gospel (see Pahman 2016b; 2017b). The Incarnation, life and teachings, cross, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of Jesus Christ are the essential content of the Gospel. Christians enter the new life Christ inaugurates through the sacraments of the Church. Then then actualize that life through asceticism, toward the end of their deification (by grace, not nature) and the transfiguration of the cosmos.

Asceticism, then, is dialectical in this sense: It follows a threefold progression of life—death—resurrection, or put philosophically, awareness—denial—transformation (see Pahman 2016b; 2017b). Because Christians are not ethical or metaphysical spirit/matter dualists, the point of fasting, for example, is not simply the denial of food, as if eating were in some way inherently evil. Indeed, following Stoic axiology, ancient Christians believed all things to be indifferent and

only good to the extent that they were used for virtue and only evil to the extent they are used for sin (Pahman 2016b; 2017b; see also Pahman 2014). Thus, one denies one's passion of hunger in order that it be transfigured—reborn according to the will of God and directed toward him through virtue, actualizing the grace given to us in the sacraments (on which, see also Schmemann 1982; Evdokimov 1998, esp. 91-94, 171-176, 227-243). Eating is only a sin to the extent it is gluttonous. Distinguishing between contemplation and a more narrow understanding of asceticism as only the negation it involves, Williams (2021, 21) nevertheless notes, "This [ascetic] refusal has its place, dialectically, in the process of growth … but the point of it is the return to present actuality as seen and sensed 'in God.'" In substance, my research demonstrates that this whole dialectical process, not just the negative aspect, is asceticism: properly understood, the practices of self-denial cannot be separated from the goal of greater communion with, and growth in, God.

Thus, my theoretical research elevates asceticism from a materially-focused, purely negative spirituality into a comprehensive worldview (see esp. Pahman 2016b; 2017b). All the ascetic disciplines function similarly to fasting, e.g., silence, solitude, simplicity, chastity, and even prayer, to the extent Christians deny their own power, authority, and will in praying, "Thy kingdom come" and "Thy will be done" (Matthew 6:10). This self-denial is thus not limited to material reality, such as the body or the world, but includes our intellectual life as well—passions, thoughts, images, and so on—and even our relationships, to the extent these become overly attached to creation at the neglect of our Creator, or we might say, to the extent they become idolatrous. We "put to death [our] members upon the earth" in order to be "renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created [us]" (Colossians 3:5, 10).

Set in the theoretical framework of my published works, asceticism is, thus, essential to the Christian life. “We either rise to new life or to second death—daily” (Pahman 2017b, 143). The flowering of the grace of God in asceticism is the daily means—though not the ends—of our salvation, inasmuch as repentance denotes in Greek the transformation of one’s mind (*metanoia*), in Hebrew to “turn” (*shuv*) around the direction one walks in life, and in various Romance languages, from which we get the English “repent,” it means to “regret” or “sorrow” over one’s present state (for more on the connection between asceticism and repentance, see Torrence 2013). People content with their current state will not strive to improve themselves. One who lives a life no different from the world will never find the narrow gate and difficult path that leads to life (see Matthew 7:13-14). And one whose mind persists in selfish thought patterns or is weighed down by vicious passions and sins will never attain the humility that uniquely characterizes faith, hope, and the love that “never fails” (1 Corinthians 13:8; see also Pahman 2016b, 497-498). To confuse the means with the ends leads to Pharisaism and superstition (see Romans 14:1-3; Seraphim of Sarov 2008), but to neglect these ascetic means through fear of these errors runs the risk of failing to take up one’s cross daily and follow Jesus Christ (Pahman 2017b; see also Luke 9:23).

My research (see Pahman 2018a; 2017b; 2013) furthermore shows that the personal transformation of asceticism is not unique to individuals. The practice of solitude, for example, following the above logic, is not some sort of Christianized Jean-Paul Sartre-style (Sartre 1955, 47), antisocial existentialism, in which “Hell is—other people!” Rather, one denies oneself the company of others for a time, in order that one may transfigure one’s relations to one’s neighbors. Asceticism is essential to healthy human community (Pahman 2013). Evdokimov (1998, 138) illustrates this well through the example of St. Seraphim of Sarov: “After a terrible

struggle, shadowed by a silence that hid a life no monk could endure, St. Seraphim left his extreme practices of the hermits and stylites and returned to the world." This same saint is known to have said, "Acquire the Spirit of Peace, and thousands around you shall be saved."[10] So also, St. Antony the Great, even though he fled the company of others his entire life, yet he ministered to all who came to him, even to his cell atop a mountain. Through those inspired by his example, says St. Athanasius (1980, 42-43), "the desert was made a city by monks." Thus, ascetical repentance is the engine, fueled by the grace of God, that drives our love for our neighbor. And from one man "seek[ing] first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33) many more than "thousands" were fed, clothed, visited in prison, treated when ill, educated, and so on, through the many institutions, such as charitable ministries, hospitals, and universities, that have their origins in Christian monasticism (on which, see Pahman 2014).

In pursuing an ascetic way of life, one must work through three states or dispositions outlined by the Church Fathers that I've identified and developed in my published work (Pahman 2018a; see also Butler and Morriss 2013, 61-90): the slave, the steward, and the son. The slave obeys only out of fear of punishment. The steward obeys out of desire for reward. But the true child of God obeys purely out of love for the Father. Within families, of course, all of these motivations—the threat of punishments, the promise of rewards, and loving obedience—have a role to play in the rearing of children, and thus all have a place in our spiritual development as well. We see here a social aspect to asceticism, rooted in the family, one which corresponds—as I explore in a recent article (Pahman 2024a) not considered for this PhD but discussed in

[10] See Evdokimov (1998, 207), for an alternate version of this quote: "acquire interior peace, and many around you will find their salvation." The saying exists in several forms and, to my knowledge, does not occur in a specific primary source text but has rather been transmitted orally. However, the text I cite herein of Seraphim of Sarov (2008) is titled and centers around the "acquisition of the Holy Spirit," so whether or not the version in my text is a literal translation of a Russian original, it is fully in the spirit of the saint's recorded teaching.

Appendix A—to the economist Kenneth Boulding's (1989; 1978; 1963) three social systems and dynamics: threat, exchange, and integrative. Insights from the ascetic tradition with regards to these three states and motivations (as outlined in Pahman 2018a) hold insights for proper Christian participation in threat, exchange, and integrative systems, such as the state, markets, and families, respectively.

Indeed, as I establish in an earlier published work (Pahman 2013, 188), "no society … exists or finds its fulfillment apart from the self-limitation of its members … by which they are transformed into a community. Asceticism, then, is essential to human society." If I never stop talking, how can I listen to my neighbor? If I only seek to use others for my own selfish ends, when will I give myself to them? Every healthy family is healthy precisely because of the ascetic "self-limitation of its members." Every dysfunctional family fails to do this. "From the family come all other forms of society, and the family does not function properly apart from asceticism. And when each community and sector of society embraces this ascetic standpoint, they necessarily respect the autonomy of others through their own self-renunciation while being transformed into what they themselves are truly meant to be" (Pahman 2013, 189). Thus, asceticism has a foundation even in natural law: It is fundamental to the flourishing of all human society *qua* human society.

Thus, too, I demonstrate (Pahman 2013) how in the social logic of asceticism, we see an Orthodox analogue to the Roman Catholic principle of subsidiarity, by which, as Pius XI (1931, §80) put it, "the more graduated order is kept among the various associations … the stronger social authority and effectiveness will be the happier and more prosperous the condition of the state." Subsidiarity *requires* social asceticism, inasmuch as higher orders of society must deny themselves in order to allow lower levels to flourish, only intervening when lower levels prove

inadequate. My published research shows how the Christian ascetic tradition, East and West, has unused wisdom for understanding how subsidiarity best functions even today. No one else in the relevant literature has noticed this connection. Asceticism, properly understood, suggests that subsidiarity is an area of ecumenical common ground, and no doubt the study and integration of each would augment the other. This is truly an opportunity, as John Paul II (1995, §54) put it, for the Church to "breathe with her two lungs!"

A further way in which my research advances this field relates to how the personalist principle of human dignity (Pahman 2019), when understood in the context of asceticism, can create common ground for dialogue with the Roman Catholic tradition. Even in the late nineteenth century, Soloviev had already built upon Immanuel Kant's (1964, 95) categorical imperative, that "man … *exists* as an end in himself, *not merely as a means* for arbitrary use by this or that will." Soloviev (Solovyov 2005, 373) expanded this in Christian personalist terms, emphasizing the inviolability of human dignity, the importance of human agency, and the fundamental relationality of all persons upon one another: "Deprive a man of what he owes to others, beginning with his parents and ending with the state and world-history, and nothing will be left of his existence, let alone his freedom. It would be madness to deny this fact of inevitable dependence." Thus, "Solidarity is a demand of morality due to our natural relation to all other human beings" (Pahman 2019, 5). This last point leads him to the need for divine grace in the ecclesial communion of the Church, affirming the necessity of the liturgical and especially Eucharistic dynamics highlighted by other Orthodox social theologians (see Schmemann 1982; Evdokimov 1998, esp. 91-94, 171-176, 227-243). It is notable, as well, that "[t]hrough his likely influence on the Russian émigré community in Paris and elsewhere, and due to the clear resonance of his philosophy with the emergent personalism of the time, we are overdue to

acknowledge Soloviev as a significant font of Maritain's 'personalist current'" sweeping across Western intellectual circles in the early twentieth century (Pahman 2019, 7, citing Maritain 1942, 12). Moreover, in the light of my previously discussed contributions (Pahman 2018a; 2017b; 2016b; 2013), we should add that asceticism is the means by which we affirm, through our agency and with respect to the dignity of all human persons, created after the image of God, "this fact of inevitable dependence" (Solovyov 2005, 373), i.e., our essential relationality to every person.

Last, in the realm of economic development, I show (Pahman 2017b) how the phenomenon of creative destruction is different but related analogue to asceticism. Creative destruction follows the same dialectic in businesses, markets, industries, and economies as does asceticism in individuals. Just as the person who fears the many daily deaths of life and refuses to train oneself with the practice of *momento mori* to endure them through asceticism, so also businesses, markets, industries, and economies that seek to protect the status quo and resist entrepreneurial change and diversity, ultimately stagnate and fail. Such policies, drawing upon Soloviev (2005, 373) above, are a "madness" that would "deny th[e] fact of [our] inevitable dependence" on one another. By contrast, I document how those businesses, markets, industries, and economies that remain free and open to unpredictable change and the challenge of competition by protecting what John Paul II (1987, §15) referred to as "the right of economic initiative," have historically proven the most dynamic. As a result, as Schumpeter (1950, 83) observed, the welfare of all has been improved at an exponential rate since the Industrial Revolution. Again, as John Paul II (1987, §15) put it, "It is a right which is important not only for the individual but also for the common good." Meanwhile, those few left behind by such radical economic transition (such as the blacksmith by the automobile) will find the comfort,

charity, and community they need in a society whose members and communities already practice asceticism in their daily lives: “A society in which people in their personal lives make a regular habit of self-limitation for the sake of better loving God and their neighbors would be one in which the generosity and hospitality needed by those left behind as economies advance would be present” (Pahman 2017b, 158).

My contribution includes demonstrating how this connection, moreover, is founded upon the same ontological realities as asceticism: change, diversity, death, and resurrection (see Pahman 2017b, 141-149). Healthy businesses, markets, industries, and economies follow practices and regulations that translate the insights of ascetic logic into economic life. Thus, I establish that ought we to support the preconditions for such practices and regulations, especially, drawing on Taleb and Treverton (2015), decentralization, diversification, reduction of debt, political variability, and the wisdom gained from the vital experience of surviving unexpected economic shocks.

Section B: Historical Work (Pahman 2015a; 2014)

If asceticism is so essential to Christian morality and spirituality, and moreover so fundamental to human social and even economic life, then we should expect to see some evidence of this in Church history. In fact, we do. Two of my historical published works examine some of this evidence as well as augmenting the theoretical principles and frameworks outlined in Section A.

The first (Pahman 2015a) examines the dependency of ancient Christian martyrdom on asceticism. Drawing upon the work of Tilley (1991), it details how ancient Christians could not have resisted ancient Roman torture to the point of becoming martyrs—rather than being

brainwashed—if they did not first practice a rigorous asceticism that helped them break the mind/body connection, comfort themselves in isolation, and provide a mantra (*Christianus sum*) in the face of interrogation and torture. Asceticism undermined the aims of Roman torture, instead making it an extension of Christians' discipline and the fulfillment of their desire to suffer with Christ.

Moreover, this article (Pahman 2015a) shows how after the conversion of St. Constantine and the legalization of Christianity through the so-called Edict of Milan in 313, martyric language continues to color ascetic discourse. Already, monasticism had started to spread in Egypt, Nubia, Palestine, and Syria, and it became a refuge for those wanting to continue the same austere asceticism of the early Church, expanding throughout the now-Christian empire and beyond. Yet, true to the term martyr, which means "witness," and in agreement with my theoretical analysis in Section A above, ancient Christian asceticism bore witness to the Gospel and proved a powerful evangelistic force, exemplified by the Celtic missionary monks who, through ascetic exile, re-Christianized the West after the fall of Rome. Throughout Church history, at its best, monasticism has served as a prophetic check on corruption in both the state and the Church as well as a significant means of social service to the poor and marginalized. Moreover, I show how those who lived in the world were not exempt from ascetic demands, though the expected standard was lower (on which, see Sorabji 2000, 194-210, 385-399; John Climacus 1982, 78). Indeed, as Soloviev and Schmemann note (see Pahman 2015a, 111-113; Solovyov 2005, 357-358n5; Schmemann 1973, 90), in the Orthodox Tradition even marriage includes ascetic and martyric imagery.

The second paper (Pahman 2014) explores the history of monastic enterprise in the Christian East, in refutation of Weber's (1992) and Harnack's (1911) claims that Eastern

monasticism has been dominated by quietism and played no significant civilizational role. Adding to the existing literature of Orthodox responses to Weber, this paper demonstrates that from the beginnings in ancient Egypt, through Byzantine Palestine, the Eastern Roman Empire, the Rus', and even through Ottoman and British occupation of Crete, monastic enterprise created significant wealth, driven by monastics' low consumption, high work ethic, and the ideal of poverty as self-sufficiency. Indeed, mendicancy has always been rare in the East. Monks owned ships, farms, shops, factories, mines, and ran markets and banks, even lending money at interest.

This work (Pahman 2014) demonstrates that this commercial activity grew naturally out of ancient Christians' Stoic axiology, in which, as stated above in Section B, the only good is virtue, the only evil vice. Everything else, including wealth, was considered indifferent, and only good or evil to the extent it was used for virtuous or sinful ends. As Archbishop Iakovos (Harakas 1983a, 71), in a keynote address at the Twentieth Clergy-Laity Congress in 1970, stated, "True asceticism is not based simply upon the disdain or rejection of material wealth. It is based upon the exercise of those virtues which can change wealth into a means to feed the hungry and save the soul of the poor."

In this paper (see Pahman 2014, 483-488), I employ these criteria, as well, as a standard for critiquing many real failures in the history of monasticism, where the spiritual character of the ascetic life was hollowed out by overconcern for material wealth, such as in the case of Solovetskii during the Time of Troubles. Yet as the example of the Kykkos monastery on Cyprus illustrates, great wealth did not necessarily prove fatal to the ascetic ideal of service to the poor. Even today, many if not most Orthodox monasteries in the United States have websites with online stores, selling icons, candles, and other devotional items, also baked goods, coffee, and other wares, in order to support their way of life by serving the needs of the Church through the

positive-sum nature of economic exchange, benefitting from the increased velocity of communication and transportation characteristic of our globalized age (see Pahman 2014, 481-483). As St. Paul put it to the Ephesian elders, "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak" (Acts 20:35)—that is, profiting from one's labor in order to have something leftover beyond one's own needs for the service of the needy.

Thus, asceticism in general—and monasticism in particular—still holds great potential for Christian economic engagement in our modern world. Asceticism played an essential role in the survival of Christianity and the spread of the Gospel all throughout Church history (Pahman 2015a). And monasticism, East and West, acted as some of the first firms and banks, as well as centers of technological innovation, all throughout Christendom (Pahman 2014). If our most extreme ascetics did not view the production and exchange of wealth as incompatible with their vocations, how much more so ought the non-monastic emulate their positive-yet-disciplined embrace of economic production and growth in our present age of unprecedented abundance, with all the opportunities and temptations that it brings? Several modern Orthodox writers (Frank 1989, 143-144; Skobtsova 2003; Evdokimov 1998, 135-156) have urged that all Christians ought to adopt an "inner monasticism" to condition their engagement with the modern world, and these historical papers contribute additional support to that claim. If even the ancient rich man can be saved (see Clement 1901), so, too, can our modern middle classes, so long as we understand our unique economic context and how the timeless principles of Christian asceticism remain necessary even today.

Section C: Interdisciplinary Work (Pahman 2019; 2018a; 2017a; 2017b; 2016a; 2016b)

The most important contribution in this section is Pahman (2016a), which develops an Orthodox theology of economics, suggesting methods for future interdisciplinary work, detailed below in this section. It begins by simply defining economics, its scope and methods as a social science, in what sense it has been and can be considered a moral science, and so on. Importantly, it relies on Lionell Robbins' (1932, 15) non-materialist definition, which is the standard textbook definition, of economics as "the science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses."

Then, based upon St. Maximus the Confessor (1982), Vladimir Lossky (2014), and Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae (1994), I show (Pahman 2016a, 39-42) how economics can contribute to our natural contemplation, the cultivation of the virtue of prudence, and thus, even to our deification. This work then contributes (Pahman 2016a, 42-46) four distinct and important conceptual developments which are explored in my research. It is worth noting in passing, that these are broad themes which are also avenues for future research. 1) "Economics needs moral principles for normativity" that Orthodox moral theology can provide (Pahman 2016a, 42); 2) "Orthodox theologians can help to identify and teach the ascetic habits necessary for successful and ethical business practices and daily work" (Pahman 2016a, 43); 3) "Economics can help to broaden the scope and competency of Orthodox moral theology" (Pahman 2016a, 44); and 4) "The economic point of view can illumine questions of theology, ethics, and spirituality" (Pahman 2016a, 44). All my theoretical work in Section A addresses the first point. Pahman (2017b), discussed above in Section A, directly addresses the second of these. All my work seeks to address the third point. And, again, Pahman (2017b) makes some contribution to the fourth point, as well as Bulgakov (2000). Contrary to those who would seek to reject modern economic science in favor of a

"Christian" alternative, understood on its own terms, the discipline of economics in its present form already offers at least these four avenues for theological engagement. I (Pahman 2016a, 46) conclude with a statement applicable to the general theme of this section: "Studying a subject outside one's specialty requires ascetic struggle, patience, humility, and wisdom." Thus, all such scholarship in itself constitutes an opportunity for "ascetic struggle."

Moreover, in Pahman (2017a), I detail how Orthodox political theology needs political economy if it hopes to overcome a myopic view of society framed only in terms of Church and state. By political economy, I mean the normative and interdisciplinary science, distinct from but complementary to positive economic science, as defined by Robbins (1982; see also Salter 2023 for use of the term in a similar way by an Orthodox Christian economist). Political economy is also the classic term for the discipline whence the modern positive science came (on which, see Pahman 2016c, not considered for this PhD). In particular, my analysis shows that Orthodox political theology should learn the following from political economy: 1) the difference between just and unjust inequality; 2) the democratic nature of markets; and 3) the usefulness of economic analysis for understanding and promoting religious liberty, which this literature on Orthodox political theology largely supports. I conclude that while adding the economy as a third social sphere alongside Church and state would be a significant improvement—as did, I would add, Solovyov (2005) and Evdokimov (1998)—societal forms in our contemporary world are even more diverse than that.

In Pahman (2019), discussed in Section A above, I establish the personalistic nature of Soloviev's moral philosophy, focused especially on the principles of human dignity, agency, and relationality. I document his influence on Russian émigrés to Paris in the twentieth century, who had significant contact with Western personalist intellectuals. Then I show that Soloviev in

particular constitutes a contribution to personalist moral philosophy, so foundational for Roman Catholic social thought, at least since the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. Soloviev's importance for the development of personalism had gone unacknowledged in the literature apart from my contribution.

Next, Pahman (2018a) employs the three-tiered ascetic schema of the slave, servant/steward, and son/child of God to augment recent theoretical and empirical research in the social sciences, especially psychology,[11] for developing an Orthodox approach to forgiveness and reconciliation. While the primary focus is personal, forgiveness is also essential to social flourishing in our fallen world. From domestic abuse to war, human beings harm one another in their sin, and understanding what forgiveness is and what practices and conditions are conducive to it not only serves interpersonal relations but could be applied to peace studies more broadly.

In particular, my work (Pahman 2018a, 164) establishes that, from an ascetic moral perspective, mercy does not violate justice but goes beyond it. Thus, working justice can actually make forgiveness easier by reducing what psychologists call the "injustice gap" created by wrongdoing (Pahman 2018a, 166-167). Reconciliation can also help, but attempts should not be made too rashly, as exposing a victim to a victimizer when one or both are not open to healing the relationship can further harm it. This leads to the question of how forgiveness, which Christ expects of all his followers (see Matthew 6:15), can be given where reconciliation is impossible. I detail (Pahman 2018a, 170-173) how one ascetic technique, grounded in natural law and Christianized Stoic axiology detailed in Sections A and B above, is to realize through the practice of watchfulness (*nepsis*) that those who do evil most truly harm themselves. Evil never

[11] I am aware of the replication crisis in psychology, so many of the studies considered in Pahman (2018a) should be considered only preliminary. Nevertheless, some data is better than no data, and at least a few of them do seem to support the conclusions of others.

makes the evildoer happy. It is antinatural, a privation of goodness, most of all in the evildoer him/herself. And so, where anger might obstruct forgiveness, a proper ascetic vision of the wrongdoer can transfigure anger into pity and enable forgiveness, even if full reconciliation remains impossible or imprudent. Further, the ascetic schema outlined in Pahman (2018a) provides a promising foundation for addressing the problem of differentiating between social genres, species, and spheres, to which I make a preliminary attempt in Pahman (2024a), not considered for this PhD but discussed in Appendix A.

Though discussed above in Section A, Pahman (2017b) also involves interdisciplinary research with economic history. The phenomenon of creative destruction is well-known among economic historians (see Schumpeter 1950). But the connection I demonstrate to asceticism, in particular the practice of *memento mori*, on the basis of a common ontological foundation of change, diversity, death, and resurrection, contributes further descriptive precision and prescriptive guidance. It also provides continuity and relevance for ancient Christian moral and ascetic exhortation through establishing this common ontological foundation. Our modern market economies may be very different than the aristocratic agrarian economies of the ancient and medieval worlds, but that difference of context does not negate the value of timeless Christian wisdom for the present. By putting the economic-historical insights of Schumpeter (1950) into dialogue with my ontologically-grounded analysis of asceticism (Pahman 2017b), I open a way forward for engaging the problems of modern economic growth and development with the virtues of generosity and hospitality obtained through the self-limitation of ascetic practices.

I furthermore document in Pahman (2016b) that the literature on virtue ethics amazingly contains little-to-no reference to asceticism or ascetic practices. While virtue ethics has a strong

foundation in natural law, the essential "how-to" of acquiring virtue often remains largely unexplored, aside from passing references to developing often unspecified "habits." But we can and should specify and study the habits needed to cultivate virtue. To that end, my work also contributes extended analysis of the habits of watchfulness (Pahman 2018a) and *memento mori* (Pahman 2016b), in particular, as well as demonstrating the importance of other ascetic disciplines throughout my other published works considered for this PhD.

Conclusion: Summary of Contributions

I began this essay surveying the state of the question on modern Orthodox Christian social thought. While noting a few exceptions, I showed how the Orthodox Tradition has fallen behind other Christians in terms of developing a coherent framework for its social, specifically economic, thought in the modern world. The rise of communism in historically Orthodox nations along with internal unrest in Greece and Lebanon (and continued marginalization in the Middle East more broadly) has probably been a contributing factor to this stunted development of an Orthodox theology that relates to our social, political, and economic life which has developed in other Christian denominations. Orthodox scholars and clergy focused on other issues during the twentieth century, principally ecumenical questions stemming from the new encounter of Orthodox exiles with Western churches and societies. Nevertheless, I continued to show how the Orthodox Tradition does have unique contributions to make to the broader literature on Christian social thought. My research has focused on the social role of asceticism in particular, developing theoretical frameworks, tracing its history, exploring its relevance for interdisciplinary scholarship, and demonstrating how it constitutes an important and distinct contribution to Christian social thought.

In Section A, I examined my theoretical work (Pahman 2019; 2018a; 2017b; 2016b; 2013), outlining eight contributions. My work (Pahman 2016b; 2017b) contributes a philosophical theology of asceticism as transformative spiritual dialectic, following the pattern of affirmation—denial—transcendence, or in theological terms, life—death—resurrection, grounded in a Christianized Stoic axiology, where the only evil is sin, the only good righteousness, and everything else is indifferent. As such, asceticism isn't simply about material renunciation but constitutes a whole mindset or *phronema* of social and ecological engagement as well, or we might say, a "world-and-life-view," to borrow from the Neo-Calvinist tradition (see, e.g., Kuyper 1931; Bavinck 2019; Wolters 2005; Heslam 1998). Moreover, asceticism is necessarily social: "no society … exists or finds its fulfillment apart from the self-limitation of its members … by which they are transformed into a community" (Pahman 2013, 188). Asceticism furthermore follows a progression of psychological motivations from fear to desire to love, as modelled in the patristic motif of the slave, servant, and son (Pahman 2018a). Indeed, asceticism is essential to achieving the *telos* of our human nature (Pahman 2013) that it should be understood as grounded in the natural law. Likewise, inasmuch as subsidiarity requires the self-limitation of higher orders of society to justly elevate lower associations for the common good of greater human flourishing, I demonstrate that asceticism ought to be regarded as an essential mechanism of subsidiarity (Pahman 2013). So, too, asceticism relates to the personalist principle of human dignity (Pahman 2019), which I trace in the Orthodox Tradition to the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev. Last, the dialectical nature of asceticism finds an economic-historical analogue in the phenomenon of creative destruction (Pahman 2017b), to the extent that both similarly map human adaptation to the ontological realities of change, diversity, death, and resurrection. Together, these published works establish theoretical justification for asceticism as

an essential aspect of Christian social thought. Asceticism derives from sound Christian anthropology and theology, and it relates to existing traditions of Christian social thought outside Orthodoxy as expounded by, for example, Rowan Williams (2021) in the Anglican tradition, Pope Paul VI (1968, §22), Pope John Paul II (1981, §33), and Pope Francis (2015, §9, §11) and others writing on Catholic social thought and self-discipline, whether in the context of the flourishing of the family or proper care for the natural environment.

Section B detailed my historical work (Pahman 2015a; 2014), specifically five aspects. I demonstrate (Pahman 2015a) the necessity of asceticism for the early Christian martyrs' resistance to Roman torture. So, too, as "martyr" means witness, and asceticism follows a martyric dialectic rooted in the Gospel and essential to martyrdom, I also show how asceticism bore evangelistic fruit in the Celtic practice of *peregrinatio*. Institutionalized in monasticism, I furthermore (Pahman 2014) establish Orthodox asceticism's economic potential by constructing a history of monastic enterprise, adding to existing Orthodox literature in response to Weber (1992) (and Harnack 1911). In the process, I employ the Stoic axiology fundamental to Orthodox ascetism as a lens by which we can assess and critique the moral merits and demerits of this history, including present-day monastic adaptation to globalization. Both works (2015a; 2014) point to the same conclusion: Orthodox monasticism still has a vital role to play in our economic lives today.

Section C surveyed six contributions of my interdisciplinary work (Pahman 2019; 2018a; 2017a; 2017b; 2016a; 2016b). Since Orthodox social thought is fundamentally an interdisciplinary enterprise between theology and political economy, the first and most important contribution (Pahman 2016a) is my development of an Orthodox theology of economics in the context of morality, virtue, prudence, grace, and deification. Next, I reveal (Pahman 2017a) the

need for contemporary Orthodox political theology to incorporate the insights of political economy, particularly in terms of the difference between just and unjust inequality, the democratic nature of markets, and the economic logic of religious liberty. My work (Pahman 2019) also adds an interdisciplinary contribution to the literature on philosophical personalism, specifically in identifying Vladimir Soloviev as an important influence on, and precursor to, those Russian personalist émigrés in Paris who were part of what Maritain (1942, 12) called a broader "personalist current" sweeping across Western intellectual circles. My work in Section C additionally includes an interdisciplinary contribution to the psychology of forgiveness (Pahman 2018a), showing how Orthodox asceticism provides a framework (the three states noted above) and practices, such as watchfulness and the sacrament of confession, conducive to understanding and cultivating forgiveness. Further, by examining the common ontological foundation of Orthodox asceticism and economic creative destruction, my work (Pahman 2017b) highlights the role of the ascetic practice of *memento mori* for both spiritual and economic development. Last, my work (Pahman 2016b) also augments the discipline of virtue ethics, to the extent that literature often notes the importance of good habits for virtue, but neglects to elaborate—asceticism is essential to any traditional Christian understanding of the acquisition of virtue, and specific practices combat particular vices while cultivating particular virtues. Again, these contributions derive from Orthodox theology. However, they link to and can enhance the work of Catholic social theologians such as Maritain (1942) and Hirschfeld (2018).

In 2012, when I first began this research project, very little contemporary scholarship existed on Orthodox Christian social thought and the economic and social importance of Orthodox asceticism. Since then, I've contributed the nine works considered for this PhD, as well as three others detailed in Appendix A below. Moreover, several of my works have already

been cited by other scholars (see, e.g., Whitener & Salter 2023; Bekavac 2022; Cavanaugh 2021; Davletov 2020; Tanase 2020). On that basis we can conclude that in part because of my work, the Orthodox Christian Tradition has gained a voice in the broader academic conversation of modern Christian social thought, future prospects of which I consider in greater detail in Appendix B below. It is my hope this contribution will be only the beginning of much more to come.

Appendix A: Other Relevant Published Works

The applications listed in my conclusion are only the beginning that an elevation and reclaiming of Christian asceticism has to offer for Christian social thought. Three other of my published works, not considered for this PhD, build upon the work discussed above and point to further applications of my research.

Aesthetics (Granger & Pahman 2016)

This paper, coauthored with Samuel Granger, establishes the personal and ascetic dimension of art. It shows that because art—as distinct from the artist and the artwork—is a virtue, it must be cultivated like any other: ascetically. As such, we cite historic Church statements that prescribe strict moral standards for iconographers. Thus, with an ascetic foundation, we put forward a theological aesthetics that combines the objective and subjective—every artwork has something of the artist in it and reflects their unique personhood, yet just like persons, and in accordance with their own spiritual development, the perfection of art, too, involves the acquisition of virtue. Conversely, the refinement of the soul in asceticism involves the acquisition of true beauty, the Beauty that God is. Thus, the Fathers refer to prayer and *hesychasm* ("stillness," understood in the context of practicing the Jesus Prayer) as the "art of arts" and *philokalia* ("the love of the beautiful/good"). Rather than a bonfire of the Vanities, true Christian asceticism should lead—and has led—to the production of beauty in the world, as every Orthodox church building, icon, and hymn attests.

Transhumanism (Pahman 2023b)

The contemporary philosophy of transhumanism—of transcending present humanity through technology and achieving a "posthuman" mode of being—has been the inspiration of science fiction since the beginning of the genre, but each year there are people working to make it science fact, such as Neuralink, cryogenics, and others. This paper builds upon the personalist, ascetic, moral, and mystical Orthodox philosophy of Vladimir Soloviev to demonstrate that while some transhumanists may have admirable intentions, no technology can ever achieve "posthumanity," because technology is fundamentally human. This presents a challenge to those who desire such transhumanism to reconceive of what transcending humanity really means. At the same time, since Soloviev's moral philosophy is grounded in the principle of human dignity, and to be posthuman must be a matter of perfecting our humanity morally, this perspective would remedy a problem of bioethics: no "posthuman" person could ever rightly consider themselves of greater dignity than others. Moreover, the principle aspect of our humanity that needs to be transcended is death, in which case we need victory over death, which is precisely the promise of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

General Systems Theory (Pahman 2024a)

This paper puts Orthodox asceticism, and in particular the three states of the slave, steward, and son/child of God, in dialogue with the general systems theory of the economist Kenneth Boulding, discussed briefly in Section A above. This paper is important for at least two reasons:

1) Boulding's social systems have a scientific precision lacking in Christian social thought generally in terms of basic categories, in this case genae, of social organization. His

categories of threat systems, exchange systems, and integrative systems have at their core the same affective motivations as the slave, steward, and son/child of God: fear of punishment, desire for reward, and love. Just as in the spiritual life—and in family life—each of these have their place, so also in society: law is a threat system; economies consist of exchange systems; and integrative systems include the family, religion, and other volunteer and charitable associations. The advantage of adopting Boulding's categories should be clear: They do not require a radical break with Christian tradition but rather that Christian theorists mine it for appropriate resources that it does, in fact, contain. Furthermore, this is not to say that older Christian social theory centered on the family, Church, and state has no value, but simply that, for the sake of social-scientific precision, these spheres do not all exist at the same tier of social genus. This paper contributes to establishing that precision through its interdisciplinary exploration of Boulding and Orthodox asceticism.

2) Boulding acknowledges but does not expand upon two ascetic social dynamics, viz. forbearance and sainthood. Thus, my research on asceticism has something to contribute to social science in this regard as well, and this paper makes that contribution. In particular, it shows that an ascetic attitude of forbearance ("you do a bad thing to me, and I do not retaliate") is the core of passive resistance, whereas Boulding's "sainthood" ("you do a bad thing to me, and I repay it with good") is the pattern of the martyrs, who rejoiced that they might suffer with Christ, even forgiving and blessing those who martyred them (see Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60). The power of these dynamics for social change cannot be understated. As Tertullian (1931, 227) put it, "the blood of Christians is seed." The power of pagan Rome ultimately could not overcome their sacrifice, exposing the illegitimacy of unjust and tyrannical laws and leading to the conversion of St. Constantine and the whole empire after him. In more recent times, passive

resistance in the American Civil Rights movement, led by Christian pastors—including Orthodox clergy, such as Archbishop Iakovos of America, who marched arm-in-arm with Martin Luther King, Jr. at Selma—contributed to the abolition of the unjust legal regime of Jim Crow. So, for the sake of effective social activism in our present contexts, my research again shows how asceticism holds overlooked treasures and resources.

Appendix B: Avenues for Future Research

Untapped Sources of Orthodox Social Thought

While the Bible, Church Fathers, and modern Orthodox theologians are often cited by those few who have contributed to modern Orthodox social thought, in my research I have identified certain periods and sources, beyond what has been surveyed in my published works, that deserve greater attention, in particular: Orthodox canon law; the scholastic Middle Ages in the Christian East; the Republic of Novgorod; and the eighteenth-century Russian Empire.

First, the Orthodox canon law tradition (on which, see McGuckin 2012; Patsavos 2023), especially those of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and those accepted from various local councils at Trullo in 692 (all of which can be found in Percival 1900), contains considerable pastoral guidance related to economic issues. Relevant canons address a range of topics, including usury (Nicaea 17; Carthage 5; Carthage 16; Laodicea 4; Trullo 10; Apostles 44; Arabic Nicene 15; Nyssa 6), property (Chalcedon 2, 3, 24; Sardica 12; Carthage 32; Ancyra 15; Trullo 25; Carthage 33; Nicaea II 12, 14; Antioch 24; Apostles 38; Gangra 8), care for the poor (Carthage 75; Nicaea II 5; Sardica 7; Chalcedon 8), marriage (Gangra 10), and the manumission of slaves (Carthage 64).

Second, scholasticism—not a philosophy but a method of reasoned inquiry, to which even modern scholarship owes a debt—was not unique to the West. Indeed, in his study of the reception of Thomas Aquinas in the Christian East, Plested (2012, 16-17) even argues that its influences can be traced to St. John of Damascus and St. Cyril of Alexandria, among other Eastern Fathers. In any case, much of this material from Eastern Scholastics remains overlooked by scholars concerned with modern Orthodox Christian social thought. Yet, to name just two

examples, St. Nicholas Cabasilas (1999) and St. Gennadios Scholarios (2022) both touch on matters of economic ethics in their works. The former (Cabasilas 1999) offers an extended defense of monastic liberty based on private property and the rule of law. The latter (Scholarios 2022) consists of various homilies and treatises, including advice for merchants and moneylenders, in addition to exhortations to almsgiving. No doubt, much more awaits in untranslated works by these and other Eastern scholastics as well. Not only should one expect thoughtful treatment of issues related to economic justice and mercy, but the common scholastic method used by both East and West at this time recommends these sources for the sake of ecumenical dialogue and cooperation as well. Moreover, the recent constructive work of Hirschfeld (2018) on Thomism and economics suggests additional common ground, in the light of Plested (2012), directly relevant to modern Christian social thought.

Next, during the same time period, according to Fedotov (1966, 2:188), "from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries" Novgorod was "a republic." The citizens' council or *veche* "elected the entire administration, not excluding the archbishop, and had the power to check on it and judge it" (Fedotov 1966, 2:189). They elected the prince and could depose him at will. Though the archbishop was "'president' of the republic…. To make him really independent, his name was drawn by lot from those of the candidates elected by the veche. The three lots on the altar in the Cathedral of St. Sophia symbolized the divine will for the fate of the city-state" (Fedotov 1966, 2:190-191). Thus, we might say, Novgorod managed to be both theocratic *and* democratic: The candidates for archbishop were chosen by the people, but God cast the deciding vote.

Novgorod depended on trade for its survival, and it had a body of laws that include many economic concerns. Furthermore, a 1471 charter (Vernadsky 1965, 83) begins by clearly affirming the rule of law: "The Archbishop-elect of Novgorod the Great and Pskov, Hieromonk

Theophilus, in his court—the ecclesiastical court—shall conduct trials in accordance with the rules of the holy fathers—the Nomocanon; and he shall give equal justice to every litigant, be he a boyar, or a middle-class burgher, or a lower-class burgher." Notice that the rule of law extended to all socio-economic classes, though one should note that like other medieval societies, slavery unfortunately existed there as well. Still, the Republic of St. Sophia, as it was alternatively called, was truly comparable to Western republics.

According to Fedotov (1966, 2:188), "Novgorod was not an outlandish growth in Russian life but the most Russian element in it, the element which was most free of Tatar admixture, and in addition contained, as it were, the possibility for a free culture to develop in the future." It was also an example of Orthodoxy largely outside the institutions and legal tradition of Rome as well as the despotism of the Mongols. Though not without any connection, we can see in Novgorod (and, for that matter, Pskov), that Orthodox Christianity was just as conducive to liberty as contemporary medieval Latin examples, such as Milan and Florence in Italy or *Magna Carta* in England. Not only does the example of Novgorod provide a basis for Orthodox in the West to authentically reconcile themselves with the broad liberal-democratic tradition at the basis of developed polities and economies today, but it puts the lie to the current narrative of Eurasianism that animates Russian militarism today (on which, see Morson 2024). Thus, it would seem to be a fruitful resource for political theology as well.

Last, the beginnings of the Russian Empire in the eighteenth century up to the Decemberist revolt in 1825 remains understudied for the sake of Orthodox social thought. As noted above, here Ivanov (2020) is an invaluable reference. During this period, the Orthodox East positively grappled with and appropriated Western ideas, though not uncritically. The situation was for more complex than domination of the czar over the Church (so-called

"caesaropapism"), and considerable social reform—though not always for the better—was often led by ecclesiastical hierarchs. Many in the Church, including Metropolitan Platon (Levshin) of Moscow (d. 1812) favored the adoption of a liberal constitution. Before the ill-fated Decemberist uprising and its brutal suppression by Emperor Nicholas I, anyone might have guessed that Russia would be the first traditionally Orthodox nation to embrace modern liberties and civil rights. The course of history did not turn in that direction, but the seeds were planted, and perhaps they could still bear fruit in our own contexts today. Many Orthodox today are embarrassed and ignorant of this period, but further study—and translation—is needed. Even just examining the few saints who have been canonized from this period, as well as the catechetical documents of the era (inclusive of Peter Mohyla's), could together make a significant contribution to Orthodox social thought. This, too, complicates the Eurasian narrative, but further study is needed, and I will refrain from editorializing on contemporary geopolitics here.

Prospects for Ecumenical Dialogue

In addition to dialogue and cooperation with the Roman Catholic social thought tradition, broader dialogue is possible as well. While one might not associate Protestantism and asceticism, Max Weber (1992) did exactly that, arguing that Calvinist "worldly asceticism" was the driving ethic of modern capitalism. In fact, though a long tradition of anti-monastic sentiment can be found in Protestant sources, and asceticism is often associated with perceived sixteenth-century monastic abuses, nevertheless most Protestants still practiced prayer, fasting, almsgiving, labor, and various other forms of ascetic self-discipline, as can be seen, for example, in the practical theology of Baxter (1825).

Moreover, historically at least, Protestants, too, shared the scholastic method and even natural law (see Grabill 2006). Protestants especially have expanded upon the traditional social estates of family, state, and Church (see, e.g., Hemmingsen 2018; von Harless 1868; Maurice 1872). Bonhoeffer (1955), referring to these as "mandates," added "culture" or "work" to these three, adapting them to the modern reality of an independent economic sector of social life, while rooting this adaptation in his exposition of the commands given to humanity in Genesis 2. Williams (2021, 189-194) has even put the *Philokalia* in dialogue with Bonhoeffer's concept of *Wirklichkeitgemässheit* or *Sachgemässheit* ("appropriateness" or "fittingness") in his discussion of political theology informed by the insights of Orthodox ascetic spirituality. Martensen (1899) and Kuyper (1931), meanwhile, expanded their social frameworks to include a numberless array of social spheres, each with their own principles, boundaries, and ends. My own published works include two papers on F. D. Maurice (Pahman 2024b; 2023a) and six on Abraham Kuyper (Pahman 2024b; 2023d; 2020; 2018b; 2016c; 2015b). Thus, I am well on my way toward contributing to the ecumenically comparative work needed in this area as well.

In Orthodox sources, as already noted above in Section C, the social categories employed are too-often inadequate to the task of Christian social thought, failing to acknowledge a specifically economic sector of social life. However, as noted in my introduction, Soloviev (Solovyov 2005) did distinguish between Church, state, and economy, though unfortunately limiting asceticism to the last of these. Evdokimov (1998) outlined a similar distinction between economic, intellectual, and governmental spheres, and he helpfully applies ascetic categories to all of them, but again his analysis seems too narrow, analyzing each from the perspective of only one traditional monastic vow—poverty, chastity, and obedience, respectively. But certainly, religious institutions and adherents must also practice simplicity and exercise authority;

governments and politicians must practice fiscal responsibility and chastity; and economic institutions and actors also require appropriate sexual conduct and a structure of authority. Thus, while helpful, Evdokimov's contributions, like Soloviev's, still seem too idealistic to be fully practical today. Indeed, there is a general need for Christian social ethics more precisely to define these social categories and the relations between them. An ecumenical taxonomy of society is needed, in addition to principles that govern the emergence of new social systems, sectors, spheres, and institutions, that would better augment both social-scientific research and social philosophy, all while rooted in timeless Christian principles.

Further Interdisciplinary Work

If my analysis of asceticism holds, there are as many avenues for interdisciplinary study as there are spheres of society. Nevertheless, given the recent and growing Orthodox interest in political theology, I will focus on another use of my research for this field. In addition to incorporating political economy into their analysis, as I argue in Pahman (2017a), discussed above in Section C, the modern liberal concept of a social contract seems to me to follow an ascetic logic. The idea that for the sake of safety and mutual support, people voluntarily limit their own freedom and subject themselves to common laws and legitimate authorities, fits well the self-transcendent, social dialectic of asceticism outlined above in Section A.

No doubt, this would not be compatible with every form of liberal political philosophy—Locke (1821) seems a better fit than Hobbes (1962) or Rousseau (1948), for example—nor would elements of specifically socially progressive liberalism be compatible with traditional Orthodox social ethics. Yet admitting what compatibility does exist would once again give Orthodox Christians a better vocabulary for public discourse and action in developed societies

today. Papanikolaou (2012, 151) does at least tie together Augustine, various forms of political liberalism, and asceticism, writing, “If the struggle of the Christian is to rightly order our disordered loves, then political engagement is part of that *ascesis*.” He does not, however, mention the concept of a social contract in this context, and I do not want to assume he would agree with my suggestion. Nevertheless, the general point seems clear enough: There should be greater interest in the relation between asceticism and political liberalism in Orthodox political theology as well, even if only to add greater nuance to critical views.

Additionally, given the connection between asceticism and sacramental grace—the latter being actualized in us by the former—interdisciplinary work with liturgical theology, especially as it pertains to Christian social thought, would be fitting. Indeed, Evdokimov (1998) and Schmemann (1973) already incorporate asceticism into their social applications of liturgical theology. Fagerberg (2013) has even contributed a book entirely dedicated to the study of what he calls “liturgical asceticism,” in which he notes the natural basis of asceticism and the universal ascetic calling of all baptized Christians that serves as a transfigured mindset or even worldview, encompassing anthropology, cosmology, and theology. Surely, more work integrating the insights of asceticism, as detailed in my research submitted for this PhD, with liturgical theology is merited.

Last, as discussed above in Appendix A (Pahman 2024a) and for the purpose of outlining a more analytically precise ecumenical social taxonomy, my recent research has explored the potential of asceticism to integrate with the general systems theory of Kenneth Boulding as a beginning of this needed work. Future work of mine will aim to expand Boulding’s framework into four social systems rather than three, for greater analytical precision and scientific applicability. Whereas Boulding distinguishes between the positive-sum, exchange economy and

zero-sum (in material terms) grants economy, the latter is divided into personal integrative systems and impersonal threat systems. The exchange economy should admit of this same distinction, specifically into informal friendships and formal markets, respectively, yet Boulding neglects to do so, viewing friendship as limited to two-person relations. In particular, I (Pahman 2023c) argue in a recent academic editorial that the category of friendship fits the personal and positive-sum character of this missing system in Boulding's analysis. Christian reflection on the nature of friendship has biblical and patristic roots and is underutilized in Christian social thought, though I will not elaborate further here. I will only add that I believe this category of friendship, as defined above, fits well Benedict XVI's (2009, §39) insistence on an economy of "reciprocal gifts."

This taxonomy is illustrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Social Systems

Social Systems	Personal (high trust)	Impersonal (low trust)	
Grants Economy	***Integrative Systems***	***Threat Systems***	
Zero-Sum, Hierarchical	Family, Church, Charity	Law, Security	*Only this row: Pre-modern worldview*
Exchange Economy	***Informal Markets***	***Formal Markets***	
Positive-Sum/ Productive, Egalitarian	Friendships, Mutual Aid, Social Societies, Black Markets	Bank, Supermarket, Online Vendors	*Only this row: Economistic worldview*
	This column only: Tribalist worldview	*This column only: Modernist/Secularist worldview*	

Other Orthodox Social Principles

My research is not meant to be absolute—other social principles are needed for Orthodox Christian social thought, not just asceticism. I have tried to highlight this especially with reference to principles shared in common with Western confessions, such as natural law, human

dignity, and so on. But the Orthodox have more to offer the broader conversation of modern Christian social thought than asceticism. In particular, though again it is not entirely unique to the Christian East, the concept of *catholicity* or *sobornost'* (see Jakim & Bird 1998; Frank 1987) seems especially useful. Meyendorff (1983, 8), while distinguishing between these terms (the latter comes from the Old Slavonic translation of the Creed), nevertheless states,

> the roots of the Slavic term *sobornaya tser'kov* lead back directly to the ecclesiology of St. Ignatius. Of course, this original meaning did not exclude the particular and rich intuitions of A. S. Khomyakov and his group in the nineteenth century about the Church as an assembly or "council" (*sobor*), and about the "conciliar" nature of the Christian faith. Indeed, that faith, as Khomyakov saw, is not the knowledge of an individual but a vision implying *communion* in the Spirit with the saints of all ages and all places. This is an essential dimension of catholicity.

St. Ignatius of Antioch marks the earliest occurrence of the term "Catholic Church," and read in context in his Epistle to the Smyrnaeans, the connection to care for the poor is unmistakable (Richardson 1970, 114):

> Pay close attention to those who have wrong notions about the grace of Jesus Christ, which has come to us, and note how at variance they are with God's mind. They care nothing about love: they have no concern for widows or orphans, for the oppressed, for those in prison or released, for the hungry or the thirsty. They

> hold aloof from the Eucharist and from services of prayer, because they refuse to admit that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and which, in his goodness the Father raised [from the dead]. They would have done better to love and so share in the resurrection. (6.1-7.1)

It is only after criticizing docetic Gnostics for denying the Incarnation not only through their beliefs, but in their actions, specifically their anti-liturgical attitudes and their neglect for the poor, that he (Richardson 1970, 115) then promotes the ecclesiastical hierarchy: "You should regard that Eucharist as valid which is celebrated either by the bishop or by someone he authorizes. Where the bishop is present, there let the congregation gather, just as where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church" (8.1-2)

The term *katholikon* is a compound of *kata* ("according to") and *olon* ("the whole"). In the anti-Gnostic context of the epistle, it cannot be concluded that Ignatius simply meant to draw an analogy between the bishop and Christ, the local and the universal Church. Rather, through the bishop, Christ is present in the Eucharist, whereby Christians become "one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17). Christ thereby becomes present in us, and we who believe him to have really become incarnate for our salvation cannot neglect the bodily suffering of those around us and still claim to embody the catholicity of the Church—it implies not only universality or right doctrine, but also holistic ministry. As St. Maria Skobtsova (2003, 73) put it, connecting *sobornost'* with the supernatural calling of the imitation of the Mother of God:

> In the Christian life there should be not only the holy folly of the cross, but also the holy folly of the sword, not only the crucifixion of the self, but also the co-crucifixion of oneself, the standing on Golgotha, at the foot of every human cross. The Christian soul should be filial, that is, cross-bearing, but also maternal, that is, receptive of the sword in the heart.

So, too, in the philosophy of S. L. Frank (1987), *sobornost'* signifies true, spiritual unity, an Orthodox analogue to solidarity in the Roman Catholic tradition, by which society is transformed from a mere mechanical order into a living organism.

Practical Applications

Finally, I conclude with a note on the need for practical applications. To the extent that asceticism ought to be applied universally by all Christians, embodying the Gospel itself, and to the extent all of creation can be used for virtue when engaged with an ascetic mindset, we should be able, without closing our eyes to the many challenges and tragedies of our contemporary world, to offer far more affirming and pastoral guidance for those whose vocations fall primarily in the world of business and commerce. So, too, this perspective ought to inform Orthodox social ministries that already do great work to help the poor, such as the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), and FOCUS North America. Renewed examination of questions of wealth; lending; justice in exchange; the moral worth of labor; the sins of greed and envy; duties of mercy to the poor, sick, and incarcerated; and many more areas would admit greater nuance and sophistication if grounded in the ascetic tradition of the Church and informed by the insights of modern economics. My research

submitted for this PhD has sought to pave a way to that end, for both the kingdom of God and the common good.

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Published Works Submitted for this PhD

Pahman, D. (2019). V. S. Soloviev and the Russian Roots of Personalism. *Rule of Faith* 1, pp. 1-10.

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These works follow in chronological order (beginning with Pahman 2013, ending with Pahman 2019).

What Makes a Society?
An Orthodox Perspective on Asceticism, Marriage, the Family, and Society.[389]

Dylan Pahman

Introduction

What makes a society? While this may seem like a simple question, the various ways in which different schools of Christian social thought answer it have wide-reaching ramifications for how one approaches any societal challenge. This essay seeks to offer a constructive, Orthodox Christian answer to the question and argues for its broader relevance to Christian social thought as a whole. I begin by very briefly surveying three other approaches, the Roman Catholic (subsidiarity), neo-Calvinist (sphere sovereignty), and the presocial or statist. Drawing upon Fr. Georges Florovsky's definition of true asceticism, patristic biblical commentary and theology, and Vladimir Solovyov's analysis of the ascetic nature of marriage in his work *The Justification of the Good*, I argue for asceticism as the Orthodox answer to the question, 'What makes a society?'[390]

[389] A large portion of this paper, which was first presented at the 2012 Sophia conference, is a revision of two sections from my forthcoming monograph to be published by the Acton Institute. My thanks to those at the Sophia conference for their helpful comments and feedback.

[390] A good account of asceticism in the Orthodox tradition comes from Archimandrite Sophrony. 'Principles of Orthodox Asceticism.' Trans. Edmonds, R. In *The Orthodox Ethos*. Holywell Press. Oxford. 1964, 259–86. Unfortunately, though I agree that monasticism contains transferable concepts to asceticism in the world, he focuses almost exclusively on the former, only mentioning the latter in passing throughout. Thus, for example, his long study of the monastic virtue of virginity, however important, needs to be adapted to chastity outside of marriage and sexual moderation within to have any real relevance. The translation of this monastic concept to the everyday context of people in the world is left to the reader. Metropolitan Ware, on the other hand, gives a far more practical assessment in the context of Great Lent. See Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia. 'Lent and the Consumer Society.' In ed. Walker, A. and Carras, C. *Living Orthodoxy in the Modern World: Orthodox Christianity and Society*. St Vladimir's Seminary Press. Crestwood, NY. 2000, 64–84. Also notable is Bulgakov, who warned pre-soviet Russia of the dangers of replacing the ideal of

Though several principles have been advocated as the core Orthodox principle of societal engagement—such as incarnation and resurrection, holism, *diakonia*, and *agape*—these, however true and useful, tend to be based upon little substantial research and, in some cases, can be overly abstract for a subject that requires a healthy practicality and realism in order to be applicable.[391] In general, though, there seems to be little thoughtful reflection on such matters at all. As Aristotle Papanikolaou observes,

> For the first time in nearly six hundred years, the Orthodox Church has no shadow [lurking over it], and yet it remains somewhat in the dark on how to respond to the political realities it confronts. A somewhat half-hearted endorsement of democracy with a push toward assuring a cultural hegemony seems to have emerged as the norm. The result is a lack of sustained reflection on what the Orthodox affirmation that creation was created for communion with God would mean for an Orthodox response to the given political and cultural situation.[392]

While I find Papanikolaou's own work to be helpful in bringing some much needed light into this darkness, the question 'what

the ascetic saint with the revolutionary student. See Bulgakov, S. 'Heroism and Asceticism: Reflections on the Religious Nature of the Russian Intelligentsia.' In *Vekhi: Landmarks – A Collection of Articles about the Russian Intelligentsia*, ed. and trans. Shatz, M.S. and Zimmerman, J.E. M. E. Sharpe. Armonk, NY. 1994 [1909], 17–50. In addition, for a brief account of the relevance of freely-chosen asceticism in the context of human rights, see Archbishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos). *Facing the World: Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*. St Vladimir's Seminary Press. Crestwood, NY. WCC Publications. Geneva, Switzerland. 2003, 73–4.

[391] For incarnation and resurrection, see Agourides, S. 'The Social Character of Orthodoxy.' In ed. Philippou, A.J. *The Orthodox Ethos*, 209–20. For holism, see Crow, G. 'The Orthodox Vision of Wholeness.' In *Living Orthodoxy*, 7–22. For *diakonia*, see Bishop Basil of Sergievo. 'Living in the Future.' In *Living Orthodoxy*, 23–36. For *agape*, see Constantelos, D.J. 'The Social Ethos of Eastern Orthodoxy.' in ed. Costa, F.D. *God and Charity: Images of Eastern Orthodox Theology, Spirituality, and Practice*. (Holy Cross Orthodox Press. Brookline, MA. 1979), 75–87.

[392] Papanikolaou, A. *The Mystical as Political: Democracy and Non-Radical Orthodoxy*. (University of Notre Dame Press. Notre Dame, IN. 2012), 53.

makes a society?' is broader than faith and politics. My concern is to discover a fundamental, Orthodox principle of human society itself, and I argue that such a principle can be found in asceticism. For the sake of comparison, however, let me first consider some answers from other traditions.

Other Answers

For Roman Catholics, each community has a God-given nature and purpose. With this in mind, the Roman Catholic answer to the question comes in the form of subsidiarity, which holds that each social problem is to be addressed by the most local community and only appropriated by a higher level if a particular community is in need of outside assistance (*subsidium*). Pope Pius XI describes it in the context of the state as follows,

> The supreme authority of the State ought ... to let subordinate groups handle matters and concerns of lesser importance, which would otherwise dissipate its efforts greatly. Thereby the State will more freely, powerfully, and effectively do all those things that belong to it alone because it alone can do them: directing, watching, urging, restraining, as occasion requires and necessity demands. Therefore, those in power should be sure that the more perfectly a graduated order is kept among the various associations, in observance of the principle of 'subsidiary function,' the stronger social authority and effectiveness will be the happier and more prosperous the condition of the State.[393]

Subsidiarity can be viewed as a social application of the idea that grace perfects nature[394]—all levels of society are linked together, dependent upon one another and ultimately upon divine grace for their fulfillment. Thus from a Roman Catholic perspective what

[393] Pope Pius XI, Encyclical Letter *Quadrigesimo Anno* (1931), 80. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno_en.html. Accessed September 13th, 2012.

[394] See Aquinas, T. *Summa Theologica*, Ia q. 1 a. 8 ad 2.

makes a society is the hierarchy of communities related to one another through the principle of subsidiarity.

For neo-Calvinists, society is composed of spheres which have their own internal laws.[395] The neo-Calvinist answer is that each sphere is to be sovereign over its own domain and not intrude upon any other. The various spheres of social life—politics, economics, science, art, church, family, and so on—are to be autonomous in distinction from each other while, nevertheless, in solidarity with one another in a common calling to be subordinated to the sovereign rule of Jesus Christ over all creation. As Dutch theologian, pastor, statesman, and polymath Abraham Kuyper famously put it in the context of education, 'Oh, no single piece of our mental world is to be hermetically sealed off from the rest, and there is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over *all*, does not cry: 'Mine!''[396] This sphere sovereignty, then, is what truly makes a society from a neo-Calvinist perspective.

Other traditions have other answers. For example, one prominent approach—perhaps more often assumed today than thoughtfully chosen—is the idea that human nature is presocial. This barbaric state of nature is only overcome when order is imposed upon people from outside of them by a powerful, sovereign state. Naturally, this statist approach favors state-centered solutions to social challenges in accordance with its assumed answer to the question, 'What makes a society?' The power of the state makes society, and the state is therefore the primary solution to all of society's problems.[397]

[395] For an introduction to this perspective, see Kuyper, A. 'Sphere Sovereignty' (1880). In ed. Bratt, J.D. *Abraham Kuyper, A Centennial Reader*. (Eerdmans. Grand Rapids, MI. 1998), 461–90.

[396] Kuyper. 'Sphere Sovereignty,' 488.

[397] For a more detailed summary of the three foregoing positions, see Ossewaarde, M. 'Settling the 'Social Question': Three Variants of Modern Christian Social Thought.' *Journal of Markets & Morality* 14, no. 2, Fall 2011, 301–317. (This entire issue was a theme issue on modern Christian social thought and contains many insightful articles from both the Roman Catholic and Reformed perspectives.) In examining the three positions outlined here in the nineteenth

My goal in the rest of this paper is to very briefly outline an Orthodox Christian answer to this question. As may become apparent, I do not feel that it is mutually exclusive with the Roman Catholic or neo-Calvinist approaches but rather that it offers another perspective by bringing to the forefront an area of Christian thought often neglected or minimalized by these traditions in discussions of social ethics: asceticism. This, I argue, is the Orthodox answer to the question, 'What makes a society?' and ultimately fundamental to Christian approaches to social challenges in general.

Asceticism as a Societal Principle : Asceticism in the Orthodox Tradition

But what is asceticism? 'True asceticism,' writes Fr. Georges Florovsky, 'is inspired not by contempt, but by the urge of transformation.'[398] Indeed, even hermits do not hate the world or view themselves as wholly disconnected from it: 'Asceticism, as a rule, does not require detachment from the Cosmos.'[399] Rather, it is means of transforming the world, whether one lives in the world or the desert. Indeed, for Orthodox Christians, everyone is called to asceticism to a greater or lesser degree. 'Ascetical virtues can be practiced by laymen also, and by those who stay in the world,' writes Florovsky.[400] They not only can, but are, as has

century Netherlands, Ossewaarde refers to the statist school of thought as the 'sovereignty' tradition. I have altered his terminology here since I know of no one who would explicitly identify as such today. This tradition is nevertheless longstanding and at one time was just as academic as the others. According to Ossewaarde, an example of one prominent thinker in this tradition would be Thomas Hobbes who taught that the king is a 'mortal god' whose will is law and who is subject to God alone. See Hobbes, T. *Leviathan*. Ed. Plamenatz, J. Meridian Books. New York, NY. 1963, 176, cited in Ossewaarde. 'Settling the Social Question,' 303 and 315n5.

[398] Florovsky, G. 'Christianity and Civilization.' In *Christianity and Culture*. The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, vol. 2. Nordland. Belmont, MA. 1974, 128.

[399] Ibid., 125.

[400] Ibid., 126.

always been the case from the very beginning of the Church, long before the rise of Christian monasticism, in fact.[401]

Christian asceticism is characterized by the three basic spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, as well as labor, simplicity, obedience, and sexual restraint, among others, all for the transformative purpose of cultivating purity of heart and true, sacrificial love. According to St. Moses the Ethiopian, the disciplines 'are to be rungs of a ladder up which [the heart] may climb to perfect charity [i.e., love].'[402] Similarly, St. Maximos the Confessor writes, 'Once you control the passions you will accept affliction patiently, and through such acceptance you will acquire hope in God. Hope in God separates the intellect from every worldly attachment, and when the intellect is detached in this way it will acquire love for God.'[403] Asceticism, of course, is the primary means by which people learn to 'control the passions,' attaining the necessary self-control, patience, and hope for true

[401] In addition to the common coupling of prayer and fasting in the New Testament (cf. Matthew 17:21; Mark 9:29; Luke 2:37; Acts 13:3, 14:23), it is sufficient to note that the *Didache* recommends fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays (*Didache* 8.1-2. In trans. Richardson, C.C. *Early Christian Fathers*. Westminster Press. Philadelphia, PA. 1953, 174), a practice still observed by Orthodox Christians today, and that the practice of observing a period of fasting before Pascha (Easter) can be documented from, at least, the time of St. Irenaeus (see Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical History* 5.24.11-18. *NPNF*[2] 1:243-4). See also the elaborate metaphor of the relationship between the body and soul in the *Epistle to Diognetus* 6 (*ANF* 1:27). If this is not enough, one needs only to consult the work of Tilley on the crucial role asceticism played in the endurance of the earliest martyrs and Satlow on the presence of asceticism in Judaism of the same time period to see from the former that asceticism was not only present in the early Church, but essential, and from the latter that it was not only Hellenistic (as if that would be a bad thing), but thoroughly Jewish as well. See Tilley, M.A. 'The Ascetic Body and the (Un)Making of the World of the Martyr.' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, no. 3. Autumn, 1991, 467-79 and Satlow, M.L. ''And on the Earth You Shall Sleep': 'Talmud Torah' and Rabbinic Asceticism.' *The Journal of Religion* 83, no. 2. Apr., 2003, 204-25.

[402] Cassian, J. *Conferences* 1.7. In ed. Chadwick, O. *Western Asceticism*. (John Knox Press. Westminster. 1979), 198.

[403] Maximos the Confessor, *Four Hundred Texts on Love* 1.3. In Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and Makarios of Corinth. *The Philokalia*. Vol. 2. Trans. and ed. by Palmer, G.E.H., Sherrard, P., and Ware, K. Faber and Faber. London. 1981, 53.

agape or charity, the highest form of love.[404] More to the point of this paper, the same would also apply to *philanthropia*, which Vicki Petrakis identifies as 'the fruit of the meeting between human volition in *askesis* and divine grace in *theosis*' for St. Gregory the Theologian,[405] and which Fr. John McGuckin describes as 'the very root and core of all that is meant by civilized values' in Greek thought.[406]

The fundamental nature of true asceticism is reflected, I believe, first of all in the Scriptures. For example, according to St. Basil the Great, the command not to eat from the tree in the Garden (Genesis 2:16–17) was actually a fast ('do not eat'), and humanity's relationship with God, each other, and the world was distorted by abandoning this ascetic mandate.[407] Indeed, the command to 'fill

[404] Similarly, Vladimir Solovyov insists that true asceticism is inseparable from true piety and altruism. See Solovyov, V.S. *The Justification of the Good*. Rev. ed. Trans. Nathalie A. Duddington. Ed. Boris Jakim. Eerdmans. Grand Rapids, MI. 2005, 51–2: 'Asceticism in itself is not necessarily a good, and cannot therefore be the supreme or the absolute principle of morality. The true (the moral) ascetic acquires control over the flesh, not simply for the sake of increasing the powers of the spirit, but for furthering the realisation of the Good. Asceticism which liberates the spirit from shameful (carnal) passions only to attach it more closely to evil (spiritual) passions is obviously a false and immoral asceticism. Its true prototype, according to the Christian ideal, is the devil, who does not eat or drink and remains in celibacy. If, then, from the moral point of view we cannot approve of a wicked or pitiless ascetic, it follows that the principle of asceticism has only a relative moral significance, namely, that it is *conditioned* by its connection with the principle of altruism, the root of which is pity.' Simons interprets this connection in the context of Solovyov's thought on war and the natural reverence due to one's ancestors. See Simons, A. 'In the Name of the Spirits: A Reading of Solovyov's 'Justification of the Good.'' *Studies in East European Thought* 51, no. 3. Sept. 1999, 189–90.

[405] Petrakis, V. '*Philanthropia* as a Social Reality of *Askesis and Theosis* in Gregory the Theologian's Oration: *On the Love of the Poor*.' In ed. Pereira, M.J. *Philanthropy and Social Compassion in Eastern Orthodox Tradition*. The Sophia Institute: Studies in Orthodox Theology. Vol. 2. Theotokos Press – The Sophia Institute. New York, NY. 2010, 91.

[406] McGuckin, J. 'Embodying the New Society: The Byzantine Christian Instinct of Philanthropy.' In *Philanthropy and Social Compassion*, 54.

[407] See Basil of Caesarea. *About Fasting* 1.3. This can be found in Greek and English with translation by Burghuis, K. at: http://bible.org/seriespage/appendix-1-basil%E2%80%99s-sermons-about-fasting. Accessed September 11, 2012.

the earth and subdue it' (Genesis 1:28) even takes on an ascetic meaning so long as one accounts for the fact that Adam's body was itself made from the dust of the earth, only becoming 'a living soul' by the breath of God (Genesis 2:7). '[E]very one will allow,' writes St. Irenaeus of Lyon, 'that we are [composed of] a body taken from the earth, and a soul receiving spirit from God.'[408] As earth, the body must therefore be ascetically cultivated and subdued as well. Biblically, asceticism is a matter of our creational design, even present in the paradisiacal state. Our fallen condition makes this more difficult but does not change the mandate: 'to till the ground' (compare Genesis 2:5b to 3:23), only now 'in the sweat of your face' (Genesis 3:19) and among 'thorns and thistles' (Genesis 3:18).

Asceticism in Marriage

In *The Justification of the Good*, the Russian Orthodox philosopher Vladimir Solovyov writes, 'True asceticism ... has two forms—*monasticism* and *marriage*.'[409] Marriage, of course, is the most basic societal institution, ideally at the heart of the family, the most basic and natural societal group. If marriage is truly a form of asceticism, then society itself must be ascetic in its roots.

But how is marriage ascetic? St. Paul, first of all, defines marriage as a relationship of mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21–33) in

[408] Irenaeus of Lyons. *Against Heresies* 3.22.1. *ANF* 1:454.

[409] Solovyov. *Justification of the Good*, 356. I would add that, certainly, single people who live 'in the world' also have an ascetic calling. Given that Solovyov was unmarried, I suspect he would agree. Furthermore, the work of Sorabji is worth noting here, in which he details several fathers of the Church who, while acknowledging *apatheia* or dispassion as the ultimate ascetic ideal, commended *metriopatheia* or the moderation of the passions to those in the world. See Sorabji, R. *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*. Oxford University Press. New York, NY. 2000, 285–99. In this paper I am concerned with Solovyov's late thought as reflected in *The Justification of the Good*. His thought evolved over the course of his life, and I make no attempt to harmonize his later work with his earlier work here. For a brief summary of sex and marriage in Solovyov's work more generally, see Polyakov, L.V. 'Women's Emancipation and the Theology of Sex in Nineteenth-Century Russia.' *Philosophy East and West* 42, no. 2. Moscow Regional East-West Philosophers' Conference on Feminist Issues East and West. Apr., 1992, 306–307.

which one's body is not one's own (1 Corinthians 7:4). Similarly, Solovyov notes that the bond of marriage actually limits and transforms sexual desire, writing,

> Marriage remains the satisfaction of the sexual want, which, however, no longer refers to the external nature of the animal organism, but to the nature that is human and is awaiting to become divine. A tremendous *problem* arises which can only be solved by constant *renunciation*.... From this point of view the fullness of life-satisfaction which includes bodily senses is connected not with the preceding lust but with the subsequent joy of realized perfection.[410]

To paraphrase, for Solovyov the only way in which sexual desire is truly human and moral, rather than being animal and amoral, is through self-renunciation. Human beings voluntarily deny their sexual desire when they limit it to marriage and when, in marriage, sex becomes primarily a service to the other for their own moral development rather than to one's self, eventually even becoming unnecessary.[411] In this way, it serves as a means of moral perfection and underscores the essentially ascetic nature of the Christian conception of marriage in this regard. Furthermore,

[410] Solovyov. *Justification of the Good*, 357–8.

[411] For Solovyov in a perfect marriage 'reproduction [and therefore sex] becomes unnecessary and impossible' (*Justification of the Good*, 358). This view is not unique to Solovyov. For example, St. John of Kronstadt and his wife lived together in celibacy, and St. Gregory the Theologian says that his parents' marriage in the end was 'a union of virtue rather than of bodies.' See Kizenko, N. 'Ioann of Kronstadt and the Reception of Sanctity, 1850-1988.' *Russian Review* 57, no. 3. Jul., 1998, 328 and Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 18: On the Death of His Father* 7. *NPNF*[2] 7:256. It seems, then, that asceticism is a normative part, and even a goal, of romantic love and marriage for Solovyov and that this is not unique to him. Kornblatt argues that Solovyov preferred an understanding of Eros as leading one 'on the path toward the image and likeness of God' to and at the ultimate exclusion of asceticism, but it would seem that her characterization of Solovyov's erotic philosophy does not agree with his later work with which I am here exclusively concerned. In the *Justification of the Good*, Solovyov argues that asceticism is one of three essential moral duties, the other two being piety and altruism. See Kornblatt, J.D. 'The Transfiguration of Plato in the Erotic Philosophy of Vladimir Solov'ev.' *Religion & Literature* 24, no. 2. Summer, 1992, 43.

it is my contention that no society (including, of course, marriage and the family), exists or finds its fulfillment apart from the self-limitation of its members (not only sexually, but also spatially, temporally, emotionally, often even dietetically)—even if only to a small extent—by which they are transformed into a community. Asceticism, then, is essential to human society.[412]

Asceticism in the Family

Indeed, this principle is not merely an abstract ideal but also the fact of the matter. There simply is no society in which each person only and always follows the desires of the flesh; such a distortion of society has no existence of itself and cannot exist in an absolute form. It would be the utter negation of society. As Solovyov argues, '[T]he indefinite multiplication of external and particular wants, and the recognition of the external means of satisfying them as ends in themselves—is the principle of disorganization, of social decomposition, while the principle of moral philosophy [i.e. asceticism]... is the principle of organization....'[413] The closer a society approximates the former, the more dysfunctional it will be. By contrast, the more a society is ascetic (as defined above), the healthier it will be.

For example, we can confirm this by reflecting on the everyday *habitus* of the family. Do we not call dysfunctional a family in which the children are allowed to eat ice cream for breakfast, where the family spends no intentional time together, and disobedience is never disciplined? Do we not rightly call out a deadbeat parent who abandons his/her children, refusing to sacrifice in order to provide for them, instead pursuing a selfish existence? Healthy families, on the other hand, eat meals together

[412] See Archimandrite Sophrony. 'Principles of Orthodox Asceticism,' 259.

[413] Solovyov. *Justification of the Good*, 400. It is clear from the following paragraph that Solovyov has asceticism in mind here. He is specifically speaking of the economic sphere of life, conceived broadly, but it would not be out of place to apply this insight elsewhere since asceticism is one of three basic moral duties to Solovyov, the other two being piety and altruism, as I have already noted. Piety and altruism may be the primary moral duties of the Church and the state, respectively, but that does not mean that any can function in a manner contrary to asceticism, correctly understood.

according to their own established dietary limitations ('eat your vegetables, then you can have dessert,' for example); they share time and space with one another; the parents sacrifice their time and desires in order to work to provide for the children; the children are required to do chores to contribute to the household; and so on. Society simply does not 'work' apart from ascetic self-renunciation.

True, such asceticism may be quite light by most standards and not the perfect embodiment of the ideal, but the basic principle must, nonetheless, be present. From the simple asceticism of the average family to the monasteries of Mount Athos, through denying oneself—especially one's material comforts—for a greater good, a collection of mere individuals is transformed into a community. Not everyone may be called to monasticism, but no one exists apart from the family, where the basic principles of true asceticism are (or at least ought to be) first practiced and modeled. As *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church* states,

> The experience of family relations teaches a person to overcome sinful egoism and lays the foundations for his [or her] sense of civic duty. It is in the family as a school of devotion that the right attitude to one's neighbours and therefore to one's people and society as a whole is formed.[414]

From the family come all other forms of society, and the family does not function properly apart from asceticism. And when each community and sector of society embraces this ascetic standpoint, they necessarily respect the autonomy of others through their own self-renunciation while being transformed into what they themselves are truly meant to be.

[414] Department for External Church Relations. *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*. Moscow Patriarchate. Moscow, Russia. 2000, 10.6. http://www.mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/. Accessed September 11th, 2012.

Conclusion

So what makes a society? As unlikely as it may sound at first blush, I contend that the Orthodox answer is asceticism and that this answer need not be limited to the Orthodox tradition but reflects a fundamental reality of society as everyone, in fact, experiences it. As such, this Orthodox perspective therefore constitutes a vital contribution to Christian social thought as a whole and one that deserves to be explored in greater detail and to be further employed in future Christian societal engagement. It is an answer, I believe, that speaks directly to the sentiment of the eighteenth century, Irish statesman and political philosopher Edmund Burke:

> Society cannot exist, unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere; and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.[415]

Asceticism is the means by which people put inner restraint 'upon will and appetite,' apart from which they 'cannot be free' and '[s]ociety cannot exist.' And indeed, if, according to Archimandrite Sophrony, '[a]sceticism, understood as spiritual labour, constitutes an inseparable part of the histories of all known religions and civilizations, even of civilizations with no religious basis,'[416] then asceticism as a core societal principle holds great potential for thoughtful public discourse as well.

[415] Burke, E. *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly, in Answer to Some Objections to His Book on French Affairs* in *The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*. Vol. 4. John C. Nimmo. London. 1887, 52.

[416] Archimandrite Sophrony. 'Principles of Orthodox Asceticism,' 259. Furthermore, Bulgakov documents the historical role of asceticism and monasticism in the founding and economic development of many cities in the Christian world, both East and West. See Bulgakov, S. 'The National Economy and the Religious Personality (1909).' Trans. Stanchev, K. *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1. Spring 2008, esp. 162–5.

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Anna Komnene's Alexiad: Legacy from the Good Daughter (Kale Thugater) [417]

V.K. McCarty

'I wish to recall everything, the achievements before his elevation to the throne and his actions in the service of others.'[418]

In exploring aspects of the Orthodox experience of family life, we are able to bring to the table a family from the threshold of twelfth-century Constantinople and see a Byzantine emperor and empress viewed by their imperial daughter--in the epic narrative of the *Alexiad*. It is the 'chief basis of our knowledge of the important period which saw the restoration of Byzantine power and the meeting of Byzantium with the West in the First Crusade.'[419] While this work has been examined from the standpoint of social context and genre, it can also be viewed as reflecting one daughter's love, even within the moral complexity of this particular Orthodox family as it is played out on the stage of Byzantine historiography. The eldest daughter of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1057-1118, ruled 1081-1118) and Irene Doukaina (1066-1023, or 1033), Anna Komnene (1083-1153 or 54) is representative of a period in Byzantine history when the power of great aristocratic families became amplified and inter-connected by strategic marriage alliances. Alexios was the first of the Komnenian Byzantine emperors and Irene's family was known to trace its lineage back to Constantine the Great.[420]

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[417] This essay is dedicated to Dr. Charles O. Long, MD, the author's father, on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday.

[418] A Comnena. *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*. E Sewter. (trans). (Penguin Books. London. 1969. Prologue). p. 17. Referenced hereafter by book, chapter, and page number. Transliterated spellings from the Greek conform in general to *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, for the sake of uniformity.

[419] G Ostrogorsky. *History of the Byzantine State*. (Rutgers University Press. New Brunswick, NJ. 1969). p. 351.

[420] There was a tradition that he had appointed their forbear the Duke of Constantinople, hence the family name Dukas.

ORTHODOX MONASTICISM
PAST AND PRESENT

EDITED BY

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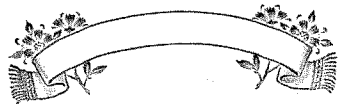
Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology Vol. 8.

move on from, events like this? I think one of the most rational and potentially productive ways forward would be for the churches to support systematic and further research into mental health issues within monastic communities.

The reflections in this paper amount to a case study. Studies of single cases yield valuable, but limited information. The very fact that Nevins fell into a crisis that unfolded (at least in part) during his residence at the St. Antony's Monastery suggests that crises of this nature *can* happen in monastic communities; and most things that are found to be at least possible, probably *will* happen at some point. The Evagrian material surveyed in this paper further suggests that psychic crises befell members of monastic communities with some regularity—at least they did in the remote past, and at least with enough frequency that Evagrius felt compelled to commit some instructions to writing to address the issue. What remains unknown at this point, however, is just how often these mental health crises *actually* happen in modern monastic communities. Without any clear idea of the prevalence of severe psychic crises in Orthodox monastic communities broadly, it is impossible to interpret the meaning of particular events like this. In other words, it is impossible for us to know at this point whether Nevins's experience was in some way aberrant and isolated, or whether his story is one of many like it, that point to troubling trends afoot within the monasteries of the Orthodox churches in the modern era. Developing a body of data on the prevalence of severe psychic crisis in monastic communities—and then comparing those statistics with the general population—will be the next step, should the Orthodox churches decide to take up this research project and carry it forward. As a psychotherapeutic counselor and a theologian of Christian antiquity, I recommend it to the hierarchs as something to weigh carefully.



MARKETS AND MONASTICISM: A SURVEY & APPRAISAL OF EASTERN CHRISTIAN MONASTIC ENTERPRISE

Dylan Pahman

In fact the whole history of monasticism is in a certain sense the history of a continual struggle with the problem of the secularizing influence of wealth. ~ Max Weber [1193]

Adolf von Harnack, lecturing in the early twentieth century on th history of monasticism, gives no indication that monasteries of th Christian East had any significant interaction with economic matters: 'T work they give only just as much attention as is necessary for a livelihoo ... still must conscience smite the working hermit when he sees th brother who neither toils nor spins nor speaks.'[1194] By contrast, 'i Western monasticism we have to recognise a factor of the first importanc in Church and civilisation.'[1195] His contemporary Max Weber, in *Th Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, shared roughly the same ou look: 'Labour is ... an approved ascetic technique, as it always has been i the Western Church, in sharp contrast ... to the Orient.'[1196] Thus to one c

[1193] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London; New York: Routledge, 1992 [1930]), 174.

[1194] Adolf von Harnack, *Monasticism* in idem, *Monasticism: Its Ideals and History and The Confessions of St Augustine*, trans. E. E. Kellet and F. H. Marseille (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Nortgate, 1911), 56.

[1195] Ibid. p. 65.

[1196] Weber, 1992 [1930]), 158. It is unclear precisely what he means by 'Orient' here, but he clearly contrasts it with the 'Western Church,' implying that the more positive, ascetic attitude toward labor only, or at least primarily, applies to Western Christianity. With regard to Eastern asceticism in general (of all religions), he seems to take a slightly more nuanced view elsewhere, giving credit to the positive influence of Buddhist asceticism in Tibet. See, e.g., idem., *General Economic History*, trans. Frank H. Knight (New York, NY; London: Collier Books; Collier-MacMillan Ltd, 1961), 267. Schluchter writes that for Weber, 'religiously motivated world mastery ... is unique to the Occident.' Wolfgang Schluchter, *Rationalism, Religion, and Domination: A Weberian Perspective*, trans. Neil Solomon (Berkely; Los Angelas; Oxford: University of California Press, 1989), 273. See also the chart on 144 where he distinguishes between Western monasticism as an expression of ascetic, salvation religion turning *away from* the world with the goal of overcoming the world, the Protestant ethic as an expression of ascetic, salvation religion turning *toward* the world with the goal of world mastery, and Oriental Christianity as a contemplative or ecstatic salvation religion turning *toward* the world with the goal of accepting one's fate in the world. Weber contrasted asceticism and mysticism but did acknowledge that sometimes they do coexist. See Max Weber, 'Religious Rejections

the foremost Church historians and one of the foremost sociologists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, monks of the Eastern Christian world, by and large, apparently have had their heads in the clouds for most of history, only for a passing moment glancing down toward the earth, and then only to offer their scorn.

Unlike the history of the economic activity and influence of Western monasticism, Eastern monasticism has been largely neglected in such studies since Harnack and Weber.[1197] As Victor Roudometof and Michalis N. Michael write, 'The analysis of the economic functions of Orthodox monasteries lags considerably behind in relation to the state of scholarly knowledge about their Western counterparts.'[1198] The relationship between Orthodox monasticism and economic enterprise is typically only studied as part of broader, historical studies, and these typically only assess economic value. There exists no introductory survey of the history of this interaction in the Christian East.

Yet, *contra* Harnack and Weber, the interaction between markets and monasticism in the Orthodox East was extensive, as I will demonstrate in the first section of this paper. This ought not to be surprising. As Nathan Smith writes: *How did/do monasteries support themselves? Even nations are typically not economically self-sufficient, so naturally monasteries are too small to supply all their own needs. From the Egyptian desert to the present day monks*

of the World and Their Directions,' in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, ed. and trans., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York, NY: Routelege, 1948), 324–326.

[1197] See, e.g., R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (London: John Murray, 1926), 53–54, 114; Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1937), 68–69, see also 75–77, 83, and 151; Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (London: Routelege & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1946), 40, 50, 59, 75, 79–80; Robert Lekachman, *A History of Economic Ideas* (New York, NY; Evanston; London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1959), 23; Murray Rothbard, *Economic Thought Before Adam Smith,* An Austrian Perspective on the History of Economic Thought, vol. 1 (Brookfield, VT: Edward Elgar, 1995), 31–64; Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success* (New York, NY: Randomhouse, 2006), 57–67; Dierdre N. McCloskey, *The Bourgeois Virtues: Ethics for an Age of Commerce* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 461.

[1198] Victor Roudometof and Michalis N. Michael, 'Economic Functions of Monasticism in Cyprus: The Case of the Kykkos Monastery,' *Religions* 1, no. 1 (2010): 55. (henceforth Roudometof Kykkos).

have engaged in trades and sold goods to lay people in order to purchase necessities. Ancient Egyptian hermits wove baskets; one modern Russian Orthodox monastery in Washington (state) sells coffee.[1199] Even monks need to pay the bills, so to speak. While Weber may not be correct about the Eastern monastic attitude toward labor, he is right when he says: 'In fact the whole history of monasticism is in a certain sense the history of a continual struggle with the problem of the secularizing influence of wealth.'[1200] This history shows that monks still need the world to survive, which historically has led to a tension between the monastic ideal of poverty and 'the secularizing influence of wealth.' This is the basis of the interaction between markets and monasticism, just as much in the East as in the West.

In light of this gap in scholarship, this paper consists of two sections: the first offers an introductory, if incomplete, survey to the history of markets and monasticism in the Christian East; the second offers a brief appraisal of this history and how it may condition the context of monastic teaching on wealth, work, business, and enterprise in the Orthodox Church. Ultimately, I demonstrate that the historical record reveals a positive view of enterprise as a means to serve others, supply one's needs, and build a surplus for charitable activity, as well as serving as a warning about the dangers of avarice and the exploitation of positions of privilege and power in the accumulation of wealth.

From Ancient Egypt to the United States

In the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, there is an illustrative story of the economic relationship between the earliest Christian monks and the world they fled. One monk overhears another worrying: 'The trader is soon coming, and I have no handles to put on my baskets.' The first monk then removes the handles from his own baskets and gives them to the other.[1201] In order to provide for their own needs, have something to give

[1199] Nathan Smith, 'The Economics of Monasticism,' ASREC Working Paper Series (2009): 14, see also 3–4 where he also briefly mentions the importance of Russian monastic enterprise, though his study focuses otherwise on the West.

[1200] Weber, 1992 [1930]), 174.

[1201] *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, 17.16 in Owen Chadwick, trans., *Western Asceticism* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1958), 184.

as alms, and work to stave off the noonday demon of *acedia*,[1202] the desert fathers and mothers would often make handicrafts and other products to sell. In the figure of the trader, the world they fled journeyed to the desert to find them for the sake of economic exchange.

Yet their economic activity cannot be restricted to a minimal production of crafts. According to James A. Goehring: *Abba Esias appears to have been involved in a sharecropping arrangement. John the Dwarf wove ropes and baskets and had an agreement with a camel driver who picked up the merchandise from his cell. He also apparently left Scetis during the harvest season to work for wages. Isidore the Priest went to the market to sell his goods. Lucius plaited ropes to earn the money with which he purchased his food. In the collection of sayings associated with Abba Poemen, one reads of meetings with the village magistrate, of the plaiting and selling of ropes, of monks who went to the city, took baths, and were careless in their behavior, of a monk who worked a field, and of one who took his produce to the market.*[1203] Goehring notes as well the many monks who did not participate in the anchoritic or coenobitic life but rather lived on the outskirts of villages.[1204] In fact, the first known use of the term *monachos* to describe an ascetic comes from a petition dating to 324 that records how a monk named Isaac 'intervened in a village dispute over a cow.'[1205]

He continues to examine coenobitic monasteries, who met their needs 'by frequent forays outside the monastery wall to gather the materials needed

[1202] See, for example, St. John Cassian, *On the Eight Vices* 6 in St. Nicodemos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth, *The Philokalia*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, Kallistos Timothy Ware (London: Faber & Faber, 1979), 113: 'by persevering in work the monks dispel listlessness [*acedia*].'

[1203] James E. Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 45–46.

[1204] See also Goehring, 1999, 89–90: 'While isolated monasteries flourished in Egypt as a result of the discovery of the desert, Egyptian monasticism was neither in its origins a product of that discovery nor in its subsequent expansion a result of an ensuing flight from the inhabited world ... to the newly found isolation of the desert.... The growth of monasticism in Egypt did not follow a simple linear path from an ill-defined urban ascetic movement in the later third and early fourth centuries to the withdrawn desert monks of the fourth-century classical period, to the large well-defined urban and suburban monasteries of the later Byzantine era.... While it expanded into the desert in the fourth century, it continued to grow and develop as well within the inhabited regions of the Nile valley where it first began.'

[1205] Goehring, 1999, 45.

for their livelihood,' including gathering materials for making ropes and baskets as well as agricultural production, sheep herding, and goat shearing.[1206] As time went on, Goehring notes, the scope of Egyptian monastic enterprise continued to grow from mats, baskets, and plaited ropes to sandals and other goods. 'As the community obtained its own boats,' he writes, 'the products were shipped down the Nile as far as Alexandria.'[1207] These '[c]ommercial dealings required careful control,' he continues, detailing the record keeping of each monastery's 'great steward,' the financial manager of the Pachomian communities.[1208] In addition, St. Shenoute's White Monastery also 'had considerable commercial exchange with the outside world.' It functioned as a sort of work cooperative, serving as 'a source of relief to the poor Coptic farmers by offering them at reduced prices such necessities as cloth, mats, and baskets.'[1209]

Perhaps surprisingly, Goehring writes, 'Ownership and transfer of property by monks was relatively common' in Egypt.[1210] Private property apparently did not conflict with the ideal of poverty and communal ownership of resources for some.[1211] This is noted by Rhee as well, who additionally comments, '[W]hether one was an anchorite, semi-anchorite, or cenobite, a monk did not necessarily live in destitution with 'total' renunciation of private property.... The monastic poverty in reality was

[1206] Ibid. 47.

[1207] Ibid. 48.

[1208] Ibid. 48. Goehring also notes the proximity of these monasteries to civilization: 'The Pachomian monasteries were not located in the distant desert or even on the marginal land where the desert begins, but in or in close proximity to the towns or villages whose names they bore' (108).

[1209] Goehring, 1999, 48–49.

[1210] Ibid. 50.

[1211] Ibid. 61–62, where Goehring notes that in Pachomian and Shenoutean communities eventually it was required that monks donate all personal property to the monastery, thus ensuring literal renunciation of all property. Nevertheless, he notes, 'The Pachomian innovation of donating personal property to the monastery was not universal among communal ascetics in fourth-century Egypt' (64). He goes on to detail, 'In the case of the monastery of Apollos at Bawit, where the documentary evidence indicates private-property ownership in the ninth century, it is just as likely that the monks of this monastery had always been able to own property as it is that their original rule shifted in later years to allow it' (Goehring, 68).

more patterned after economic self-sufficiency than destitution.'[1212] Most monks did not follow the standard of St. Paul the Hermit, who according to St. Jerome stitched together palm leaves to wear so as not to even own a cloak.[1213]

Furthermore, though to an extent Rhee is right that 'monastic poverty in reality was ... patterned after economic self-sufficiency,'[1214] Goehring summarizes the economic interdependence of Egyptian monasticism with the secular world, arguing that: 'Such interaction was part of the monastic self-understanding in Egypt from the beginning.... [Monasticism's] significance and success in Egypt lay not only in its religious import to the surrounding communities, but also in its social and economic interdependence with them. It enlivened dying villages, increased agricultural production and trade, and produced various necessities ... for the peasants. Its leaders were also among the new purveyors of social and economic power in the hinterland. Its success in Egypt was dependent upon both elements.'[1215] Egyptian monks were self-sufficient in the sense of providing for their own needs with their own work, but they depended on others inasmuch as such work could not provide for their needs apart from economic exchange.

Byzantine Palestine

Doron Bar's study of the Christianization of rural, Byzantine Palestine, western Galilee and the Negev in particular, includes further insight into this history. He writes: 'Many of the monasteries included such devices as

[1212] Helen Rhee, *Loving the Poor, Saving the Rich: Wealth, Poverty, and Early Christian Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012), 184. She additionally notes, 'While these monks individually renounced all worldly attachments, including possessions, many, if not most, cenobitic monastics could count on sufficient shelter, clothing, regular meals, and 'excellent' health care for the rest of their lives due to the economic stability of monastic communities' (183). The major exceptions were certain Syrian monks who lived entirely off of begging (184).

[1213] See St. Jerome, *The Life of Paulus the First Hermit* in *NPNF*[2] 6:301.

[1214] Rhee, 2012, 184. She additionally notes, 'While these monks individually renounced all worldly attachments, including possessions, many, if not most, cenobitic monastics could count on sufficient shelter, clothing, regular meals, and 'excellent' health care for the rest of their lives due to the economic stability of monastic communities' (183). The major exceptions were certain Syrian monks who lived entirely from begging (184).

[1215] Goehring, 1999, 51–52.

oil and wine presses, indicating that agriculture was central to the monastery's daily routine,'[1216] noting that 'more than 170 such establishments' were 'in Palestine's countryside.'[1217] The founding of monasteries at the edges of rural villages was common.[1218] Following St. Basil, these monasteries engaged in social welfare activities.[1219] Unlike Egypt and Syria, however, these monasteries did not arise out of local piety but were part of the advancing Christianization process of the region. As the monks, then, commonly spoke Greek rather than Aramaic, interaction with the people and customs of the villages in Palestine was a challenge. 'There was a complicated give-and-take between the monks and villagers,' Bar writes. 'The local villagers enjoyed the protection, religious patronage, and various religious services that the monks offered them, elements that previously were lacking in these remote areas.'[1220] He continues, 'The monks themselves sought the presence of the villagers.... In those rural areas, the monks became well-known figures and fulfilled a major sociological role. The monks helped the farmers to confront problems typical in those regions, and in return the farmers made handsome donations to the monks and their monasteries.'[1221]

According to Bar, the monasteries of the region cannot be easily classified in purely religious or economic terms: 'Many of the monasteries were built not in isolated areas but close to a village, sometimes integrated into its fringes, and most frequently connected to the village by a short path. This phenomenon can be observed not only in Palestine but also in some other regions of the Byzantine world, and suggests that in such cases, both the monks and the villagers were interested in being neighbors.'[1222] This interaction shows that not only did the monasteries need contact with the villages for survival, but the villages also needed the

[1216] Doron Bar, 'Rural Monasticism as a Key Element in the Christianization of Byzantine Palestine,' *The Harvard Theological Review*, 98, no. 1 (Jan., 2005): 51.

[1217] Ibid. 51, see also the map on 52.

[1218] Ibid. 55–56.

[1219] Ibid. 57.

[1220] Ibid. 59.

[1221] Ibid. 60.

[1222] Ibid. 63.

monasteries. The result was a higher economic, religious, and cultural standard of living for both the villagers and the monks.[1223]

The Kykkos Monastery on Cyprus

Founded at the end of the eleventh century by Emperor Alexios Komnenos, the economic history of the Kykkos monastery up to the present day is one of widespread and expansive enterprise. Victor Roudometof and Michalis N. Michael offer extensive detail of the monastery's property holdings and business ventures. Along with several other monasteries on the island, Kykkos significantly increased its land holdings from the fifteenth century onward. In 1554, 'there were 30 monks and a few employees—a shepherd, two vineyard guards and six other employees in the monastery....'[1224] Kykkos continued to expand its holdings under Ottoman rule. 'The monastery did not simply manage land that was within the *wakf* framework. It also used land for which it had only the right of usufruct (*tassaruf*). Additionally, for a large number of lands located nearby or far away from its main complex, it had the right of complete ownership (*mülk*).'[1225] The monastery obtained land and other property in a variety of ways, such as purchasing public land, acquisition of land for which they previously only had the right of usufruct, purchase from private owners, donations received from the Orthodox faithful, and property inherited from private owners.[1226] Most land acquired was cultivatable, but the monastery also 'bought houses with yards, shops, building plots in the cities, vineyards and gardens.'[1227]

After 1850, the monastery hired more workers, operated markets, increased its land holdings, annexes, estate holdings, pastures, and mills.[1228] Mills represented the most important enterprise in the local economy, and Kykkos owned more than 16.[1229] Roudometof and Michael write that 'the monastery was probably one of the most important

[1223] Rhee's summary (*Loving the Poor*. 2012, 183–184) of the lifestyle of early Christian monks applies here as well.
[1224] Roudometof Kykkos. 58.
[1225] Ibid. 59. A *wakf*, under Islamic law, is an inalienable religious endowment.
[1226] Ibid. 62–63.
[1227] Ibid. 62.
[1228] Ibid. 64.
[1229] Ibid. 66.

producers on the island.'[1230] Mills required a large amount of capital to purchase, equip, and operate. More broadly, these holdings were cultivated either directly by the monks, by renting, or by the tenant farmer system.[1231] The monastery also owned many trees, which under Ottoman law were separate possessions than the land on which they stood.[1232]

In the case of the Kykkos monastery on Cyprus, one cannot study the market apart from studying the monastery, because in many cases the monastery itself *was* the market. It operated shops and markets for oil and leather vending and held the title deeds for 59 shops and laboratories by the second half of the nineteenth century, including wine, grocery, and coffee shops.[1233] By the end of the Ottoman era, the monastery owned 72 shops, 13 annexes, 10 churches, 15,148 acres of land, 8,797 olive trees, 1,402 other trees, 429 vineyards, 11 water mills, and 11 olive mills; it had its own goldsmiths, its own commissioners for exportation, and even owned part of a ship.[1234] Its major products in the nineteenth century included 'silk, grain, wine, cotton, oil, sesame and various other products of stockbreeding, like wool and leather.'[1235] Additionally, as there were no banks on Cyprus, Kykkos itself acted as a bank, loaning money to be repaid with interest and borrowing money as well.[1236]

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, British rule eliminated political privilege for the monastery and brought government antagonism toward the Church. The British seized land from the monastery. The monastery, for its part, refused to comply with the new regulations on property and payment of taxes and supported the anti-British nationalist rebels in the 1950s.[1237] Since 1950, and especially since the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, the monastery sold land in the booming real estate market. Since the 1970s urban expansion on Cyprus brought a newfound economic prosperity. Annual income for

[1230] Roudometof Kykkos. 66.
[1231] Ibid.64–65.
[1232] Ibid. 65.
[1233] Ibid. 67.
[1234] Ibid. 67–68.
[1235] Ibid. 67.
[1236] Ibid. 67.
[1237] Ibid. 68–71.

the monastery increased tenfold from 1983 to 2003 (approximately from 770,000 to 7.7 million Euros).[1238] 'This income has been used to fund several actions,' they write, including charity work, renovations, and 'the creation of the Byzantine Ecclesiastical Museum' as well as 'the Archangel Cultural Foundation of the Kykkos Monastery.'[1239]

Writing in 2010, Roudometof and Michael write that the 'Kykkos Monastery is, today, one of the most financially powerful monasteries in Cyprus.' The monastery owns one factory for wine and another for bottling water and rents out many buildings. 'At the same time,' they write, 'it remains the owner of extensive real estate property holdings. The monastery is also one of the main stakeholders in the Hellenic Bank of Cyprus.'[1240] Far from idealizing 'solitary contemplation and mortification,' waiting idly 'for the holy light of God to shine at last on [them],'[1241] the monks of Kykkos have a long history of successful enterprise and charitable activity.

Russia

Russian monasticism, too, has a long history of economic enterprise. 'Monasteries in Muscovite Russia served a variety of functions, ranging from prayer and meditation to banking and commerce,' writes Isaiah Gruber.[1242] In some cases, unfortunately, the charitable activity and other contributions to broader socioeconomic well-being did not match up to the example of Kykkos. No doubt this is not unique to Russia but likely represents the spectrum of success and failure among Eastern monasticism in general in this regard. In my research, nevertheless, by far the worst examples of monasteries that, by all appearances, failed in the

[1238] Roudometof Kykkos. 71.
[1239] Ibid. 71.
[1240] Ibid. 71.
[1241] Adolf von Harnack, *Monasticism* in idem, *Monasticism: Its Ideals and History and The Confessions of St Augustine*, trans. E. E. Kellet and F. H. Marseille (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Nortgate, 1911), 56.
[1242] Isaiah Gruber, 'Black Monks and White Gold: The Solovetskii Monastery's Prosperous Salt Trade during the Time of Troubles of the Early Seventeenth Century,' *Russian History* 37 (2010): 238.

'continual struggle with ... the secularizing influence of wealth'[1243] come from Russia.

During the fourteenth century in Russia, Gilbert Rozman writes, 'Ownership of votchiny [inherited landed properties] was divided between clerical authorities representing churches and monasteries, nobles ... and the prince himself.'[1244] Monasteries were some of the few property owners in medieval Russia, and among some of the most enduring. He writes: 'In ... conditions of growing commercial involvement, many estate owners fell into debt, while others, including certain monasteries, adapted to the changed circumstances by securing grants of land in still unsettled areas or through rights of inheritance from private owners seeking salvation, by engaging in usury, or by taking advantage of monopoly trading rights in such goods as salt and fish.'[1245]

Lawrence N. Langer notes that in medieval Russia, unlike in the West, there were no guilds.[1246] Thus, monasteries claimed a significant share of the market by taking advantage of their tax-exempt status.[1247] Langer speaks of 'brotherhoods (*bratchina*) which existed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries [that] were primarily organizations of monastic servitors and certainly did not represent separate crafts [unlike guilds].'[1248] Additionally, Maurice Dobb notes, 'It was precisely wealthy monasteries like the Troitsa Sergeievsky near Moscow or that of St. Cyril on the White Sea, among the most enterprising and successful traders of

[1243] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London; New York: Routledge, 1992 [1930]), 174.
[1244] Gilbert Rozman, *Urban Networks in Russia, 1750–1800, and Premodern Periodization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 51.
[1245] Gilbert Rozman, *Urban Networks in Russia, 1750–1800, and Premodern Periodization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 52.
[1246] Lawrence N. Langer, 'The Medieval Russian Town' , in Michael F. Hamm, (ed). *The City in Russian History* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 24–27, see also 12. For a simple and straightforward account of the importance and function of guilds, see Robert Lekachman, *A History of Economic Ideas* (New York, NY; Evanston; London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1959), 18–19, and for some of the common problems 22.
[1247] See Lawrence N. Langer, 'The Medieval Russian Town', 25.
[1248] Ibid. 25.

the period, that were the earliest to impose labour services (instead of dues in money or kind) upon peasantry on their estates.'[1249]

Rozman compares the acquisition of property by the Church and Orthodox monasteries to the Church in the West in the ninth and tenth centuries, writing: 'Christian religious rural areas were increasingly active in accumulating resources in rural areas during this phase of decentralization. Eventually, efforts to reorganize the movement of local resources together with various improvements in rural conditions would result in the widespread emergence of periodic markets.'[1250] Thus, in Russia, as in France and England centuries before, the accumulation of capital by the Church did help to bring political stability and economic development. 'Actually many of the early markets' in mid-fifteenth-century Russia, writes Rozman, 'were not located in typical villages, but were found outside the walls of monasteries, which as owners of large estates had long served as gathering points for craftsmen and as accumulation points for goods.'[1251] Langer goes on to detail the monasteries' sometimes questionable economic activities:

> The monasteries ... accumulated the greatest amounts of capital and during the second half of the fourteenth and the fifteenth century expanded their economic activities, for example resorting increasingly to hiring free labor (naimiti). In smaller towns like Beloozero, monasteries nearly monopolized the entire market; consequently Ivan II had to restrict somewhat their privileges in trade. Nevertheless, the monasteries controlled some of the largest salt works and served to fulfill an important economic function, the movement of foodstuffs in large bulk from one market to another.[1252]

The largest and most financially successful of such monastic salt works can be found in the case of the Solovetskii monastery, which in purely economic terms, by far represents the most successful Eastern monastic enterprise. The salt mines, along with many other enterprises of the

[1249] Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (London: Routelege & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1946), 40.
[1250] Gilbert Rozman, *Urban Networks in Russia, 1750–1800, and Premodern Periodization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 55.
[1251] Ibid. 61.
[1252] See Langer, 'The Medieval Russian Town'. 25.

Solovetskii monastery, were originally founded by St. Philip II, who served as its abbot in the mid-sixteenth century before becoming Metropolitan of Moscow.[1253] Solovetskii's salt works in particular were extremely lucrative, salt being 'a vital necessity and hence a highly profitable cash crop.'[1254]

Isaiah Gruber writes:

> Major institutions such as the 'state within a state' centered at Solovki commanded impressive revenues and, as Queen Elizabeth's ambassador Giles Fletcher put it, 'deal[t] for all manner of commodities.' These were the mega-corporations of a society continually professing spiritual motives in all realms of life—whether political or social, intellectual or economic, sexual or military. In fact, the vast majority of ecclesiastic documents that have survived for the perusal of historians are simply business records of income and expense.[1255]

Gruber examines the financial success of Solovetskii in the Time of Troubles (1599–1615). Gruber compares the medieval salt industry to the modern oil industry, and Solovetskii had the largest market share in medieval Russia.[1256] 'The first two-thirds of the *Smuta* [Time of Troubles],' he writes, 'actually *profited* the Solovetskii monasterial business, which had the good fortune to control large supplies of a high-demand natural resource.'[1257] How were they able to do this, given the severe hardship in Russia during this time? Gruber explains:

> I speculate that the situation with regard to salt—the 'white gold' of its day—was similar to the situation with regard to oil today. Demand was always high, even regardless of cost, but it could vary somewhat—especially in crisis situations. Meanwhile, the volume of the commodity that could be supplied remained almost constant....

[1253] See, e.g. Victoria Clarck, *Why Angels Fall: A Journey Through Orthodox Europe from Byzantium to Kosovo* (New York, NY: MacMillan, 2008).
[1254] Isaiah Gruber, 'Black Monks and White Gold: The Solovetskii Monastery's Prosperous Salt Trade during the Time of Troubles of the Early Seventeenth Century,' *Russian History* 37 (2010): 239.
[1255] Ibid. 238–239.
[1256] Ibid. 242.
[1257] Ibid. 244, see also 247.

However, suppliers were able to manipulate prices to a more or less significant degree by restricting or opening supply as they saw fit. The Solovki monks—not to mention other businessmen in Russia—may well have exploited these realities for their own advantage during the Time of Troubles.[1258]

He notes, furthermore, that the monastery functioned as a wholesaler. Thus it did not sell directly to those who needed salt but to merchants who may also have raised the price of this scarce and needed the commodity even more.[1259] The comparison to oil cartels and mega-corporations is quite apt when it comes to the amount of income and capital that Solovetskii enjoyed. Gruber details their spending habits as follows:

> Typically, the elders in Vologda would spend the majority of their proceeds from salt sales on purchases of grain and other supplies for the monastery. In the year 7120 (1611-1612), they had enough money to spend more than 9,000 rubles for such purposes—an amount well above average annual expenditure. Such figures prove that this enormous monasterial corporation had considerable sums of money available to be spent all throughout the Troubles, even during years of horrible famine and war. In fact, in the sixteen years 7108-7123 (1599-1615), the Vologda office of the Solovetskii Monastery recorded purchases totaling 116,517.095 rubles.

'Using my rough approximation,' he writes, 'this would correspond to perhaps a quarter billion U.S. dollars today. Remarkably, most if not all of this money came from income, not savings.'[1260]

Despite such huge expenditures, profits, and the surrounding destitution of the time, very little funds were dedicated to almsgiving. '[T]he prosperity enjoyed by the monastery during *Smutnoe vremia* [the Time of Troubles] stands out against a background of great suffering among the common population.'[1261] Examining the year 1605 alone, Gruber notes:

[1258] Ibid. 245.
[1259] Ibid. 246.
[1260] Gruber, (2010): 246-247.
[1261] Ibid. 248.

> In addition to these large expenses, a laconic entry at the end of the document read, 'nishchim rozoshlosia [to the poor was expended] 5 altyn, 2 dengi [0.16 rubles].' This minimal almsgiving—scrupulously recorded by the business-like monks—contrasts starkly with the tens of thousands of rubles brought in by their commercial activity. Of course, after three years of famine and one of war, it was as likely as not a dearth of poor people that kept charity expenses so low.[1262]

In sharp contrast to the sanctity of its founder, who was martyred for his resistance to Ivan the Terrible in defense of the Russian people, Solovetskii seemed to all but forego its spiritual calling during the Time of Troubles. Gruber concludes:

> What have we learned from the black monks and their trade in white gold? First, the Time of Troubles was not an unmitigated disaster for all segments of Muscovite society. For some, the country's misfortune was to a certain degree their windfall, at least during the first two stages of the period. Second, the goal of an ostensibly spiritual institution remained to a very significant extent economic profit, not (for example) relieving widespread poverty or resisting supposedly illegitimate tsars.[1263]

While on the one hand Gruber is right that Russian monastic operations have historically displayed certain failings regarding their *raison d'être*, Rozman and Langer show how the reality was more mixed—Solovetskii cannot be taken as a microcosm of the whole of Russian monasticism. Another mixed picture can be found in eighteenth century Kiev. At this time as Kiev grew in population from the 1720s to the 1750s, '[g]reat monasteries, particularly the Monastery of the Caves,' as well as a fortress, 'dominated the city and its economy.'[1264] Michael F. Hamm records that in Kiev:

> Monasteries were ... prominent in the two most important local trades, milling and distilling. Monks from the Monastery at the Caves

[1262] Ibid. 247.
[1263] Ibid. 248.
[1264] Michael F. Hamm, 'Continuity and Change in Late Imperial Kiev' in Michael F. Hamm, ed., *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), 81.

had fourteen taverns in Pechersk District in the 1750s, one on each street. In 1766 it seemed to one observer that 'the making of vodka and other drinks was the main, if not the only, form of production in Kiev.' For all of the city's 'miracle-working icons,' went an eighteenth century lyric, 'its men, though charitable to the poor, are in the end destroyed by its taverns. They become stingy: good men become bad.'[1265]

It would be uncharitable to assume that corrupting good men was the aim of this enterprise of the Monastery of the Caves, but their taverns certainly could not have helped. Kiev, at least, was known for its 'miracle-working icons,' and we can hope that the men of Kiev were 'charitable to the poor' in part due to the teaching and example of local monks. In any case, the enterprise of the monasteries of Kiev, including the Monastery of the Caves, was instrumental in improving the quality of education in Russia as whole, printing books and participating in an international exchange of ideas. 'Kiev's importance as a center of learning should not be overlooked,' writes Hamm, 'for its monasteries helped introduce Western ideas into seventeenth and eighteenth-century Russia. From 1616 the Monastery at the Caves operated a press which contributed greatly to the development of book-printing in the Empire.'[1266]

Lastly, while he does not cite the sources of the funding used, it is worth mentioning here Scott M. Kenworthy's account of the social engagement of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra in the nineteenth century. 'Trinity-Sergius actively engaged in a wide array of philanthropic activities,' he writes, 'providing services such as an almshouse for the elderly poor both of Sergiev Posad and other regions as well as a hospital for both local residents and pilgrims, a hostel for pilgrims, and educational institutions for both orphans who lived in the monastery and poor children of the surrounding region.'[1267] He continues to write about monasticism more broadly: 'Moreover, in 1840 private individuals or societies supported

[1265] Ibid. 81.
[1266] Ibid. 82.
[1267] Scott M. Kenworthy, 'Russian Monasticism and Social Engagement: The Case of the Trinity--Sergius Lavra in the Nineteenth Century' in M.J. Pereira, ed., *Philanthropy and Social Compassion in Eastern Orthodox Tradition*, The Sophia Institute: Studies in Orthodox Theology, Vol. 2 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press; The Sophia Institute, 2010), 178–179.

half of the hospitals and almshouses located on monastery property; by 1914, these non-monastic sources accounted for a mere 6.9 percent of the funding.'[1268] In addition, he notes the bottom-up nature of these reforms, arising from individual monasteries more than from hierarchical mandates.

The United States in the Present Day

In December of 1997, Our Merciful Saviour Russian Orthodox Monastery in Washington State found itself facing potential litigation from Starbucks. The monastery operated a small business selling coffee over the internet, and Starbucks charged it with violating its trademark of the label 'Christmas Blend.'[1269] While two other businesses responded by changing the names of their blends, Our Merciful Saviour refused. A year later, embarrassed over the negative publicity that threatening a monastery with a lawsuit engendered, Starbucks dropped the charges.[1270] Today Our Merciful Saviour uses the story as a marketing point for its 'Christmas Blend' coffee on its website: 'Made famous by our battle with Starbucks some years ago … this wonderful seasonal blend of Arabica beans is perfect for drinking around the hearth.'[1271] Due to their persistence, many other coffee makers still use the label as well.

Our Merciful Saviour is not the only modern monastery benefitting from globalization, conducting business over the internet and benefiting from high speed shipping.[1272] I offer here a sample of only a few American

[1268] Ibid. 179.
[1269] William Patalon III, 'Starbucks' 'Christmas Blend' Stirs Brouhaha: Local Firm, Monastery Warned on Trademark,' *The Baltimore Sun*, December 25, 1997, accessed October 8, 2013, http://articles.baltimoresun.com/1997-12-25/news/1997359001_1_christmas-blend-starbucks-registered-trademarks.
[1270] Lee Moriwaki, 'Starbucks Ends Fight Over Name,' *The Seattle Times*, February 3, 1998, http://community.seattletimes.nwsource.com/archive/?date=19980203&slug=2732309.
[1271] 'Coffee,' All Merciful Saviour Orthodox Monastery, October 8, 2013, http://vashonmonks.com/coffee.htm.
[1272] I use the term globalization in its standard, neutral sense, meaning the deterritorialization, the growth of interconnectedness, and the increased velocity of social activity that has come as a result of technological advancement over approximately the last 200 years. See William Scheuerman, 'Globalization,' *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Summer 2010 Edition),

Orthodox monasteries and the products they produce and sell. St. Paisius Monastery, a Serbian convent in Arizona, specializes in prayer ropes but also sells books, music, icons, crosses, and rings.[1273] The Hermitage of the Holy Cross, a Russian monastery in House Springs, Missouri, features pumpkin spice bar soap and also sells other bath and body products, books, incense, food, greeting cards, icons, jewelry, and various Orthodox CDs and DVDs.[1274] Holy Transfiguration Monastery, part of the un-canonical 'Holy Orthodox Church in North America', is well-known for its icons and books. In addition, they also sell prayer ropes, crosses, oils, incense, lamps, CDs and DVDs, and prosphora seals.[1275] St. John Chrysostomos Greek Orthodox Monastery in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin sells icons, candles, jewelry, and other devotional items. The monastery's website entirely consists of its online store.[1276] The Monastery of St. John of San Francisco, part of the Orthodox Church in America and located in Manton, California, has a bookstore that also sells candles, soaps, icons, crosses, scarves, honey, prayer ropes, and greeting cards.[1277] St. John the Forerunner, a Greek convent in San Francisco, sells various baked goods as well as prayer corner items, icon cards, natural soaps and lotions, honey and jams, fresh roasted coffee, and sterling silver Jesus Prayer rings.[1278] Paracletos, a Greek monastery in Antreville, South Carolina, has its own, separate website for its store where it sells icons, neck crosses and gifts, censers, incense, oil lamps, and prayer ropes.[1279] Dormition of the Mother of God Romanian Orthodox Monastery, a convent in Rives Junction, Michigan, sells books, prayer ropes, vestments, and specialty

accessed October 17, 2013, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2010/entries/globalization/.

[1273] 'St. Paisius Monastery Gift Shop,' St. Paisius Monastery, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.stpaisiusgiftshop.com/.

[1274] 'Hermitage of the Holy Cross,' Hermitage of the Holy Cross, accessed October 8, 2013, https://store.holycross-hermitage.com/.

[1275] 'Holy Transfiguration Monastery Store,' Holy Transfiguration Monastery, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.bostonmonks.com/.

[1276] 'Home Page,' St. John Chrysostomos Greek Orthodox Monastery, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.stchrysostomoscrafts.com/.

[1277] 'St. John's Bookstore,' Monastery of St. John, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.stjohnsbookstore.com/.

[1278] 'St. John's Monastery Bakery,' St. John the Forerunner, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.stjohnmonastery.org/.

[1279] 'Orthodox Byzantine Icons, Censers, Incense, Vigil Lams, Prayer Ropes, Neck Crosses and Gifts,' Paracletos Monastery, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.orthodoxmonasteryicons.com/.

items, including handcrafted monk and nun dolls.[1280] This brief survey gives no indication that the Orthodox tradition of monastic enterprise shows any signs of diminishing or, for that matter, has any uneasiness about participating in the global markets of the twenty-first century.

Appraisal

On the structural side, I would argue that though he claims his account is 'unduly focused on Christian and Western monasticism,' Nathan Smith's basic economic analysis fits Eastern Christian monasticism as well.[1281] To simplify, he notes the following seven points: (1) monasticism began eremitically and only later became coenobitic; (2) there existed competition between monastic orders and practices; (3) internally, monasteries resemble the structure of socialist communes (though *contra* Smith I would say only generally and not 'precisely'[1282]); (4) monasticism is a lifelong commitment; (5) unlike secular communes, monasteries are incredibly resilient institutions (he notes the average lifespan being about 450 years); (6) 'monasteries made great contributions to civilization and often acquired great wealth'; and (7) there is 'a monastic reform cycle, with repeated decay and renewal.'[1283]

[1280] 'Dormition Monastery » Welcome to Our Gift Shop,' Dormition of the Mother of God Orthodox Monastery, accessed October 8, 2013, http://www.dormitionmonastery.org/?page_id=4.

[1281] Nathan Smith, 'The Economics of Monasticism,' ASREC Working Paper Series (2009): 17.

[1282] Ibid. 11. Some class division existed between novices and monks, abbots and others, clergy and non-clergy and, as we have seen, ownership of private property was not in actual fact completely abolished. We may add as well the division between monks and lay brothers among the Cistercians. See Ludo J.R. Milis, *Angelic Monks and Earthly Men: Monasticism and its Meaning to Medieval Society* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press), 39–40. Thus, the idea that internally they were 'precisely' socialist seems to overstate the reality. They certainly strove for communal ownership and classlessness, but they did not perfectly achieve this. Furthermore, while Smith discounts the idea that monasteries can be classified under the model of the firm, we have seen at least in the case of Solovetskii that a comparison to business institutions may be quite apt. Indeed, one can say about a business that the property is owned corporately, though, of course, not always in the sense of the sort of shareholder model in which everyone owns a portion of the company that fits better with socialism.

[1283] For this list in greater detail, see Nathan Smith, 'The Economics of Monasticism,' ASREC Working Paper Series (2009): 17.

Smith then notes how, among those disaffected by any particular society, there will always be some who embrace an eremitic lifestyle. When this is done for spiritual purposes, the individual cultivates spiritual capital (or, we might say, heavenly treasure), which, in turn, attracts others to follow the hermit's example. After a while, enough monastics group together and form coenobitic communities. Monasteries are more stable than secular communes because (nearly) everyone there joins voluntarily, for life, embraces celibacy (thus having no children who do not choose to join the community), and a life focused on worship is self-reinforcing. That is, the more people develop spiritual capital the more attracted they are to the sorts of activities that develop spiritual capital,[1284] and the more attractive monastic life will be to others. Reinforced by strict obedience and a strong work ethic, monasteries accumulate capital and contribute to civilization. As they grow in wealth, however, they naturally attract more people for purely economic reasons rather than for the sake of spiritual development, diminishing the spiritual vitality of the community, making it less attractive, and leading eventually to a decrease in membership. At the same time, this motivates the more zealous to embrace the eremitic life in effort to return to the initial spiritual purity, starting the cycle over again.

Sergey Bulgakov cites the Russian historian Vasily Osipovich Klyuchevsky, who records precisely this phenomenon with regards to Russian monasticism. He additionally notes how many Russian villages formed around monasteries, confirming the role of monasticism on the development of Eastern civilization, Klyuchevsky writes:

> Three quarters of fourteenth and fifteenth century monasteries in depopulated areas were such [agrarian] colonies; they were established by monks who left other monasteries, from similar depopulated areas. A desert monastery would nurture in its brotherhood, at least among the most susceptible brothers, a very special mood: a specific concept of monastic objectives was formed; the founder has left for the woodlands in order to attain salvation in a quiet solitude, convinced that would not have been possible in the secular world, among peoples' squabble. He would attract similar searchers of voicelessness and they would build a desert home. The rigid way of life, [and the] glory of the deeds attracted from afar not only prayers and contributors but also peasants who would settle around a prospering cell on which they could rely as both religious and economic support; peasant[s] would cut the forest around, build villages, clear up fields, 'alter the desert,' as the hagiography of Rev. Sergey Radonezhski tells us. In such cases monastic colonization meets peasants' ... and serves it as unintended guide. Thus, from a hermit's cell in solitude grew a populated, rich, and noisy monastery. Often, however, there would be a disciple of the founder among the brothers, disturbed by this non-monk noise and wealth; following the spirit and the word of the teacher, with his blessing the disciple would leave for another untouched desert and there in the same order would emerge another forest cell. Sometimes, even often, the founder himself would undertake the venture to repeat the experience.[1285]

One notable element of this analysis is that in order for monasteries to have maximum, positive social effect, the desire for spiritual purity needs to persist. That is, monasteries tend to do their best work for the common good when monastics continue to toil primarily for the kingdom of God and do not lose sight of their spiritual vocation. While the Orthodox are caricatured by Harnack and Weber as being too far to the spiritual extreme, the most egregious historical example of a poor attitude toward wealth, Solovetskii, appears to have had precisely the opposite problem. We may note again, as well, those Russian monasteries that took advantage of their tax-exempt privilege to monopolize the market on various goods. This raises an important question: how did Eastern

[1284] In this context Smith (2009) cites the Russian spiritual classic *The Way of a Pilgrim*. Ibid. p. 31.

[1285] V.O. Klyuchevsky, 'Lecture 24,' *The Course of Russian History* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), quoted in Sergey Bulgakov, 'The National Economy and the Religious Personality (1909),' *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 165. Notably, Bulgakov's essay may be the earliest Orthodox response to the Weber thesis. Importantly, and *contra* Harnack as well, he notes the high value Eastern monastics placed on physical labor. For a summary of Bulgakov's economic philosophy in general, see Daniel P. Payne and Christopher Marsh, 'Sergei Bulgakov's 'Sophic' Economy: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective on Christian Economics,' *Faith & Economics* 53 (Spring 2009): 35–51. For a contemporary Orthodox response to Weber, see Irinej Dobrijevic, ''The Orthodox Spirit and the Ethic of Capitalism': A Case Study on Serbia and Montenegro and the Serbian Orthodox Church,' *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 1–13.

monastics view wealth and enterprise? What appears to be the case, in fact, is that in general they actually did live according to their own teachings on the subject: wealth is neither inherently good nor bad, but only good or bad depending upon its use. St John Cassian records the following teaching of Abba Theodore, one of the desert fathers:

> Altogether there are three kinds of things in the world; viz., good, bad, and indifferent. And so we ought to know what is properly good, and what is bad, and what is indifferent.... We must then believe that in things which are merely human there is no real good except virtue of soul alone.... And on the other hand we ought not to call anything bad, except sin alone.... But those things are indifferent which can be appropriated to either side according to the fancy or wish of their owner, as for instance riches, power, honour, bodily strength, good health, beauty, life itself, and death, poverty, bodily infirmities, injuries, and other things of the same sort, which can contribute either to good or to evil as the character and fancy of their owner directs. For riches are often serviceable for our good, as the Apostle says, who charges 'the rich of this world to be ready to give, to distribute to the needy, to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that' by this means 'they may lay hold on the true life' [1 Timothy 6:18-19].[1286]

While, certainly, St. John Cassian also taught about the dangers of avarice,[1287] here wealth itself is understood as indifferent and 'often serviceable for our good.' In the light of the history of Eastern monastic enterprise, we can see how the monastic vow of poverty did not preclude monasteries from owning and using wealth not only for their own good, but for others, through industry, trade, and charity, the best example in this brief survey perhaps being Kykkos. A similar attitude toward globalization seems to be at work in American monasteries today. While

[1286] St. John Cassian, *Conferences*, 6.3 in *NPNF*[2] 11:352–353. This same teaching in particular can also be found in St. John Chrysostom ('Homily Against Publishing the Errors of the Brethren,' 2 in *NPNF*[1] 9:236) and in general in St. Basil the Great (*Epistle* 233 in *NPNF*[2] 8:273). The good/evil/indifferent distinction among Greek philosophical schools is originally Stoic and may have found its way into Christian ethics as early as the New Testament. See, e.g., Niko Huttenson, 'Stoic Law in Paul?' in Tuomo Rasimus, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Ismo Dunderberg, ed., *Stoicism in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 39–58, esp. 44–46.

[1287] See St. John Cassian, *Institutes*, 7 in *NPNF*[2] 11:248–257.

we ought to be wary of its potentially destructive use, just as we ought to be wary of avarice in general, nevertheless this increase in interconnectedness, deterritorialization, and velocity of communication is also 'often serviceable for our good' and the good of others.[1288] It has allowed Orthodox monasteries with access to the internet to make and sell products to a much broader customer base than they would otherwise have, serving the needs of those purchasing devotional items and other products while allowing monasteries to pay their bills and continue their ministry of prayer on behalf of all the world. If ever there was a mutually beneficial exchange, monastic market activity, where it has not succumbed to 'the secularizing influence of wealth,'[1289] would be it.

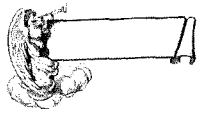
Conclusion

The history of Eastern monastic enterprise reveals a broadly positive interaction between monasteries and markets. Trade can be (and often is) a very positive social good. An ascetic attitude toward enterprise can help to put in check the corrupting tendency of wealth when those who labor work primarily for the heavenly treasures of holiness and virtue, i.e. spiritual capital. Business and banks ought not to be viewed as *per se* bad, since often monasteries in fact *were* businesses, banks, and even markets, with great spiritual and social benefit for all. Even today, many monasteries depend on the networks of trade and communication provided by globalization to survive. The question, it seems, is one of virtue and self-discipline; not simply being pro- or anti-market or business. In the context of faith and asceticism, the history of Eastern monasticism shows that the market and enterprise can be a powerful means to love one's neighbor and serve the common good, even while laboring for God alone. Ultimately, the many positive examples from the

[1288] For a basic introduction to globalization, see William Scheuerman, 'Globalization,' *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2010 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2010/entries/globalization/.

1289 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London; New York: Routledge, 1992 [1930]), 174.

history of Eastern monastic enterprise recommend saturating one's economic activity, whether one lives in the desert or in the world, with the spirit of Orthodox asceticism as a means for combating social injustice and serving the common good in the face of the passionate forces of secularism, consumerism, envy, and greed.



SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR APATHEIA

Theodore Grey Dedon

When the devils see that you are really fervent in our prayer they suggest certain matters to your mind, giving you the impression there are pressing concerns demanding attention. In a little while they stir up your memory of these matters and move your mind to search into them. Stand resolute, fully intent on your prayer. Pay no heed to the concerns and thoughts that might arise the while. They do nothing better than disturb and upset you so as to dissolve the fixity of your purpose. (Evagrius of Pontus, Praktikos 9-10)

We too Have a War to Wage

The problem of apathy and indifference is one which plagues modern society quite unlike any other. 'We have become used to the suffering of others. It doesn't affect us. It doesn't interest us. It's not our business,' so Pope Francis lamented recently. Hearing about this or that issue is so commonplace in our everyday discourse. We are confronted with an almost apocalyptic sense of the world we live in. Because of the multiplicity and diversity of the world's problems, it becomes too easy to meet them with the response of apathy. Apathy is defined, in English, as a 'lack of concern or interest.' Its synonym is indifference. If one is to take seriously the problems of the world and indeed take them as a personal concern, one might well be overwhelmed. But, as Pope Francis says, we have become so accustomed to suffering as an omnipresent reality that we are rendered numb and try to remove it from our own realm of effect. Pope Francis has argued that this phenomenon has been so embedded in our public consciousness that it has taken on a character he aptly names, 'the globalization of indifference.'[1290]

This is reminiscent of similar problems described in Antiquity. But there are differences. The current phenomenon of apathy is usually charted by external measurements—the suffering of others and, in general, our lack of personal relation to this. In ancient times, while suffering was sharply appreciated as an ever-present reality, spiritual practices were often applied to combat it. As the Christian tradition reminds us, we are all sinners. Whatever our characters, natures, or

[1290] J. Hooper. "Pope Francis Condemns Global Indifference Towards Suffering." http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/08/pope-francis-condemns-indifference-suffering. Accessed: July 13th, 2014.

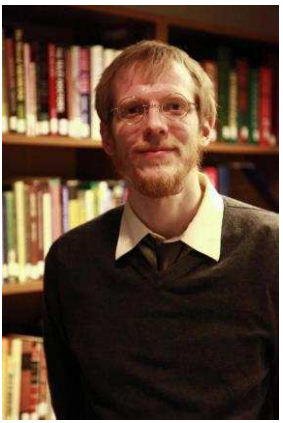
urn:nbn:de:0276-2015-2068

Dylan Pahman

The Sweat of Christians is the Seed of Martyrdom: A Paradigm for Modern Orthodox Christian Witness

Abstract

This paper examines the connection between asceticism and martyrdom from a practical, historical, and theoretical point of view. It is argued that from the very beginning, Christians practiced asceticism, and that this practice was an essential preparation for martyrdom. Martyrdom, in turn, served as an inspiration for asceticism. Thus, while red martyrdom can be seen as the culmination of Christian asceticism, all Christian asceticism ought to be seen as martyric, witnessing to the kingdom of God and the cross of Christ. As such, it is argued that other forms of asceticism can also be understood through the martyric lens,



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such as exile from one's homeland—as was the case with many ancient Celts—and marriage. No matter where or in what circumstances Orthodox Christians live, then, they ought to embrace a martyric way of life through their asceticism. In the end, I conclude by briefly noting the martyric character of the Eucharist, which forms the center of the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church, thus reinforcing the thesis that martyrdom should be seen as the universal character of the Christian life and commending it is a still-vibrant paradigm for modern Orthodox Christian witness.

Keywords

Asceticism, Columbanus, Death, Diaspora, Eucharist, Evangelism, Exile, Marriage, Martyrdom, *Memento Mori*, Mission, Monasticism, *Peregrinatio*, Witness

1 Introduction

Tertullian once said that "the blood of Christians is [the] seed" of the Church.[1] In this paper, I argue that the sweat of Christians, in their ascetic labors, is the seed of martyrdom and their witness to the world. First, drawing upon the work of Tilley and others, I will demonstrate the historical link, both theoretical and in practice, between asceticism and martyrdom. A life of asceticism is as much a witness (*martys*) as death for one's faith, and in many cases has proved essential to the latter. Second, on this basis, I will argue for a further theoretical broadening of common conceptions of martyrdom and asceticism. In the first place, the ancient Celts, in the concept of *peregrinatio*, which Cahill associates with "white martyrdom,"

1 Tertullian, *Apology* 50 in: *ANF* 3:55.

offers an additional nuance to the martyric vocation, viz. exile, with contemporary relevance in the context of the vast Orthodox "diaspora" in the West today. The Celtic monastic missionaries, through austere discipline, spiritual contemplation, and active engagement with society, contributed invaluably to the re-Christianization of the West after the fall of Rome. In the second place, the connection between asceticism, martyrdom, and marriage, as noted by Schmemann and Soloviev, testifies to the ascetic character of the family and, by extension, all society. Ultimately, I conclude that in whatever martyrdom Orthodox Christians are called to live today, their asceticism serves as a witness to the world and preparation for the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, just as we fast in preparation for the Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ, our ultimate martyric ideal. In these ways, in answer to the question, "Who are the new martyrs today?" I respond that the Orthodox answer should be "all of us."

2 The Practical Connection Between Asceticism and Martyrdom in the Early Church

Drawing on the research of psychologist Peter Suedfeld, Maureen Tilley documents five goals of torture sought by the ancient Romans against the early Christians. "The first three are rather straightforward," she writes: "information, incrimination of friends and associates, and intimidation of other members of the community." She continues,

> "But the torturers in the stories of martyrs—and in the present—still keep torturing long after these ostensible goals are achieved. Why? Because their real goal is not merely the control of an individual but the restructuring of society. Torture attempts to control people who hold as true a vision of reality contrary to

> that of the torturers. Hence, Suedfeld adds his latter two purposes of torture, isolation and indoctrination."[2]

Thus, the goal of Roman torture was not simply to intimidate and extract information from the Christians but to brainwash them.[3] The fact of martyrdom, however, shows that the Roman torturers often failed at their goal.

How could this be? With regards to intimidation and information extraction, Tilley shows how the culture of early Christians counteracted these goals:

> With information, incrimination, and intimidation, the martyrs had the high ground. First, information: the Apologists had pointed out the anomaly of torturing prisoners in order to get them to deny the crime they were ready to admit [i.e. being a Christian] (Tert., *Apol.* 1 *ad fin.*; Justin, *First Apol.* 6 and *Second Apol.* 12). Second, incrimination: there was no need to implicate others. In fact, the Christian community had too many volunteers for martyrdom (e.g., *Pion.* 4.13; *Polyc.* 4; Clement 4.10; Tert., *Cor.*; Cyprian, *Ep.* 81; *E.H.* 6.14, 16, and 22; *Maxima* 4; *Euplus*, Latin recension 1; *Marian* 9). Third, torture as intimidation met with mixed results because Christians used stories of torture to teach the faithful to be strong in persecution (*Polyc.* 1; *Pion.* 1; *Saturninus* 1; *Donatus*; *Marculus*; *Maximian*). The victims were prepared to be victors.[4]

With regards to isolation, its dehumanizing goal proved ineffective. Early martyrs either affirmed the commonality of all before the judgment seat of Christ or the dissimilarity between themselves as servants of God and their torturers as servants of

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2 M. Tilley, The Ascetic Body and the (Un)Making of the World of the Martyr, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59.3 (Autumn 1991), p. 468.

3 As Tilley notes, this goal is not unique to the Romans of the first few centuries after Christ; the same can be said for the Soviets, for example, at Pitesti in Romania in the twentieth century. See, for example, A. Ratiu & W. Virtue, *Stolen Church: Martyrdom in Communist Romania* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1978), pp. 89–112.

4 M. Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," p. 470.

the evil one. In addition, ancient martyr acts are replete with instances of Christ or angels visiting isolated Christians.[5]

It is in the martyrs' resistance to indoctrination, however, that their asceticism shows through:

The type of ascetic preparation for martyrdom was tied to the sorts of tortures the martyrs would undergo, especially deprivation of food and water. Christian communities would begin fasting as soon as they realized that police action was imminent (e.g. *Pion.* 2; *Donatus* 6; *Marculus*). They even mimicked the duration and the sporadic nature of the starvation they would undergo (*Montanus* 9). Such pre-torture practices actually helped change their metabolism so that they survived longer under torture. They could train their bodies to rely on alternative sources of glucose for the brain and to reduce their need for water[6].

She continues, "Tertullian exhorted his readers to prepare for prison, to get used to fasting, lack of water, even the anxiety about eating. They had to enter prison in the same state as most people who were leaving. What they would suffer there would not be any penalty but the *continuation of their discipline* (*Iei.* 12)".[7]

Yet this asceticism was not simply a response to persecution but an aspect of daily life. "Daily life was full of opportunities for asceticism directed toward the resistance of torture," writes Tilley. "Asceticism, specifically sexual renunciation, made possible the renunciation of mortal life itself (*Thecla* 3.26). Thus did ascetic theory and practice help Christians prepare for the tortures they met."[8] She and others note that the contest of martyrdom for the early Christians had cosmic connotations as

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5 Idem, pp. 470–471.
6 Idem, p. 471.
7 Idem, pp. 471–472.
8 M. Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," p.472.

well, additionally shaping their worldview in a torture-resistant way.[9]

In the end, she concludes, "Asceticism allowed the confessors to reconfigure or remap their bodies so that they became *terra incognita* for their torturers and a safe place for the well-prepared martyrs. In addition, this evidence refutes the claim that asceticism was a substitute for martyrdom which Christians adopted once their religion was legalized. On the contrary, asceticism logically and practically preceded martyrdom. In fact, it made martyrdom possible".[10]

Asceticism was thus practically linked to martyrdom inasmuch as we would have few early Christian martyrs (and arguably, if Tertullian is correct, no enduring Church) if early Christians did not first embrace an ascetic lifestyle.

3 Further Theoretical Broadening of Martyrdom and Asceticism

3.1 Early Christian Exhortation and the Monastic Ideal

When we turn to theory, the connection between asceticism and martyrdom becomes more pronounced. First of all, the Greek *martys* and related terms in the New Testament are undifferentiated compared to later usage.[11] That is, while it can be used in the context of dying for the faith (cf. John 12:17; Acts

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9 M. Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," pp. 472. See also P. Kolbert, Torture and Origen's Hermeneutics of Nonviolence, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 76.3 (September 2008), p. 563.; and P. Middleton, *Radical Martyrdom and Cosmic Conflict in Early Christianity* (London; New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2006), esp. pp. 79, 94–96.

10 M. Tilley, "The Ascetic Body," p. 475.

11 For a basic overview, including the Greco-Roman and Jewish origins of the concept of *martys* as witness, see A. Harvey, R. Finn, & M. Smart, Christian Martyrdom: History and Interpretation, in B. Wicker (ed.), *Witness to Faith? Martyrdom in Christianity and Islam* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 33–48.

2:32),[12] it often carries the more general, literal meaning of witnessing to the faith (cf. Acts 22:20; Revelation 2:13, 17:6).

In Edelhard Hummel's study of martyrdom in the writings of St. Cyprian, he begins by noting that the term had already taken on a more narrow sense with Tertullian. "The word *martyr* is applied by Tertullian primarily to those Christians who have sacrificed their lives for the faith," he writes. However, even here he notes that at times the word is used for "those who have given oral testimony of their faith" or those who are in prison awaiting a martyric death.[13]

Already with St. Cyprian, the term starts to broaden again. While the martyr proper is still the one who has died for the faith, Hummel notes that "[t]here are countless passages … in which he makes use of the expression *martyr*, when it is evident that he refers to persons who are still living."[14] Hummel parses St. Cyprian's use of terms as follows: "If *physical torture and mistreatment* was added to imprisonment or to exile, then Cyprian granted the confessors in question the rank of martyrs. If such torture should lead to death, they were *martyres consummate*."[15]

Yet, St. Cyprian does not stop there but also "recognizes the existence of an unbloody or spiritual martyrdom."[16] The nuance to this is enlightening: spiritual martyrdom requires "the same

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12 Pobee has additionally noted the use of Jewish martyr motifs in the Christology of the Pauline epistles. See J. Pobee, *Persecution and Martyrdom in the Theology of Paul* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1985), pp. 49, 53. See also B. W. Bacon, The Motivation of John 21:15-25, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 50.2 (1931), pp. 71–80; esp. 72, 74, and 80 for martyrdom in the Gospel of John. Bacon's work is, however, somewhat dated.

13 E. Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1946), p. 3. see also p. 4.

14 E. Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom*, p. 8.

15 Idem, p. 14.

16 Idem, p. 21.

conceptual relationship to death" as martyrdom by blood. St. Cyprian thus exhorts Christians to prepare like soldiers for the battle, ready to face death and the coming judgment. He writes, "Our martial preparation should be this—that we ever keep before our eyes, our thoughts, and our senses, the punishments of the impious and the rewards of the just; that we consider what punishments the Lord threatens against those who deny Him, and also what glory He promises to those who confess Him! If the day of persecution surprises us while we are occupied with such thoughts and meditations, then, the soldier of Christ is (…) prepared to win the crown."[17]

Compare this, for example, to the following from Evagrius in the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*: "While you sit in your cell, draw in your mind, and remember the day of your death. And then you will see your body mortifying. Think on the loss, feel the pain. Shrink from the vanity of the world outside." He continues, "Weep and lament for the judgement [sic] of sinners, bring to life the grief they suffer; be afraid that you are hurrying towards the same condemnation. Rejoice and exult at the good laid up for the righteous. Aim at enjoying the one, and being far from the other."[18] This should be unsurprising. As Nicole Kelley has argued, the reading of ancient martyr acts themselves was designed to be a spiritual exercise.[19] Thus the ascetic language of martyric preparation lived on long after any imminent threat of physical death.

The relationship between asceticism and martyrdom thus became reciprocal. Asceticism was essential preparation for many early martyrs, and martyrdom inspired more fervent asceticism. Indeed, the spiritual exercises commended by St.

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17 Cyprian of Carthage, *Epistle* 57.4 in: E. Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom*, pp. 71–72.

18 Evagrius, *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, 3.3 in Owen Chadwick (trans.) *Western Asceticism*, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1958), p. 44.

19 N. Kelley, Philosophy as Training for Death: Reading the Ancient Christian Martyr Acts as Spiritual Excercises, *Church History* 75.4 (December 2006), pp. 723–747.

Cyprian (and, we may add, Origen[20]) to prepare Christians for martyrdom recur in the earliest Christian teachings on the *memento mori* ("remembrance of death") in the monastic life, as noted above. Hence, we see that the connection between the white martyrdom of asceticism and the red martyrdom of physical death, as Tilley notes, was not that the former was a substitute for the latter. True, some of the first monks were disenchanted with the Church's new place of prominence in Roman society after Constantine,[21] but we may also say that their desire may simply have been to continue living and developing the ascetic ethos that Christians had always sought to live from the beginning.

Inasmuch, then, as Christian asceticism requires a dying to self, (red) martyrdom may be thought of as simply the consummation of Christian spiritual practice, and we may say that this, in fact, was the self-understanding of the early Church.[22] As the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, Jesus Christ died and rose again in order to "release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:15). Courage in the face of death, then, ideally ought to characterize the Christian life, in whatever form it takes and in whatever context it is found.[23]

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20 See Kolbert, "Torture and Origen's Hermeneutics of Nonviolence," pp. 563–564.

21 This is a commonplace of Church history. See, e.g., A. Harnack, E. *Monasticism: Its Ideals and History and the Confessions of St. Augustine: Two Lectures by Adolf Harnack*, E. E. Kellett & F. H. Marseille (trans.), (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1911), p. 48.

22 In addition to what has already been said herein, see, e.g., Lisa D. Maugans Driver, "The Cult of Martyrs in Asterius of Amaseia's Vision of the Christian City," *Church History* 74, no. 2 (June 2005), p. 244: "The martyrs won acclaim, in Asterius's opinion, because they maintained the right organization of soul and body that enabled them to live and die for Christ."

23 The Western saint and theologian Thomas Aquinas even sees courage as central to martyrdom. He writes, "[M]artyrdom is an act of courage." T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IIa-IIae, q. 124, a. 2 in Brian Wicker

3.2. The Celtic Peregrinatio

The ancient Celtic Christians represent a further historical broadening of the concept of martyrdom. Thomas Cahill popularized the concepts of white and green martyrdom among the ancient Celtic Christians in his book *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. Noting the Celts' fondness for the desert fathers, Cahill describes the Celtic green martyrdom as roughly equivalent to the eremitic life. Then, Citing St. Columcille's exile from Ireland to found the monastic community of Iona, and eventually to become the Apostle to Scotland, Cahill describes the Irish conception of white martyrdom: "all who followed Columcille's lead were called to the White Martyrdom, they who sailed into the white sky of morning, into the unknown, never to return."[24] Thus, by Cahill's account, white martyrdom for the Irish is specifically connected to Celtic monastic missions outside of Ireland.

Yet this account, however romantic, does not seem to be required by what little sources we have, nor do other scholars make this same distinction. One ancient Irish homily gives perhaps the clearest differentiation of these forms of martyrdom as the modern scholar could hope to find today. In particular, it defines white martyrs as those who "part for the sake of God from everything that they love, although they may suffer fasting and hard work thereby."[25] Certainly, white martyrdom as described here *could* mean missionary exile, but the primary literature contains no direct references to St. Columcille as inspiration, nor does it require such an interpretation. Among Roman Catholics today, for example, the

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(ed.), *Witness to Faith? Martyrdom in Christianity and Islam* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), p. 141.

24 T. Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995), pp. 183–184.

25 The Cambrai Homily, trans. Oliver Davies, *Celtic Spirituality* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1999), p. 370. Interestingly, Davies translates *glas* as "blue" rather than "green," making the third Celtic martyrdom blue martyrdom.

term "white martyrdom" is still used to speak of the monastic life in general.[26]

Nevertheless, Cahill is right that St. Columcille's missionary exile can be seen as emblematic of a new discipline that many more soon zealously followed: *peregrinatio*. As the Irish understood this to be primarily an extension of their asceticism, we may, considering the foregoing, see in it another path of martyrdom, whether we call it white or green or any other color. Fiaich describes this *peregrinatio* thusly:

> *"Peregrinatio* is the word often used by contemporary writers to describe the movement abroad of these Irish religious. It did not normally mean "pilgrimage" in the modern meaning of that word. The Irish *peregrinus* throughout the middle ages was not an Irishman who visited a shrine abroad and then returned home, but rather the man who for his soul's welfare abandoned his homeland for good or at least for many years."[27]

Thus, *peregrinatio* required exile from one's home country for the sake of one's soul. Cahill dramatically details the suffering of homesickness as part of these monks' ascetic struggle, writing that for St. Columcille leaving Ireland was "a much harder thing than giving up his life."[28] Considering the millions of Orthodox Christians who, fleeing violent oppression in their homelands, now live in what has been called the Western "diaspora," I would argue that the Irish *peregrinatio* offers a martyric paradigm for framing the vocation of these Orthodox *peregrini* today, and with great importance for a time of moral uncertainty in the West, increasingly termed "post-Christian." Despite their primarily spiritual aspirations, the Irish *peregrini* are often credited for their substantial contribution to the re-

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26 See "Martyr" in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 9 (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 313.

27 T. Fiaich, Irish Monks on the Continent, in James P. Mackey (ed.), *An Introduction to Celtic Christianity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), p. 103.

28 T. Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, p. 183.

Christianization of Western Europe in their own time after the fall of Rome.[29]

McNeil explains, in part, how this came about: "Complete freedom from superiors beyond their own communities in the mission field made them [the *peregrini*] adaptable to local needs and opportunities. They rapidly enlisted Frankish and other German youth who, working harmoniously with them, made Christianity indigenous and self-perpetuating."[30] Their ecclesiastical autonomy gave them the ability to adapt best to their new contexts in a new land. While Celtic customs, such as monastic rules and manuscript illuminations, lingered on the Continent for centuries, from the beginning the Irish missionaries sought to help the indigenous peoples make the faith their own as well, imparting to them a lasting legacy of ascetic discipline and morality. What we see in the history of the *peregrini* is a martyric abandonment of self through exile from their native land for the sake of their Christian faith and service to others.

Perhaps the most prominent of all the Irish *peregrini* was St. Columbanus, "a monk of Bangor in Co. Down who," according to Zarnecki, "in about 590, left Ireland with twelve companions and, in the course of the next twenty-five years, lived in Gaul and Italy, exercising a profound influence on religious life and, to a certain extent, on the civilization of Western Europe."[31] His influence in Gaul, where his crew first landed, was expansive. Later, exiled from Gaul after a confrontation with the local royalty, he and his companions were shipwrecked and ended up in Switzerland. From there, they traveled to northern Italy,

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29 See, e.g., T. Fiaich, "Irish Monks on the Continent," 103; J. McNeill, *The Celtic Churches: A History—A.D. 200 to 1200* (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 174–175.; G. Zarnecki, *The Monastic Achievement* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1972), p. 23.

30 McNeill, *The Celtic Churches*, p. 175.

31 G. Zarnecki, *The Monastic Achievement*, p. 22.

where St. Columbanus founded "the abbeys of Luxeuil in the Vosges and Bobbio in the Apennines."[32]

Everywhere they went, they left a legacy of faith and education. "The Irish monks," writes Zarnecki, "with their tradition of learning, established large libraries and encouraged the copying and decorating of books. A very large number of manuscripts from Bobbio still survive, and the earliest among them exhibit a curious mixture of Celtic and Italian elements of decoration."[33] In short, as the life of St. Columbanus demonstrates, to the extent one can say that the Irish saved civilization, they did it through a wholehearted embrace of the martyrdom of exile and an ascetic way of life, becoming "those people who repent well, who control their desires, and who shed their blood in fasting and in labor for Christ's sake."[34]

3.3 Martyrdom and Marriage

By the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we can see further broadening of asceticism and martyrdom to the realm of marriage. Or rather, perhaps we should say that it is a renewed acknowledgment of what was always already there. For example, in addition to expressing the royal nature of marriage, Fr. Alexander Schmemann noted that "the glory and the honor" of the crowns in an Orthodox wedding "is that of the martyr's crown. For the way to the Kingdom is the *martyria*—bearing witness to Christ. And this means crucifixion and suffering. A marriage which does not constantly crucify its own selfishness and self-sufficiency, which does not 'die to itself' that it may point beyond itself, is not a Christian marriage."[35]

Vladimir Soloviev had already picked up on this motif in the previous century. He writes of the monk Father Clement

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32 Ibidem.

33 Idem, p. 23.

34 *The Cambrai Homily* in Davies, *Celtic Spirituality*, p. 370.

35 A. Schmemann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973), p. 90.

Sederholm that as "a young scholar," he was present once at a marriage in a Russian [Orthodox] church, [and] was struck by the fact that in a sacred anthem bridal crowns are compared to the crowns of martyrs. This profoundly thoughtful view so touched his soul that it called forth a complete revolution, ending with the young philologist giving up secular learning and the university chair destined for him and, to the distress of his relatives, going into a monastery.[36]

Thus, the Orthodox confluence of martyrdom and marriage *itself* acted as a witness to the faith, spurring on the conversion of this young man. Accordingly, Soloviev writes, "True asceticism (…) has two paths: monasticism and marriage."[37]

He further details precisely how he understands marriage as a form of asceticism and martyrdom:

> "Marriage remains as satisfaction of the sexual requirement; only that very requirement now relates not to the outward nature of an animal organism but to a nature that is humanized and awaiting deification. A huge *task* appears, solved only through continuous *exploit*. In the struggle with hostile reality, it is possible to conquer only by passing through martyrdom."[38]

Marriage transforms sexual union by orienting it toward the higher Good through a martyric renunciation of one's lower, egoistic impulses for that "nature that is humanized and awaiting deification."

For Schmemann, in fact, confusion about the martyric nature of marriage is a major cause of divorce in the modern world: "It is not the lack of respect for the family, it is the idolization of the family that breaks the modern family so easily, making divorce its almost natural shadow. It is the identification of marriage

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36 V. Soloviev, The Moral Organization of Humanity as a Whole, (1899), trans. Vladimir Wozniuk, *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16.1 (Spring 2013), p. 340n16.

37 Idem, p. 338.

38 Idem, p. 340.

with happiness and the refusal to accept the cross in it."[39] To purge marriage of its martyric nature robs it of the witness it must necessarily bear for the kingdom of God and the cross of Christ.

As I have written elsewhere, this ascetic nature of marriage has even broader implications: "From the family come all other forms of society, and the family does not function properly apart from asceticism."[40] That is, all the members of a healthy family must constantly deny themselves to contribute to the common good of the group. And inasmuch as asceticism is the seed of martyrdom, then martyrdom is not only the seed of the Church—when taken from this broad perspective it is the seed of all human flourishing in society as well.

4 Conclusion

The philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre famously ended his book *After Virtue* with a call for a new St. Benedict to renew the dying moral culture of the West. While I do not share his rather bleak characterization of our own times as a "new dark ages,"[41] he is right to highlight, albeit indirectly, the importance of asceticism in the cultivation of moral culture. For the Orthodox "diaspora," however, perhaps St. Columbanus and the Celtic *peregrini* would make for better inspiration than St. Benedict, who historically had much less to do with the re-Christianization of the West than they did.

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39 A. Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 90.

40 D. Pahman, What Makes a Society? An Orthodox Perspective on Asceticism, Marriage, the Family, and Society, in: T. Dedon and S. Trostyanskiy (ed.), *Love, Marriage, and Family in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition*, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 7 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press – The Sophia Institute, 2013), p. 189.

41 A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2nd edn., 1984), p. 263.

But who are the new martyrs today? Not only is the exile of many an opportunity for a new martyric witness in Western lands, wherever we find ourselves our call is the same: to martyrdom, to the cross of Christ. For many in the twentieth century under Soviet rule, that meant the shedding of their blood and enduring perhaps the most anti-human torture in all of human history. For many Syrian, Iraqi, Egyptian, and other Middle Eastern Christians today, their lives are continually being threatened by hostile forces seeking to exterminate them from the very birthplace of the Church. Yet, it is not they alone who must embrace a martyric outlook. As Pope St. Gregory the Great (Dialogos) once said, "[P]eace also has its martyrdom."[42] Indeed, wherever Orthodox Christians partake of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, they "proclaim the Lord's death till he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26). As Pobee has noted, "In view of the martyrological ideas involved in the crucifixion (…) the Eucharist may be said to celebrate the martyrdom of Jesus."[43] And, in the early Church, Middleton has noted how "behind every martyrdom was the death of Jesus,"[44] which all Christians are baptized into (cf. Romans 6) and are called to imitate (cf. Philippians 2). Indeed, St. Polycarp's execution is even described with a possible allusion to the Eucharist. In the vault of the flames as he was burned at the stake, he glowed "like bread being baked."[45] And the Eucharist itself is a foretaste of the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, again connecting the notions

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42 Pope St. Gregory the Great, *Homily* 1 from idem., *Homilies on the Gospels*, trans. Dom David Hurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1990), p. 9. For more on the pope's understanding of spiritual martyrdom, see A. Rush, Spiritual Martyrdom in St Gregory the Great, *Theological Studies* 23.4 (1962), pp. 569–589.

43 Pobee, *Persecution and Martyrdom*, 85. See also his discussion of three details—the breaking of the bread, the cup, and the covenant in Christ's blood—that follows on 85–86.

44 Paul Middleton, *Radical Martyrdom*, 82.

45 *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, 15.2 in: C. H. Hoole, *The Apostolic Fathers* (London: Rivingtons, 1885), p. 212.

Deification and the Dismal Science: On Orthodox Theology and Economics[1]

Dylan Pahman

> The breath of Thy Holy Spirit inspires artists, poets, and scientists. The power of Thy supreme knowledge makes them prophets and interpreters of Thy laws, who reveal the depths of Thy creative wisdom. Their works speak unwittingly of Thee. How great art Thou in Thy creation! How great art Thou in man!
>
> —Akathist of Thanksgiving[2]

Introduction

While a leader in environmental theology, contemporary Orthodox Christian social thought lags behind other traditions, such as the Roman Catholic and Reformed, in its engagement with modern economic issues. This is not due to lack of resources, however. In his own time, Fr. Georges Florovsky favorably noted, "'Social Christianity' was the basic and favorite theme of the whole religious thinking in Russia in the course of the last century [i.e., the nineteenth], and the same thought colored also the whole literature of the same period."[3] Vladimir Solovyov dedicated a chapter to "The Economic Question" in his *Justification of the Good*,[4] published in the same decade as Pope Leo XIII's landmark encyclical *Rerum Novarum* and the Dutch Reformed theologian Abraham Kuyper's foundational speech *The Problem of Poverty*.[5] Sergei Bulgakov was notably an economist be-

fore becoming a priest and turning his attention to theology.[6] S. L. Frank gave considerable attention to economic issues, such as the nature of private property, in several works.[7] And other writers since their time up to the present have contributed to a significant body of Orthodox reflection on modern economic issues.[8]

Drawing upon these resources as well as a variety of economists, including Robbins, Knight, Eucken, Hayek, and Kirzner,[9] this paper outlines a basic methodology for approaching economic issues from the perspective of Orthodox theology. In the first section, I examine (1) the standard definition of economics and (2) the character of economics as a social science and its methodological differences from the physical sciences. In the second section, I examine the role of morality in economics. In the final section, (1) I draw upon Vladimir Lossky and St. Maximus the Confessor[10] *inter alia* to develop an Orthodox approach to economics. Then (2) I offer four suggestions for interdisciplinary work between Orthodox theology and economics. In conclusion, I argue that both can benefit from one another: Positive economics needs ethics for normativity, and Orthodox theology needs economics for prudent application of spiritual and moral principles.

Economics as a Social Science

What Is Economics?

Without proper attention to definitions, social thought becomes sloppy. When economists use words like "competitive,"[11] "rational," or "self-interested,"[12] they do not mean them the same way the nonspecialist does. Before we could address any of those, however, we need to take the time to answer the most basic question: "What is economics?" While agreeing on most fundamental principles, the defini-

tion of economics has historically been a matter of considerable dispute among economists themselves.[13] In the present day, however, the definition of Lionel Robbins has gained prominence, so I will focus on it.

"Economics is the science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses," wrote Robbins in his *Nature & Significance of Economic Science*.[14] He explains, "From the point of view of the economist, the conditions of human existence exhibit three fundamental characteristics. [1] The ends are various. The time and the means for achieving these ends are at once [2] limited and [3] capable of alternative application."[15] The use or ends of a resource must be various to qualify as economic. "The Manna which fell from heaven may have been scarce," wrote Robbins, "but, if it was impossible to exchange it for something else or to postpone its use, it was not the subject of any activity with an economic aspect." At the same time, "If I want to do two things, and I have ample time and ample means with which to do them, and I do not want the time or the means for anything else, then my conduct assumes none of those forms which are the subject of economic science."[16] We might say that for Robbins, economics is the study of opportunity cost—the way in which the choice to do one thing comes at the cost of not doing others with the same, limited time and resources.

Robbins thus puts forward a nonmaterialistic definition of economics. That is, it is not exclusively concerned with material wealth, even less so with money. Accordingly, he notes that if one wants to be both a philosopher and a mathematician but does not have the time and ability to do both, the choice between the two is economic.[17] It too involves "a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses." For Robbins, not everything is economic, but there is an economic aspect to almost everything. Israel Kirzner helpfully clarifies that in contrast to older "classifi-

catory" definitions, "Robbins's definition…does not consider the adjective 'economic' as at all appropriate for the description of any act as such, but sees it as singling out a point of view from which actions may be examined."[18] Robbins would agree with Frank Knight that "Life is economic; economics is not all of life."[19] As Robbins put it,

> We have been turned out of Paradise. We have neither eternal life nor unlimited means of gratification. Everywhere we turn, if we choose one thing we must relinquish others which, in different circumstances, we would wish not to have relinquished. Scarcity of means to satisfy given ends is an almost ubiquitous condition of human behaviour.[20]

How Is Economics Scientific?

Having clarified what economics *is*, we must now ask, "How is economics scientific?" I could imagine someone objecting that perhaps it doesn't need to be. Isn't common sense good enough? As Wilhelm Röpke noted, "Economics is the one field where every layman feels able to render a competent opinion because it is the field where his interests are involved and his sentiments are aroused."[21] In response, I'd appeal to Walter Eucken, Röpke's colleague. What we think of as "common sense" is often colored by our own interests. Yet, Eucken clarifies, "It is not that what we learn from our everyday experience must be wrong because of its subservience to our interests. It may be either right or wrong, and what has to be found is a strict criterion and a scientific method for deciding that."[22] As the classical economist William Nassau Senior put it, "Men who fancy they are applying common-sense to questions of Political Economy, are often applying to them only common prejudice."[23] In order to transcend our own "common prejudice," economics needs a scientific method of analysis. But what does that look like?

First of all, to be scientific does *not* necessarily mean following the experimental method of the physical sciences,

though that approach has been fruitful.[24] The presumption, however, that this alone qualifies as scientific is not science, but scientism. As F. A. Hayek put it, "The scientistic as distinguished from the scientific view is not an unprejudiced but a very prejudiced approach which, before it has considered its subject, claims to know what is the most appropriate way of investigating it."[25] Rather, as Robbins put it, "quantitative prediction in economics is apt to be hazardous; much more hazardous indeed than predicting the weather."[26]

Economics, as a social science, is concerned with studying human behavior in one particular aspect: that defined as economic above. Like other social sciences, says Hayek, it deals "with the relations between men and things or the relations between man and man. They are concerned with man's actions and their aim is to explain the unintended or undesigned results of the actions of many men."[27] The goal of economics in particular, according to Eucken, is to explain "how everyday economic life hangs together" and "the structure of the economic system under which everyday economic reality is understood."[28]

Methodologically, Hayek details the key difference between the natural or physical sciences and the social sciences as follows: "Whenever we are concerned with unconscious reflexes or processes in the human body there is no obstacle to treating and investigating them 'mechanically' as caused by objectively observable external events." But, he continues,

> The social sciences in the narrower sense…are concerned with man's conscious or reflective action, actions where a person can be said to choose between various courses open to him, and here the situation is essentially different… We know…that in his conscious decisions man classifies external stimuli in a way which we know solely from our own subjective experience of this kind of classification… Our procedure is based on the experience that other people as a rule…classify their sense impressions as we do.[29]

Thus, there is an essentially subjective core to the social sciences and the phenomena they study. As Hayek put it, "There are no better terms available to describe this difference between the approach of the natural and the social sciences than to call the former objective and the latter subjective."[30]

In the case of economics, the tendency to economize when faced with scarce means for alternative ends is understood to be the result of a judgment, a free choice on the part of human persons. The subjective experience of this phenomenon is then abstracted into a general rule for analysis, such as "every person is desirous to obtain, with as little sacrifice as possible, as much as possible of the articles of wealth."[31] It is important to note that, by their very nature, such rules admit of exceptions. That an austere ascetic both seeks out sacrifice and flees from wealth does not change the usefulness of a rule like this as a tool for the analysis of human social behavior in general.

All of this underscores one last point. Because economics is concerned with subjective behavior and motivations, economic value is essentially subjective as well.[32] Economic value is not the only kind of value, nor necessarily the most important, but that does not make it *un*important. Most people want a hammer in order to pound nails, for example, but a murderer might want a hammer to kill someone. Both the normal person and the murderer, however, might believe that $24.99 is a decent price for a hammer. Prices do not indicate moral, artistic, spiritual, or any other value. They signify the relative, subjective value of an item to both buyers and sellers as a use of limited resources that could otherwise be employed. The price system acts as a mechanism of coordinating the scattered subjective information regarding the various economic values of goods and services, information that cannot be obtained through mere external observation.[33] That said, if, alternatively, the murderer doesn't have

$24.99, he or she can't buy a hammer and will have to steal one—or the money to buy one—and risk getting caught for that crime before the opportunity for murder will ever be a reality. Thus, the economic value of the hammer just might save a life! Kidding aside, the constraint upon behavior that scarcity provides forces people to make decisions that are significant in their own right, even if the moral status of those choices is neutral—though I will now argue that that neutrality is more ambiguous than it may seem.

Economics as a Moral Science

Economics, as a positive science at least, claims to be "value-free." My most charitable reading of this claim is that it means a certain degree of methodological independence from ethics, though not for that exemption from ethical demands in practice or application.[34] While to some degree anticipated as early as the classical economist (and later Anglican archbishop of Dublin) Richard Whately,[35] the standard statement of this comes from Milton Friedman: "Positive economics is in principle independent of any particular ethical position or normative judgments," he wrote. As such, to some degree *contra* Hayek,[36] it ought to be "an 'objective' science, in precisely the same sense as any of the physical sciences."[37] He did not, for that, rule out the importance of normative economics or political economy, which are lively fields in their own right.[38] But I think this position ought to be weighed for its own merits before it is criticized.

In particular, there is virtue in a discipline that seeks to know its own limits and adhere to them. The economist, when faced with an ethical question, can offer cost-benefit analysis, but *as an economist* he or she refrains from outlining a system of morality and making ethical judgments. These concerns are important but outside of the domain of economics and thus also outside the competence of econo-

mists. Personally, I wish theologians and ethicists would be as disciplined about staying within their competence when they engage economic questions, but I digress.[39]

There are some important limitations to the "value-free" restriction, however. First, the social sciences, which we've already said include economics, once were called the moral sciences.[40] In the case of classical political economy, the focus was on how to enrich nations and alleviate poverty.[41] Despite shifting to Robbins's less materialistic definition, economics still uniquely bears this moral vocation. Every science has a moral vocation, because no science can completely escape the necessity of value judgments. Wilhelm Röpke insisted pointedly that

> science in its very foundations rests on value judgments. That men pursue science at all, that the science of economics has been developed as a special branch, that we select worthwhile subjects of research from the endless number of possible ones, that we economists decided to devote ourselves to this science, that we regard truth as an inviolable scientific principle—all this implies judgments of value…If the Relativist is not satisfied with this let us ask him whether he is seriously prepared to devote his life to discovering the means for impoverishing a nation in the quickest possible way or for improving the much neglected "fine art of murder."[42]

Thus, to be "value-free" should not be taken too literally. A more precise way of putting it might be that there are such things as scientific value and economic value, and that these cannot simply be conflated with moral or spiritual value, even if they do have a moral foundation. We might even venture to call this a form of *symphonia*: Economics and ethics are importantly distinct, but they should neither be confused nor radically separated in application.[43]

Another, related limit of the value-free restriction, although Friedman might disagree, is that it renders economics depen-

dent upon other disciplines in order to contribute to normative policy recommendations. Frank Knight was emphatic about this point. "Without an adequate ethics and sociology in the broad sense," he wrote, "economics has little to say about policy."[44] Life is economic, but economics is not all of life. Failing to acknowledge the latter leads to economism—the reduction of all value to economic value, eschewing the importance of moral and spiritual considerations and exercising a disciplinary colonialism, so to speak, invading the boundaries of domains for which the economist *qua* economist has no right or competence to rule.

Lastly, the "value-free" label can be misleading in that it fails to acknowledge that economics, as a science of decision-making, could also be considered a science of wisdom and prudence. As St. John of Damascus put it,

> Reason consists of a speculative and a practical part. The speculative part is the contemplation of the nature of things, and the practical consists in deliberation and defines the true reason for what is to be done. The speculative side is called mind or wisdom, and the practical side is called reason or prudence.[45]

Economics can contribute to reasonable thinking on both accounts. It helps us identify to what extent the nature of a problem is economic, and it helps us to discern in those cases "what is to be done." Prudence is not the only virtue we need, but it is one we cannot do without. And thus, we cannot do without economics either.

Orthodox Theology and Economic Science

Toward an Orthodox Theology of Economics

So how might the student of Orthodox theology approach interdisciplinary work with economics in order to broaden the competence of Orthodox social thought? Before offering

a few suggestions, we need a basic theology of economics. From an Orthodox perspective, there is no realm of life devoid of the grace of God. As one text attributed to St. Justin the Philosopher puts it, "To God nothing is secular, not even the world itself, for it is His workmanship."[46] So the work of secular economists cannot be cast aside simply because most economists are not also theologians. We cannot even disregard the work of those who are not Christians. God is at work among them as well.[47]

St. Maximus the Confessor offers a more detailed breakdown of what Vladimir Lossky calls "the different degrees of the presence of grace in the created world."[48] According to St. Maximus,

> The Holy Spirit is present unconditionally in all things, in that he embraces all things, provides for all, and vivifies the natural seeds within them. He is present in a specific way in all who are under the Law, in that he shows them where they have broken the commandments and enlightens them about the promise given concerning Christ. In all who are Christians he is present also in yet another way in that he makes them sons of God. But in none is he fully present as the author of wisdom except in those who have understanding, and who by their holy way of life have made themselves fit to receive his indwelling and deifying presence.[49]

Commenting on this, Lossky writes, "If we wanted to make a diagram…we would make four concentric circles, of which the center would represent the fullness of the teaching as well as of the experience of grace." He continues, "The four circles would be [1] the pagan or 'lay' world; [2] the world living in accordance with revealed Law or natural law; [3] the Christian world in general; and finally, [4] the mystical center of the universe where the saints can attain the fullness of grace, perfect union with God."[50] Figure 1 illustrates this:

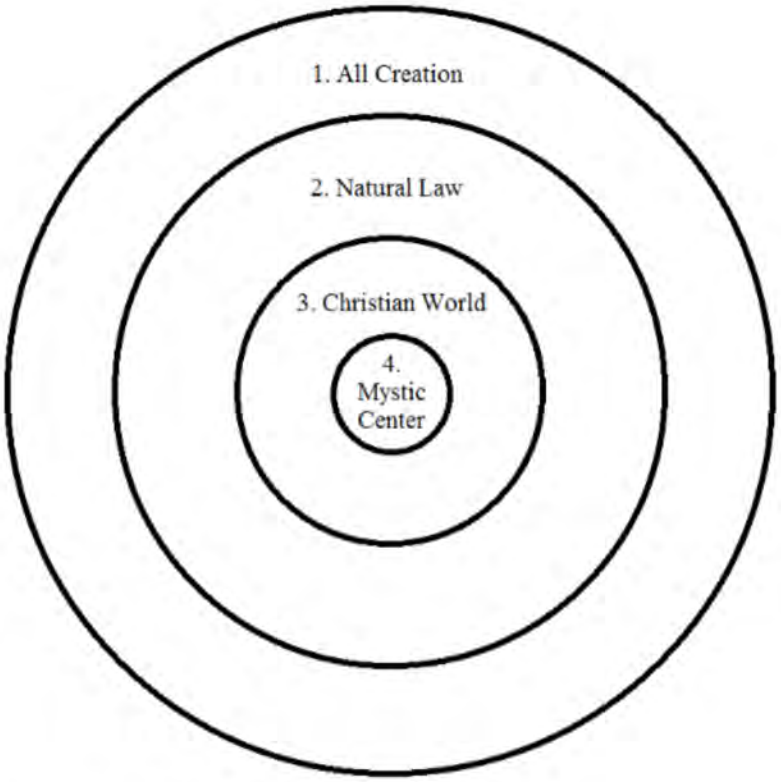

Figure 1. Degrees of Grace

Economics would fall within the first or second of these concentric circles as a matter of the beginnings of natural contemplation. As Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae put it,

> Every man, depending on his own conscience and freedom, makes use of the levels [of creation] inferior to himself. And in order to make use of them, man organizes and transforms by his labor the data of the world, imprinting on them his own stamp. This adaptation of the world to man's needs… demands, in the first place, that man have knowledge of the things of the world. But it likewise belongs to our nature—as the only being conscious of itself and of the world—to search for a meaning to our own existence and that of the world as well.[51]

This meaning, of course, is found only in eternity. But the natural contemplation involved in economics is not incidental to that. Rather, it can lead people to acknowledge their

need for the eternal, and it itself participates in it, just as we have already noted that it is permeated by grace.[52]

Indeed, to the extent that economics is a moral science, it could, for the Christian, potentially fall within the third and fourth of Lossky's circles of grace as well. As Vladimir Solovyov put it, "It is written that man does not live by bread *alone*, but it is not written that he lives without bread."[53] So also Florovsky: "the church is a society which claims the whole man for God's service and offers cure and healing to the whole man, and not only to his 'soul.'"[54] Caring for the poor and marginalized is one of the most basic Christian duties and the basis, according to Christ, upon which we will one day be judged (see Matt 25:31–46). Studying economics enables a person to do that better, and there is nothing dismal about that. It too can contribute to our deification.

Four Suggestions

So how else might Orthodox theology benefit from greater engagement with modern economics? I offer the following four suggestions:

(1) As already noted, **economics needs moral principles for normativity**.[55] The Orthodox Tradition can offer the guidance of sound moral principles needed to augment economic analysis in this regard, helping to give it a more responsible voice when it comes to questions not only of efficiency, but justice and mercy as well. To be clear, this ought not to look like theologians telling economists when economic analysis can be brushed aside. It *never can be*. Life is economic. Rather, it should take the form of helping to determine *what to do* with that analysis, because economics is not all of life.[56] For example, economists can advise policy makers about the economic costs and benefits of immigration—increased competition in labor markets, increased specialization, additional entrepreneurial ventures that provide

new employment opportunities, more people to pay into and support state welfare benefits, and so on. But it is the sociologist's and political scientist's job to say what effect this will have on a society's culture, what attitude people will have toward the influx of foreigners, whether there is any security risk, how to integrate newcomers into a society's democratic process, and so on. Even still, neither can tell us what morally *ought* to be preferred in any given context. To do that, moral principles are also needed regarding the dignity of human persons, labor, innovation and trade, cultural cohesion, pluralism, and so on. All of these things—economics, sociology, political science, moral principles—need to come together for prudent political economy, and no doubt for any given issue there may be more than one defensible view. The Orthodox Tradition can contribute the needed moral principles through concepts like the ascetic basis of society,[57] the sacramental quality of creation,[58] the spiritual nature of social life (*sobornost'*),[59] the *perichoresis* or *symphonia* between the various spheres of social life,[60] natural law,[61] *philanthropia*,[62] *philoxenia*,[63] and so on.

(2) **Orthodox theologians can help to identify and teach the ascetic habits necessary for successful and ethical business practices and daily work**. Max Weber famously attributed the spirit of modern capitalism to the Protestant ethic of what he termed "worldly asceticism."[64] Several Orthodox writers have pointed out, however, that Weber did not accurately understand the Orthodox ascetic tradition.[65] Thus, its insights have gone largely neglected in discussions of the ascetic character of entrepreneurship and work in modern societies in general.[66] At an academic level, making the case that Orthodox asceticism is not a barrier, but rather an asset, to a society's integration into and success in global markets would go a long way to opening the doors to economists and sociologists expanding their research to more seriously engage the Christian East.[67] On a more pastoral level,

there is a significant body of (mostly Protestant) work in the West that has sought to develop a theology of work in order to help laypeople, in their various vocations, better live out their faith.[68] Certainly the Orthodox ascetic tradition, which emphasizes constant prayer, the spiritual good of labor, and a view of life's setbacks and hardships as opportunities for virtue has insights to add to this conversation as well.[69]

(3) **Economics can help to broaden the scope and competency of Orthodox moral theology**. For example, modern markets are impersonal, largely unplanned social spaces. Trying to apply face-to-face, personalistic ethics is a category error. As the economist and theologian Paul Heyne put it,

> A judge who forgives a convicted criminal is not a candidate for sainthood but for impeachment. The morality of large social spheres is simply different from the morality of face-to-face systems. Arguments against capital punishment must take those differences into account, and so must our arguments for revised economic policies.[70]

The moral question in such situations centers upon just rules of conduct, where people must be treated impartially. As Peter Hill and John Lunn put it, "In personal relationships, one can cultivate good intentions and condemn a lack of concern for others. However, unless one wants to opt completely out of the world of impersonal exchange, one must accept benefits from unknown others and also provide benefits to others, without knowing much about their moral worthiness."[71]

Consider again the example of the murderer who wants to buy a hammer. Unlike in a tribal society, neither the hardware store owner nor the hammer manufacturer is able to know how any given consumer of their hammers intends to use them. The moral culpability for murder-by-hammer falls upon the murderer alone.

Socially speaking, the morality of selling hammers centers, rather, upon questions of equal treatment. While any given

manufacturer may feel compunction at their unintended contribution to such a tragic act, and that compunction may be commendable[72] and may lead to improved manufacturing practices,[73] the economist would point out that there may be other unintended consequences of trying, at the level of law, to penalize or regulate hammer manufacturers or hardware stores.[74] As Heyne put it (in 1993),

> The trouble is that any productive process could always be made safer but only at some cost…Airline travel could always be made safer if we required planes to taxi from one city to another. But travel would become less safe because people would drive their cars, which is far more risky.
> The US Federal Aviation Administration is thinking about requiring that all children under two years old have their own seats so that they can be strapped in. That might save one life every ten years, but we might kill about ten babies every year as mummy and daddy drive to see grandma instead of taking the plane.[75]

Conversely, should the hardware store clerk refuse to sell someone a hammer because she judged that that person superficially appeared to be untrustworthy (rather than explicitly declaring his or her intent to murder), it would not be praiseworthy but an act of unjust discrimination and thus immoral. After all, only God "knows the secrets of the heart" (Ps 44:21).[76]

(4) **The economic point of view can illumine questions of theology, ethics, and spirituality**. Consider, for example, Jesus's warning to his disciples to "count the cost" of following him (Luke 14:27–30). Christ is telling us to economize! Indeed, we might reconsider the ascetic who seeks sacrifice and shuns wealth. What is really meant by that is *material* sacrifice and *material* wealth. No saint seeks to sacrifice or flee from virtue. The monk, for example, sacrifices material wealth but seeks to acquire spiritual wealth through the most efficient means possible, such as living celibately and forgo-

ing the frustrations of family life.[77] From a spiritual perspective this is a sacrifice, of course, but from the economic point of view it is also still utility-maximizing behavior, and the insights of economics might actually help us do that better, whatever our vocations may be. Prudent cost-benefit analysis matters for our salvation too. Otherwise, we leave ourselves susceptible to the jeer, "This man began to build and was not able to finish" (Luke 14:30).

Conclusion

Few social issues of our time do not contain an economic aspect. For those of us who believe that the Orthodox Tradition has riches new and old to bring to these discussions, a basic attention to and competency in modern economics is required. Such interdisciplinary work is not easy. Studying a subject outside of one's specialty requires ascetic struggle, patience, humility, and wisdom. But those things are themselves a reward, in addition to the fruits of such interdisciplinary work. In this essay, I have provided a basic introduction to modern economic science and an outline for how Orthodox social thought could better engage it. Orthodox scholars interested in this work may further take heart that they can also draw from a considerable body of scholarship among Roman Catholic and Reformed Christians that offers additional models for the integration of theology and economics, not to mention opportunity for ecumenical dialogue.

Notes

[1] An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the 2016 Florovsky Symposium on May 7, 2016, at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts.

[2] "Akathist Hymn: 'Glory to God for All Things,'" in John (Ellsworth) Hutchison-Hall, ed., *Akathists Services, Canons, and Other Prayers*, vol. 1, *Akathists* (John-that-Theologian.com, 2013), 27.

[3] Georges Florovsky, "The Social Problem in the Eastern Orthodox Church," in idem, *Christianity and Culture*, The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, vol. 2 (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing Company, 1974), 136.

[4] See Vladimir Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 2nd ed., trans. Natalie Duddington, ed. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 282–311.

[5] Respectively, see Pope Leo XIII, encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum*, May 15, 1891, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html; Abraham Kuyper, *The Problem of Poverty*, rev. ed., trans. Dirk Jellema, ed. James W. Skillen (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991 [1891]).

[6] For some of his social theology translated into English, see Sergei Bulgakov, *Karl Marx as a Religious Type: His Relation to the Religion of Anthropotheism of L. Feuerbach*, trans. Luba Barna (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1979); idem, "Heroism and Asceticism: Reflections on the Religious Nature of the Russian Intelligentsia," in Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman, trans. and ed., *Vekhi: Landmarks* (Armonk, NY; London: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), 17–50; idem, "The National Economy and the Religious Personality (1909)," trans. Krassen Stanchev, *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 157–179; idem, *Philosophy of Economy: The World as Household*, trans. and ed. Catherine Evtuhov (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000). See also Krassen Stanchev, "Sergey Bulgakov and the Spirit of Capitalism," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 149–156.

[7] See S. L. Frank, *The Spiritual Foundations of Society*, trans. Boris Jakim (Athens, Ohio; London: Ohio University Press, 1987), esp.172–175; idem, *The Light Shineth in the Darkness*, trans. Boris Jakim (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1989); idem, "The Ethic of Nihilism," A Characterization of the Russian Intelligentsia's Moral Outlook," in *Vekhi*, 131–155.

[8] See Petr Struve, "The Intelligentsia and Revolution," in *Vekhi*, 115–130; A. N. Tsirintanes, *Towards a Christian Civilization: A Draft Issued by the Christian Union of Professional Men in Greece* (Athens: The "Damascus" Publications, 1950); Florovsky, "The Social Problem," in idem, *Christianity and Culture*, 131–142; Archbishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos), *Facing the World: Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*, trans. Pavlos Gottfried (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Theological Seminary, 2003), 179–199; Daniel P. Payne and Christopher Marsh, "Sergei Bulgakov's 'Sophic' Economy: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective on Christian Economics," *Faith & Economics* 53 (Spring 2009): 35–51; Alfred Kentigern Siewers, "Traditional Christian Marriage as an

Expression of Social Justice: Identity and Society in the Writings of Florensky and Bulgakov," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 569–586; Irinej Dobrijević, "The Orthodox Spirit and the Ethic of Capitalism: A Case Study on Serbia and Montenegro and the Serbian Orthodox Church," *Serbian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 1–13; Department of External Church Relations, *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, 2000, https://mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/; idem, *The Russian Orthodox Church's Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights*, 2008, https://mospat.ru/en/documents/dignity-freedom-rights/; Fr. Michael Butler and Andrew Morriss, *Creation and the Heart of Man: An Orthodox Christian Perspective on Environmentalism*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Acton Institute, 2013); Fr. Gregory Jensen, *The Cure for Consumerism*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Acton Institute, 2015); Dylan Pahman, "What Makes a Society? An Orthodox Perspective on Asceticism, Marriage, the Family, and Society," in *Love, Marriage and Family in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition*, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 7 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press, 2013), 179–193; idem, "The Value of Ordered Liberty: The Orthodox View," *The City* (Summer 2014): 53–59; idem, "Asceticism and Creative Destruction: On Ontology and Economic History," Ontology and History: International Conference at the European Cultural Centre of Delphi (Delphi, Greece: May 2015). The Orthodox Council convened in Crete June 19–26 also adopted, with some revisions, the draft document "The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today's World." The unedited draft version can be read at the council website: https://www.orthodoxcouncil.org/decisions/-/asset_publisher/f1JDEVkdg6TH/content/mission-orthodox-church-todays-world/3574532?_101_INSTANCE_f1JDEVkdg6TH_languageId=en_US. This document's statements on economic issues are of questionable value and accuracy, however, highlighting the need for more careful interdisciplinary work, as argued in this paper.

[9] Specifically, Lionel Robbins, *An Essay on the Nature & Significance of Economic Science* (London: MacMillan & Co., 1932); Frank H. Knight, "Ethics and Economic Reform: III. Christianity," *Economica*, new series 6, no. 24 (November 1939): 398–422; Walter Eucken, *The Foundations of Economics*, trans. T. W. Hutchinson (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1951); F. A. Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society. Part I," *Economica*, New Series 9, no. 35 (August 1942): 267–291; idem, "The Use of Knowledge in Society," *The American Economic Review* 35, no. 4 (September 1945): 519–530; Israel M. Kirzner, *The Economic Point of View* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, Inc., 2009). I draw from

representatives of a variety of schools of economics (e.g., classical, Austrian, Chicago, Freiburg). However, despite this diversity, this should not be taken to be a comprehensive sampling—there are other schools (and economists, for that matter) not represented herein that are no less important to modern economics. But it is not as if these schools are hermetically sealed off from one another either—the boundaries are not strict and sometimes merely institutional.

[10] Vladimir Lossky, "The Doctrine of Grace in the Orthodox Church," trans. Paul Ladouceur, *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (2014): 69–86; Maximus the Confessor, "Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy, and Virtue and Vice," in *The Philokalia, The Complete Text*, vol. 2 (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 164–284.

[11] See Israel Kirzner, *Competition and Entrepreneurship* (Chicago, IL; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), 89.

[12] See Dylan Pahman, "Editorial: Self-Interest and Moral Contexts," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 1–5.

[13] For a survey, see Kirzner, *The Economic Point of View*.

[14] Robbins, *Nature & Significance*, 15.

[15] Ibid., 12–13.

[16] Ibid., 13.

[17] See ibid., 14.

[18] Kirzner, *The Economic Point of View*, 124.

[19] Ross B. Emmett, "Economics is not All of Life," *Econ Journal Watch* 11, no. 2 (May 2014): 146. Emmett is here summarizing Knight.

[20] Robbins, *Nature & Significance*, 15.

[21] Wilhelm Röpke, "The Place of Economics among the Sciences," in Mary Sennholz, ed., *Freedom and Free Enterprise: Essays in Honor of Ludwig von Mises* (Auburn, AL: The Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2008 [1956]), 125.

[22] Eucken, *The Foundation of Economics*, 32.

[23] William Nassau Senior, *An Introductory Lecture on Political Economy* (London: J. Mawman, 1828), 31. This also calls to mind Kant: "To appeal to common sense, when insight and science fail, and no sooner—this is one of the subtile [sic] discoveries of modern times, by means of which the most superficial ranter can safely enter the lists with the most thorough thinker, and hold his own. But as long as a particle of insight remains, no one would think of having recourse to this subterfuge. For what is it but an appeal to the opinion of the multitude, of whose applause the philosopher is ashamed, while the popular charlatan glories and confides in it?" (Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, trans. Paul Carus, in Paul Carus, ed., *Kant's Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics with an Essay on Kant's Philosophy, and Oth-*

er Supplementary Material for the Study of Kant [Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1909], 6).

[24] Vernon Smith won the Nobel Prize in economics for this in 2002. The audio and text of his address are available online at http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2002/smith-lecture.html. The lecture was subsequently published in the *American Economic Review*. See Vernon Smith, "Constructivist and Ecological Rationality in Economics," *American Economic Review* 93, no. 3 (June 2003): 465–508.

[25] Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society. Part I," 269.

[26] Lionel Robbins, "Economics and Political Economy," *The American Economic Review* 71, no. 2 (May 1981): 3.

[27] Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society. Part I," 276. See also Robbins, "Economics and Political Economy," 2.

[28] Eucken, *The Foundations of Economics*, 102.

[29] Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society. Part I," 277. See also Robbins, "Economics and Political Economy," 3: "The influence of the Reformation made no change in the forces of gravity. But it certainly must have changed the demand for fish on Fridays."

[30] Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society. Part I," 279.

[31] Senior, *Introductory Lecture*, 35.

[32] Modern, mainstream economics rejects the labor theory of value utilized by Karl Marx and originating with David Ricardo. Bulgakov called it scientifically "indefensible," though he did find it philosophically interesting. See Bulgakov, *Philosophy of Economy*, 119.

[33] On this, see Hayek, "The Use of Knowledge in Society."

[34] For more on this, see Dylan Pahman, "Toward a Kuyperian Political Economy: On the Relationship between Ethics and Economics," *Faith and Economics* 67 (Spring 2016), forthcoming.

[35] See Richard Whately, "Lecture I: Nature and Subjects of the Science," in idem, *Introductory Lectures on Political-Economy, Delivered at Oxford in Easter Term, MDXCCCXXXI with Remarks on Tithes and on Poor-Laws and on Penal Colonies*, 4th ed. (London: John W. Parker and Son, West Strand, 1855), 1–17.

[36] This difference may be more apparent than actual. Hayek was speaking of the subject matter of the social sciences when he called them subjective and contrasted them with the objective nature of the physical sciences. Friedman is speaking here of the relation of economics to ethics. Objective, for Friedman, here indicates a subject that is independent from ethics.

[37] Milton Friedman, "The Methodology of Positive Economics," in idem,

Essays in Positive Economics (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 4.

[38] I use the term "political economy" in the same sense as Robbins, viz., that discipline that covers "that part of our sphere of interest which essentially involves judgments of value. Political Economy, thus conceived, is quite unashamedly concerned with the assumptions of policy and the results flowing from them." He continues, "Political economy in this sense involves all the modes of analysis and explicit or implicit judgments of value which are usually involved when economists discuss assessments of benefits and the reverse or recommendations for policy." As distinct from welfare economics of the time, which claimed to be value-free, Robbins says that "Political Economy…at each relevant point, declares all relevant non-scientific assumptions" (Robbins, "Economics and Political Economy," 8–9). Political economy is thus something of a hybrid discipline, combining positive economic analysis with ethics, politics, and sociology, *inter alia*. Robbins even recommends that "as teachers of the subject, our instructions will be more fruitful if, side by side, they run parallel with suitable courses in Politics and History" (9). I would add ethics, philosophy, and—for instructors at Christian institutions at least—theology.

[39] On the importance of competence in general, see Charles Malik, *Christ and Crisis*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Acton Institute, 2015), 15–29.

[40] Hayek acknowledges this. See Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society. Part I," 277.

[41] On this, see Senior, *Introductory Lecture*; Alfred Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, 9th ed., vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1961), 45–46; Kirzner, *The Economic Point of View*, 20–54. It is also worth noting that the full title of Adam Smith's famous 1776 work is *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, highlighting that the creation of wealth was fundamental to his conception of political economy as well.

[42] Wilhelm Röpke, "A Value Judgment on Value Judgments (1941)," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 18, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 504. On the significance of Röpke and this essay in particular, see Samuel Gregg, "A Value Judgment on 'A Value Judgment on Value Judgments," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 18, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 483–495. See also idem, *Wilhelm Röpke's Political Economy* (Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2010).

[43] One can find a neo-Calvinist approach to this in Pahman, "Toward a Kuyperian Political Economy." Kuyper would use the term "sphere sovereignty" rather than *symphonia*, and Kuyper's Reformed social thought

has areas of dissonance with Orthodoxy, of course, but I still find him insightful on this question. See also Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*.

[44] Knight, "Ethics and Economic Reform: III. Christianity," 422. Similarly, see Röpke, "A Value Judgment on Value Judgments." It should be noted, however, that Knight did not believe Christianity offered much with regards to this needed "ethics and sociology," but it is also quite clear that the Christian ethics he engaged is just one example from his time and not an adequate survey of the wide variety of Christian approaches to morality, not to mention Orthodox Christian approaches.

[45] John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 2.28 (NPNF² 9:40b).

[46] Justin Martyr, *On the Resurrection of the Dead* 5 (ANF 1:296). The authorship of this treatise has been disputed.

[47] This is not to say that a researcher's perspective and bias have no significant effect on his or her research, however. On this, see Röpke, "A Value Judgment on Value Judgments," 502; Paul Heyne, "Economics and Ethics: The Problem of Dialogue," in idem, *"Are Economists Basically Immoral?" and Other Essays on Economics, Ethics, and Religion* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1998), 10–28; Anthony Randazzo and Jonathan Haidt, "The Moral Narratives of Economics," *Econ Journal Watch* 12, no. 1 (January 2015): 52. Nietzsche made this same basic point about the study of history. See Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Use and Abuse of History," trans. Adrian Collins, in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Oscar Levy, vol. 2, *Thoughts out of Season*, part 2 (Edinburgh; London: T.N. Foulis, 1909), 23.

[48] Lossky, "The Doctrine of Grace in the Orthodox Church," 85.

[49] Maximus, "Various Texts" 1.73, in *The Philokalia*, 2:180–181.

[50] Lossky, "The Doctrine of Grace," 85.

[51] Dumitru Stăniloae, *The Experience of God: Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, vol. 1, *Revelation and Knowledge of the Triune God,* trans. Ioan Ionita and Robert Barringer (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1994), 5.

[52] See Stăniloae, *The Experience of God*, 1:1–14; Butler and Morriss, *Creation and the Heart of Man*, 75: "This recognition of *logoi*, which begins in a scientific (*epistēmonikōs*) investigation of the phenomenal world, matures in its latter stages into an intuitive grasp of the inner principles of things and ultimately of their unity in the one Logos of God. That is, natural contemplation proceeds from seeing God in creation to seeing creation in God."

[53] Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 394–395.

[54] Florovsky, "The Social Problem," 142.

[55] As Robbins put it, "all recommendations of policy involve judgments of value" (Robbins, "Economics and Political Economy," 6).

[56] On this, see also Tsirintanes, *Toward a Christian Civilization*, 224: "The science of political economy must be science within the strict meaning of the term. We do not criticize political economy as not concerning itself with metaphysics, but, on the contrary, we criticize and condemn those economists who, as if in the name of science, turn to a sort of materialistic cryptometaphysics." He continues, "We are not, therefore, looking for 'a Christian political economy,' but for a political economy which will stay inside the field of a strict scientific method. But this does not mean that political economy can ignore Christianity without losing something. There are Christian economic principles which political economy cannot ignore, if it would not have a critical void in its scientific research and be led again to bankruptcy." It seems from the context that Tsirintanes is here using the term "political economy" to refer to economics in general, and perhaps even specifically positive economics, rather than the broader, normative, integrative discipline that term is more commonly associated with today. While I don't agree with all his conclusions, Tsirintanes's methodology seems close to that which I'm advocating here.

[57] See Pahman, "What Makes a Society?"

[58] See Alexander Schmemann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (1963; repr., Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1988).

[59] See Frank, *The Spiritual Foundations of Society*.

[60] See Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*.

[61] See Stanley Samuel Harakas, "The Natural Law Teaching of the Eastern Orthodox Church," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* (Winter 1963–1964): 215–224; idem, *Toward a Transfigured Life: The* Theoria *of Eastern Orthodox Ethics* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing, 1983), 127–131; Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 185–190; Frank, *The Spiritual Foundations of Society*, 23–30; Stăniloae, *The Experience of God*, vol. 1; Alexander F. C. Webster, "Beyond Byzantium: Eastern Orthodoxy in the American Public Square," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (1997): 337–352; Perry T. Hamalis and Aristotle Papnikolaou, "Toward a Godly Mode of Being: Virtue as Embodied Deification," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 26, no. 3 (2013): 271–280; Boaz Goss and Rico Vitz, "Natural Law among Moral Strangers," *Christian Bioethics* 20, no. 2 (2014): 283–300.

[62] See M. J. Pereira, ed., *Philanthropy and Social Compassion in Eastern Orthodox Tradition*, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 2 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press/The Sophia Institute, 2010).

[63] See Archbishop Stylianos of Australia, "Xenos and Philoxenia in Greek Orthodox Tradition," *Phronema* 15 (2000): 3–14.
[64] See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London; New York: Routledge, 1992 [1930]).
[65] See Bulgakov, "The National Economy and the Religious Personality (1909)"; Dobrijević, "The Orthodox Spirit and the Ethic of Capitalism"; Stanchev, "Sergey Bulgakov and the Spirit of Capitalism"; Dylan Pahman, "Markets and Monasticism: A Survey and Appraisal of Eastern Christian Monastic Enterprise," in John A. McGuckin, ed., *Orthodox Monasticism Past and Present*, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 8 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press, 2014), 465–488.
[66] I have attempted a preliminary analysis of the ascetic character of entrepreneurship from an Orthodox perspective in my conference paper "Asceticism and Creative Destruction."
[67] For an excellent sociological study of Orthodoxy in the context of globalization, see Victor Roudometof, *Globalization and Orthodox Christianity: The Transformations of a Religious Tradition*, Routledge Studies in Religion, vol. 32 (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014). Unfortunately, Roudometof does not specifically address economic globalization.
[68] See, e.g., Pope John Paul II, encyclical letter *Laborem Exorcens*, September 14, 1981, available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html; Lester DeKoster, *Work: The Meaning of Your Life A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 1982); David Wright, *How God Makes the World a Better Place: A Wesleyan Primer on Faith, Work, and Economic Transformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 2012); Chad Brand, *Flourishing Faith: A Baptist Primer on Work, Economics, and Civic Stewardship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 2012); Charlie Self, *Flourishing Churches & Communities: A Pentecostal Primer on Faith, Work, and Economics, for Spirit-Empowered Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 2013); John Bolt, *Economic Shalom: A Reformed Primer on Faith, Work, and Human Flourishing* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 2013); Gene Edward Veith, *Working for Our Neighbor: A Lutheran Primer on Vocation, Economics, and Ordinary Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 2016).
[69] The only Orthodox volume I know of that touches on this is now ten years old and of limited relevance. See Ann Mitsakos Bezzerides, ed., *Christ at Work: Orthodox Christian Perspectives on Vocation* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006).
[70] Paul Heyne, "Are Economists Basically Immoral?" in idem, *"Are Economists Basically Immoral?"*, 9.

[71] Peter J. Hill and John Lunn, "Markets and Morality: Things Ethicists Should Consider When Evaluating Market Exchange," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 35, no. 4 (December 2007): 638.

[72] We do pray for the forgiveness of unknown and unwilled sins, after all. Furthermore, per suggestion #2, it is not my intention to say that manufacturers have no moral responsibilities in general. The concern here is with the specific example of the morality of impersonal social spaces, markets in particular.

[73] I admit, however, that how to make a hammer less potentially deadly without removing its intended utility of being an effective instrument for pounding nails is beyond my imagination. This, in part, is why I chose the example. There seems to be nothing more that rationally could be done.

[74] Prudent regulation, rather, should focus more on regulating market forms (e.g., antidiscrimination laws) than market processes. On this, see Walter Eucken, *This Unsuccessful Age: Or the Pains of Economic Progress* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1952). See also Dylan Pahman, "Sowing Weeds: A Theological and Moral Analysis of Barriers to Entry," Association of Private Enterprise Education Annual Conference (Las Vegas, NV: April 2016).

[75] Heyne, "Are Economists Basically Immoral?" 4. Of course, Heyne is not saying that, therefore, airline safety doesn't matter at all. His point is that perfection is in impossible standard, which underscores the idea of economics as a science of prudence. There are limits to what we can achieve in the real world, limits that economics, among other disciplines, helps us to see. This, in part, is why Heyne thinks economists are often suspected of being immoral. They will ask (and *ought* to ask, Heyne would say) necessary but uncomfortable questions, like "How much is too much to save a life?" (2).

[76] All Scripture quotations herein are taken from the NKJV.

[77] For a fascinating study that touches on this, see Nathan Smith, "The Economics of Monasticism," ASREC Working Paper Series (2009).

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ST VLADIMIR'S THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

A continuation of *St Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*,
a peer-reviewed journal,
published by
THE FACULTY OF ST VLADIMIR'S ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Paul Meyendorff, *Editor*

Volume 60, Number 4
2016

of God through the Incarnate Christ reverses the forgetfulness which occurred at the Fall, and restores the knowledge of the good and gracious Creator to humankind.

Conclusion

In order to understand the coherence of the doctrines of sin, the Incarnation, and salvation in Athanasius' thought, it is necessary to recognize the centrality of the soul's forgetfulness of God in his account of the Fall. When considering important texts where the Fall and its tragic implications is the focus of Athanasius' thinking, forgetfulness is a significant occurrence within the sequence of events that led to the separation of God and humanity, and a cause of human wickedness in its many forms. For Athanasius, the soul's forgetfulness of God at the Fall is part of the *raison d'être* of God's plan of redemption through Christ. Distinguishing the important role that forgetfulness plays in Athanasius' thought deepens our understanding of his doctrine of sin and broadens our perspective of the way he views the saving effects of the Incarnation.

death and renewed us; and also although he is invisible and indiscernible, yet by his works he revealed and made himself known to be the Son of God and the Word of the Father, leader and king of the universe."

St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 60:4 (2016) 489–504

Alive from the Dead: Asceticism between Athens and Jerusalem, Ancient and Modern, East and West

Dylan Pahman[1]

Introduction

While some, such as Charles Hartshorne and Nicholas Wolterstorff, have claimed a Harnackian incompatibility between Greek and biblical thought,[2] Tertullian's famous question, "What hath Athens to do with Jerusalem?" has been conclusively resolved from a historical point of view (the answer being "quite a lot, actually") with regards to Second Temple Judaism, the New Testament, and the early Church.[3] Nevertheless, antipathy between theology and

1 This paper was originally presented at the Dominican Colloquia in Berkeley, July 16–20, 2014. My thanks to those present for their helpful feedback.

2 See, respectively, Charles Hartshorne, *Omnipotence and Other Theological Mistakes* (Albany: State University of New York, 1984), 2; and Nicholas Woltersdorff, "God Is Everlasting," in Michael Peterson, et al., eds., *Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 127.

3 See, e.g., George H. Van Kooten, "Christianity in the Graeco-Roman World: Socio-Political, Philosophical, and Religious Interactions Up to the Edict of Milan," in D. Jeffrey Bingham, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Early Christian Thought* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 3–37; Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, tr., John Bowden (London: SCM, 1974); idem., *The "Hellenization" of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, tr., John Bowden (London: SCM, 1989); and idem., *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians*, tr., John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); Larry R. Helyer, *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002); Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); idem., *Heritage and Hellenism* (Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 1998); David Winston, *The Ancestral Philosophy*, ed., Gregory E. Sterling (Providence: Brown University Press, 2001); John J. Collins, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2005); Pieter W. van der Horst, *Japheth in the Tents of Shem* (Lueven: Peeters, 2002); idem., *Hellenism—Judaism—Christianity* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994); James L. Kugel, ed., *Shem in the Tents of Japheth* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough, *On the History of Religion*

philosophy persists to the present. More often it is, however, an antipathy of times, eras, and traditions, such as ancient/medieval vs. modern or East vs. West. Indeed, Wolterstorff would likely see no such incompatibility between the commonsense epistemology of Thomas Reid, for example, and the patterns of biblical thought.[4] Among Eastern Orthodox writers, as well, such as Christos Yannaras and Fr Alexander Schmemann, the worlds of East and West can appear to be as far apart as good from evil (and sometimes portrayed as respectively synonymous).[5]

By contrast, this paper examines the compatibility between ancient and modern, East and West, through a philosophical and theological analysis of asceticism. Drawing upon Hegel's dialectic of self-consciousness, I bring together Vladimir Solovyov's account of the ascetic principle in morality and Pavel Florensky's dynamic, non-essentialist understanding of personhood to argue that the logic of asceticism follows a dialectic of awareness—denial—

and on Judaism, eds., Ernest S. Frerichs& Jacob Neusner (Atlanta: Scholars, 1986); Elias J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Lee I. Levine, *Judaism & Hellenism in Antiquity* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1998); John J. Collins & Gregory E. Sterling, ed., *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2001); A. Caquot, M. Hadas-Lebel, & J. Riaud, eds., *Hellenica et Judaica* (Paris: Leuven, 1986); Troels Engberg-Pedersen, ed., *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide* (Louiville: Westminister, 2001); Peder Borgen, *Paul Preaches Circumcision and Pleases Men* (Dragvoll: University of Trondheim Press, 1983); Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, *New Testament Backgrounds* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

4 See, e.g., Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Hume and Reid," *The Monist* 70, no. 4: Thomas Reid and His Contemporaries (October 1987): 398–417; and idem., "A Life in Philosophy," *Proceedings and Address of the American Philosophical Association* 81, no. 2 (November 2007): 93–106.

5 See, e.g., Christos Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1996), 24–27, 114–16; idem., "Orthodoxy and the West," tr. Fr Theodore Stylianopoulos in A.J. Philippou, ed., *Orthodoxy, Life and Freedom: Essays in Honour of Archbishop Iakovos* (Oxford: Studion Publications, 1973), 130–47; Alexander Schmemann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1973), 21; and idem., "Worship in a Secular Age," in idem., *For the Life of the World*, 117–34. For an important historical counterbalance to this too-common false dichotomy, see Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

transformation or, in Christian theological terms, life—death—resurrection.[6] This modern perspective is then compared to and supplemented by Patristic accounts of the nature and goal of asceticism that generally rest upon Stoic axiology, (broadly) Neoplatonic metaphysics, and the specifically Christian themes of self-denial and divine grace. This synthesis of modern philosophical and ancient Christian understandings of asceticism is offered as an example of how, in this instance, such narratives of incompatibility are both unfounded and unhelpful. In addition, this dialectic of asceticism is offered as a paradigm for further study of asceticism in both theology and philosophy.

West to East: From Hegel to Florensky

Hegel

One might wonder, "Why Hegel?" Indeed, if one reads his own comments on ascetic practices, G.W.F. Hegel seems to think such practices are unenlightened and misguided.[7] As will become clear, however, Hegel's influence can be felt among modern writers in

6 Flood even characterizes asceticism as "the internalization of tradition, the shaping of the narrative of life in accordance with the narrative of tradition that might be seen as the performance of the memory of tradition." Gavin Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), ix. See also 4–5. In the case of Christianity, the narrative in question would be the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

7 See G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, tr. J. B. Baille, rev. 2nd ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), 575: "It is purposeless to renounce a pleasure and give away a possession, in order to show oneself independent of pleasure and possession; hence, in the converse case, insight will be obliged to proclaim the man a fool, who, in order to eat, employs the expedient of actually eating. Insight again thinks it wrong to deny oneself a meal, and give away butter and eggs not for money, nor money for butter and eggs, but just to give them away and get no return at all; it declares a meal, or the possession of things of that sort to be an end in itself, and hence in fact declares itself to be a very *impure* intention which ascribes essential value to enjoyment and possessions of this kind." *Contra Hegel*, it will be shown in the last section of this paper, on the Church fathers, that, in fact, ancient Christian ascetics were quite clear and consistent in denying that pleasure and possession have any value per se apart from a virtuous use, oriented through love toward God.

the East, including both Solovyov and Florensky. Thus, rehearsing where Hegel's dialectic does overlap positively with the language and logic of asceticism is relevant and helps to illustrate the more general concern of this paper—the unhelpful nature of strict East vs. West, ancient vs. modern, philosophy vs. theology dichotomies. Thus, to Hegel, I now turn.

Hegel's thesis—antithesis—synthesis dialectic,[8] when applied to self-consciousness as he does in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, slips, perhaps surprisingly, into the language of ascetic self-denial.[9] Explaining the self-transcendence of consciousness, for example, moving from oneself as particular object of the will to universal or absolute will, he writes,

> Through these moments—the negative abandonment first of its own right and power of decision, then of its property and enjoyment, and finally the positive moment of carrying on what it does not understand—it deprives itself, completely and in truth, of the consciousness of inner and outer freedom, or reality in the sense of its own existence for itself. It has the certainty of having in truth stripped itself of its Ego, and of having turned its immediate self-consciousness into a "thing," into an objective external existence.[10]

He continues, "It could ensure its self-renunciation and self-abandonment solely by this real and vital sacrifice [of its self]."[11] Yet, Hegel emphasizes that this is not merely a negative act or state

8 For more on Hegel's dialectical method, see Michael Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method" in ed. Frederick C. Beiser, *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 130—170, but especially 131–133 for a basic overview of the method.

9 On this application of his dialectic in particular, see Frederick Neuhouser, "Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord" in ed. Kenneth R. Westphal, *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 37–54; and Franco Chiereghin, "Freedom and Thought: Stoicism, Skepticism, and Unhappy Consciousness" in ed. Kenneth R. Westphal, *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 55–71.

10 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, 265–66.

11 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, 266.

of being. "For giving up one's own will," he writes,

> is only in one aspect negative; in principle, or in itself, it is at the same time positive, positing and affirming the will as an *other*, and, specifically, affirming the will as not a particular, but universal.[12]

Regarding self-will as "an *other*," i.e., as external to one's true self, and affirming the will so far as it is oriented toward the universal rather than the particular, would appear to follow an ethical logic of negation of one's self-will for the sake of altruism, perhaps even for the active pursuit of the will of God.

Yet for Hegel, of course, this is firstly an ontological matter. He concludes,

> But for its self, action and *its own* concrete action remain something miserable and insignificant, its enjoyment pain, and the sublation of these, positively considered, remains a mere "beyond." But in this object where it finds its own action and existence, *qua* this particular consciousness, to be inherently existence and action as such, there has arisen the idea of Reason, of certainty that consciousness is, in its particularity, inherently and essentially absolute, or is all reality.[13]

More than mere ethical dialectic, there is something here reminiscent of an esoteric mysticism, a union with not simply the divine, but "all reality," resulting from this ascetic-like denial of one's selfhood, self-consciousness, and self-will. The end state is a synthesis of particularity and universality, the particular denies its particularity, but does not in so doing lose all particularity. Rather, the particular extends its consciousness "in its particularity" to be "inherently and essentially absolute."

12 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, 266.

13 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, 267.

Solovyov[14]

Moving from West to East, for the Russian Orthodox philosopher Vladimir Solovyov, the ascetic principle in morality arises from the feeling of shame. He writes in *The Justification of the Good*,

> The fundamental moral feeling of shame psychologically contains man's negative relation to the animal nature which seeks to overpower him. To the strongest and most vivid manifestation of that nature the human spirit, even at a low stage of development, opposes the consciousness of its own dignity: I am ashamed to submit to the desire of the flesh, I am ashamed to be like an animal, the lower side of my nature must not dominate me—such domination is shameful and evil. This self-assertion of the moral dignity—half-conscious and unstable in the simple feeling of shame—is worked up by reason into the *principle of asceticism*.[15]

And what is the principle of asceticism, to Solovyov? "The moral demand to subordinate the flesh to the spirit conflicts with the actual striving of the flesh to subject the spirit to itself," he writes.

> Consequently the ascetic principle has a double aspect. It requires in the first place that the spiritual life should be safeguarded from the encroachments of the flesh, and secondly, that animal life should be made merely the potentiality or the matter of the spirit."[16]

He continues to describe "three chief moments in this process,"

14 For an introduction to some of Solovyov's foundational philosophical views, see Grzegorz Przebinda and E. M. Swiderski, "Vladimir Solov'ëv's Fundamental Philosophical Ideas," *Studies in East European Thought* 54, no. 1/2, Polish Studies on Russian Thought (Mar. 2002): 47–69. For an account of Solovyov's contribution to philosophy by a close contemporary, see Sergei Nikolaevich Bulgakov, "Vladimir Solovyov: Scholar and Seer" (1903) in James Pain and Nicolas Zernov, ed., *Sergius Bulgakov: A Bulgakov Anthology* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1976), 42–48. For those completely unfamiliar with Solovyov, it may be helpful to note that it is widely believed he served as the inspiration for the character Alyosha in Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*.

15 Vladimir Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good: An Essay on Moral Philosophy*, tr. Natalie A. Duddington, ed. Boris Jakim, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 37.

16 Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 43.

following a dialectic reminiscent of Hegel: First, a certain self-consciousness is required for a person to draw an inward distinction between spirit and flesh. Having drawn this distinction, which Solovyov locates in the feeling of shame, the second step is a struggle to liberate the spirit by subordinating the flesh to it. Aware of the distinction and ashamed at the lack of this subordination, ashamed at the likeness one bears to lower animals, one suppresses one's animality not for the sake of negation but rather to subordinate it to that which is spiritual, in turn spiritualizing it. Finally, the result is the achievement of supremacy over nature and a state of moral perfection, the liberation of the spirit through the spiritualization of the flesh.[17]

Solovyov then examines how ascetic practices seek to reshape bodily functions for the sake of spiritual ends, highlighting regulation of breathing, alluding to the practice of Jesus Prayer on Mount Athos and other Orthodox monasteries; regulation of sleep through traditional hours of prayer; regulation of hunger through fasting; and so on.[18] In all of these practices, the struggle and self-denial involved in reshaping bodily activity is not purely negative but for the sake of self-mastery. As Soloyvov sums it up, "[S]elf-preservation of the spirit is, above all things, the preservation of its self-control. This is the main point of all asceticism."

Florensky

From Hegel's semi-ascetic dialectic of self-consciousness, to Solovyov's semi-Hegelian dialectic of asceticism, I now turn to Fr Pavel Florensky, who explicitly cites both Hegel and Solovyov as influences,[19] along with the fathers of the Church and the liturgical

17 Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 43. Fagerberg identifies this spiritualization of the body (rather than the liberation of the spirit from the body) as the purpose of asceticism, emphasizing that human beings are "body-spirit creatures." David W. Fagerberg, *On Liturgical Asceticism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 15.

18 See Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 44–48. Similarly, Flood writes, "The reversal of [the] flow of the body is performed in ascetic practice." Flood, *The Ascetic Self*, 4.

19 On Hegel and Solovyov's influence on Florensky, see Steven Cassedy, "Pavel Florenskii's Trinitarian Humanism" in eds. G. M. Hamburg & Randall A. Poole, *A History of Russian Philosophy 1830–1930: Faith, Reason, and the Defense of Human Dignity*

tradition of the East. In Florensky we find clear echoes of Hegel and Solovyov, yet put in more explicitly theological terms.

Robert Slesinski offers a helpful starting point in his study of Florensky's thought: "[I]f it is sin that makes us insensate and impassible [in the sense of 'uncaring'] before created reality, that closes us off from it," Slesinski writes, "then it is only its contrary, virtue, both moral and intellectual, as a true *habitus* acquired through ascetical, moral, and intellectual exploit and struggle, that disposes us to see it and consciously commune with it."[20] He continues to say that to Florensky,

> Ascetical practice helps the creature overcome its egoism and empty identity, and in this fashion enables it truly to center its life in the objective, created order, which enjoys an importance in itself as an independent creation of the same Godhead.[21]

We see in Slesinski's summary Florensky's appropriation of Hegel—asceticism is an overcoming of egoism that engenders communion with God and creation (or "all reality," Hegel would say).

For Florensky, asceticism carries with it a new perspective on life and death: "The ascetic saints of the Church," he writes, "are alive for the living and dead for the dead."[22] Life and death become not, primarily, references to a physical state but a spiritual one. "Repentance leads to humility of the heart," he writes, "i.e., to its dying to everything, the destruction within it of evil selfhood and the lower law of identity."[23] Through "dying to everything" daily, a person attains true life.

Regarding this "lower law of identity," Florensky furthermore opposes two laws of identity, the lower and higher, fleshly and

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 193–95; and N. O. Lossky, *History of Russian Philosophy* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1952), 188–90.

20 Robert Slesinski, *Pavel Florensky: A Metaphysics of Love* (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1984), 164.

21 Ibid., 169.

22 Pavel Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, tr. Boris Jakim (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 5. Henceforth, PGT.

23 Florensky *PGT*, 229.

spiritual. The lower is that of the identity principle of logic, A = A, and the overcoming of this essentialist, self-referential identity in the antinomy of A and not-A is the higher. He writes,

> According to the higher, spiritual law of identity, self-affirmation lies in self-negation, whereas, according to the lower, fleshly law of identity, self-negation lies in self-affirmation. Just as a phoenix, building a fire of death for itself like a nest, is reborn in the flame, so the flesh is resurrected in the fiery rejection of itself. ...[24]

Once again, the goal of this self-negation is nevertheless positive: it is part of the ascetic process by which a person apprehends and attains his/her true self-identity.[25] Furthermore, it is not self-centered but an expansive new way of viewing the world. He continues,

> [T]he goal of the ascetic's strivings is to perceive all of creation in its original triumphant beauty. The Holy Spirit reveals itself in the ability to see the beauty of creation. Always to see beauty in everything would be "to be resurrected before the universal resurrection," to have a foretaste of the last Revelation, that of the Comforter.[26]

And this, to Florensky, is the goal of asceticism.

Tying together the activity of the three theological virtues with this Hegelian and ascetic dialectic of identity, Florensky elsewhere writes,

> The triple act of faith, hope, and love overcomes the inertia of the [lower] law of identity. I stop being I, my thought stops being my thought. By an unfathomable act I renounce the self-affirmation "I = I." Something or Someone helps me escape my self-enclosedness. ... Something or Someone in me extinguishes in me the idea that I am the center of philosophical seeking, and, in place of this idea, I put the idea of the Truth itself. Being nothing but what I have been

24 Florensky, *PGT*, 224–25.

25 Valantasis also connects asceticism and identity formation: "Asceticism may be defined as performances designed to inaugurate an alternative culture, to enable different social relations, and to create a new identity." Richard Valantasis, "A Theory of the Social Function of Asceticism," in Wimbush and Valantasis, *Asceticism*, 548.

26 Florensky, *PGT*, 226.

> given, I, given to myself, unfathomably for myself renounce this my sole property and bring to the Truth this sole sacrifice that I can make. ... Previously, sinful selfhood had put itself in the place of God, but now with the help of God I put God in my place, God, Whom I do not yet know but for whom I yearn and whom I love.[27]

Through grace—that "Someone or Something"—and through faith, hope, and love for God, one ascetically denies oneself, refusing to ground one's identity in one's self. Rather, self-grounded philosophy such as Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*, gives way to a decidedly theological trajectory, where God himself is the center, foundation, and goal. That love for God and neighbor, for Florensky, necessarily requires the ascetic process already described becomes clear in his treatment of friendship, wherein he writes that love "can only be attained by a long (O how long!) ascesis."[28] "Love," he writes,

> makes it possible to forget about the power of sin, takes us out of ourselves, says an authoritative 'Stop!' to the torrent of our selfhood, and pushes us forward: "Go and find in all of life what you have seen in bare outline and only for an instant."[29]

The Church Fathers

But perhaps one might object that Florensky's understanding of asceticism is simply Hegel dressed up in the language of Christian theology, bearing no resemblance to that tradition itself. In order to demonstrate that, in the case of asceticism, there is not only no sharp division between West and East but also no such division between ancient and modern, I now turn to the fathers of the Church.

27 Florensky, *PGT*, 51.

28 Florensky, *PGT*, 285. This contrasts sharply with Schopenhauer, who speaks of moving "from virtue to asceticism," rather than the other way around. Asceticism to him is purely negative and a response to the attainment of universal love, rather than the means to that attainment. See Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. 1, trans. R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Trubner & Co.; Ludgate Hill, 1883), §§68–69, esp. pp. 490, 506.

29 Florensky, PGT, 286.

In his first sermon on Pascha, Pope St Leo the Great connects the ascetic practices of the Christian life, Lent in particular, with the joy of the Resurrection, employing the Pauline characterization of the life in Christ as continual dying and rising with Jesus. "[W]hat is honoured at the feast," says St. Leo, "is celebrated by our practice," regarding which he highlights the three most basic ascetic practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.[30] He continues,

> Since, therefore, by our forty days' observance we have wished to bring about this effect, that we should feel something of the Cross at the time of the Lord's Passion, we must strive to be found partakers also of Christ's Resurrection, and "pass from death unto life," while we are in this body. For when a man is changed by some process from one thing into another, not to be what he was is to him an ending, and to be what he was not is a beginning. But the question is, to what a man either dies or lives: because there is a death, which is the cause of living, and there is a life, which is the cause of dying.[31]

The ascetic life, in cooperation with divine grace, to St Leo, is that "death, which is the cause of living." He philosophically grounds this in the common, patristic understanding of the mutable nature of the creation, human persons included.[32] While, of course, human persons are always by nature human, *personal* identity is no more static to Leo than it is to Florensky: "when a man is changed by some process from one thing into another, not to be what he was is to him an ending, and to be what he was not is a beginning." The Christian's identity in Christ does not rest on self-affirmation but rather in continually ceasing to be what one is in order to become what one is not, growing in the likeness of God, who alone is without change.

30 Pope St Leo the Great, *Sermons*, 71, in NPNF² 12:182.

31 Pope St Leo the Great, *Sermons*, 71, in NPNF² 12:182.

32 See, e.g., St Augustine, *City of God*, tr. Marcus Dods (New York, NY: The Modern Library, 1950), 237–38; idem., *The Confessions*, tr. Philip Burton (New York, NY: Everyman's Library, 2001), 264, 300; St Gregory of Nyssa, *The Great Catechism*, 21 in NPNF² 5:490.

This contrast between the divine and unchanging and the mutability of the world was a staple of Platonic thought long before the advent of Christianity, and it continued to be developed among the Neoplatonists. As I began this paper with the fact that Christian thought was not born into nor did it develop in isolation from Greek philosophy, I will not belabor this point. That one can find Neoplatonic currents, whether implicit or explicit, to greater or lesser degrees, in the metaphysics of St Augustine, the Cappadocians, and others, is an uncontroversial assumption.[33] They did not appropriate it uncritically, of course, but, *contra* Tertullian, most of them found that Athens had quite a bit to do with Jerusalem after all.[34]

A less frequently acknowledged influence, however, comes originally not from Athens but Citium: the Stoics. Of particular interest to the subject at hand, the Stoic axiological distinction between, goods, evils, and indifferents is especially salient. Several recent works argue for the presence of this Stoic distinction in the

33 See, e.g., Stephen Gersh, "The First Principles of Latin Neoplatonism: Augustine, Macrobius, Boethius," *Vivarium* 50 (2012): 113–38; Nathan Jacobs, "On 'Not Three Gods'—Again: Can a Primary-Secondary Substance Reading of *Ousia and Hypostasis* Avoid Tritheism?" *Modern Theology* 24, no. 3 (July 2008): 331–58; John Rist, "On the Platonism of Gregory of Nyssa," *Hermathena* 169 (Winter 2000): 129–51; Deirdre Carabine, "A Thematic Investigation of the Neoplatonic Concepts of Vision and Unity," *Hermathena* 157 (Winter 1994): 43–56; C. J. De Vogel, "Platonism and Christianity: A Mere Antagonism or a Profound Common Ground?" *Vigilae Christianae* 39, no. 1 (March 1985): 1–62. Similar studies could be multiplied ad nauseam.

34 With regards to asceticism, Rubenson writes, "The success of Christianity could hardly have come about without the devotion of the ascetics combined with the Platonic interpretation of Christianity that developed in the monasteries. . . ." Samuel Rubenson, "Christian Asceticism and the Emergence of the Monastic Tradition," in Vincent L. Wimbush & Richard Valantasis, eds., *Asceticism* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1995), 55. Dillon helpfully notes, as well, that Platonic asceticism contained at least two strands, the one is "of the world as a sort of prison camp" but the other is "one which has no particular quarrel with the body or the world, but which sees the ensouled body as an organism that gains greatly by being finely tuned." John M. Dillon, "Rejecting the Body, Refining the Body: Some Remarks on the Development of Platonist Asceticism," in Wimbush and Richard, *Asceticism*, 82.

New Testament and the early Church.[35] Furthermore, it continues into Christian Rome in the works of St John Cassian, St Basil the Great, St John Chrysostom, and likely many others during and beyond their time.[36]

St Basil the Great offers a good summary of the Christianized version of this distinction:

> There are, as it were, three conditions of life, and three operations of the mind. Our ways may be wicked, and the movements of our mind wicked; such as adulteries, thefts, idolatries, slanders, strife, passion, sedition, vain-glory, and all that the apostle Paul enumerates among the works of the flesh. Or the soul's operation is, as it were, in a mean, and has nothing about it either damnable or laudable, as the perception of such mechanical crafts as we commonly speak of as indifferent, and, of their own character, inclining neither towards virtue nor towards vice. For what vice is there in the craft of the helmsman or the physician? Neither are these operations in themselves virtues, but they incline in one direction or the other in accordance with the will of those who use them. But the mind which is impregnated with the Godhead of the Spirit is at once capable of viewing great objects; it beholds the divine beauty, though only so far as grace imparts and its nature receives.[37]

While the Stoics might stop at saying that only virtue is good, only vice is evil, and everything else is indifferent, St Basil interprets this through the Christian (and Platonic) conviction that "No

35 See, Niko Huttenson, "Stoic Law in Paul?" in Tuomo Rasimus, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Ismo Dunderberg, eds., *Stoicism in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 39–58, esp. 44–46; Stanley K. Stowers, "Jesus the Teacher and Stoic Ethics in the Gospel of Matthew," in Rasimus et al., *Stoicism in Early Christianity*, 59–76; Nicola Denzey, "Facing the Beast: Justin, Christian Martyrdom, and Freedom of the Will," in Rasimus et al., *Stoicism in Early Christianity*, 176–98.

36 See St John Cassian, *Conferences*, 6.3 in NPNF² 11:352–53; St John Chrysostom, "Homily Against Publishing the Errors of the Brethren," 2 in NPNF¹ 9:236; and St Basil the Great, *Epistle* 233 in NPNF² 8:273. See also, perhaps, St Augustine, *The Confessions*, 57.

37 St Basil the Great, *Epistle* 233 in NPNF² 8:273.

one is good but One, that is, God" (Lk 18:19). Indeed, virtue and communion with God are linked together in the Second Epistle of St Peter, which begins by saying that through "glory and virtue" Christians become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet 1:3–4), which is classically known as *theosis* or deification.

So if through ascetic renunciation Christians embrace the cross of Christ, through grace and virtue they are empowered to live his resurrected life. And every indifferent thing in this life may be used, through asceticism, to that end.[38] The fathers, thus, advocated detachment and the practices conducive to that end, not for its own sake but for properly ordering one's self towards God and the world. "[T]he Physician of souls ..." writes Evagrios,

> corrects our incensive power through acts of compassion, purifies the intellect through prayer, and through fasting withers desire. By means of these virtues the new Adam is formed, made again according to the image of his Creator. ...[39]

And, in St John Cassian's *Conferences*, St Moses the Ethiopian emphasizes the conditional, relative nature of spiritual disciplines:

> Solitude, watches in the night, manual labour, nakedness, reading and the other disciplines—we know that their purpose is to free the heart from injury by bodily passions and to keep it free; they are to be the rungs of a ladder up which it may climb to perfect charity.[40]

Apatheia—another Stoic import—to Evagrios, and purity of heart, in St John Cassian's *Conferences*, are the proximate goal of the spiritual life because they keep Christians pointed toward their ultimate end: the kingdom of God and charity, the highest form of love.

38 On asceticism as training for righteousness, see, e.g., J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Primitive Christianity as an Ascetic Movement," in Wimbush and Valantasis, *Asceticism*, 88.

39 Evagrios the Solitary, *Texts on Discrimination in Respect of Passions and Thoughts*, 3, in G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, & Kallistos Ware, ed., *The Philokalia*, vol. 1 (London: Faber and Faber, 1981), 40.

40 St John Cassian, *Conferences*, 1.7, in Owen Chadwick, tr. and ed., *Western Asceticism*, vol. 12 of The Library of Christian Classics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958), 198.

Given the dynamic nature of human personhood, always changing, always ceasing to be who one is and becoming something else, we may say that though heavily theological, ancient Christian asceticism is an intensely practical attempt to adapt one's life to such concrete strictures. Everyone, in this sense, dies daily. Florensky is right, then, that bare self-affirmation is really a harmful embrace of death. By contrast, the goal of asceticism is daily to die rightly, intentionally to put to death every thought, passion, desire, intuition, instinct[41]—nailing it all to the cross of Christ through the practice of ascetic disciplines, such as watchfulness, hesychasm, fasting, and prayer, "that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor 4:11).

Conclusion

Whether considered philosophically or theologically, in the West or in the East, among modern or ancient writers, the same life—death—resurrection dialectic recurs again and again as the pattern of the ascetic life, even across otherwise vastly different metaphysics. Beginning with basic self-awareness, one then puts to death the earthbound orientation of one's faculties, with the resulting resurrection of the self to a transfigured life. Christos Yannaras expresses this perfectly, writing,

> Every voluntary mortification of the egocentricity which is "contrary to nature" is a dynamic destruction of death and a triumph for the life of the person. The culmination comes when man shows complete trust by handing over his body, the last bastion of death, into the hands of God, into the embrace of the "earth of the Lord" and into the fulness [sic] of the communion of the saints.[42]

Yet while Yannaras, Florensky, and others demonstrate the usefulness of asceticism for theology and philosophy, specifically

41 See, e.g., St Maximos the Confessor, *Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy, and Virtue and Vice*, 3.24, 4.22, in G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware, ed., *The Philokalia*, vol. 2 (London: Faber and Faber, 1981), 215, 240–41.

42 Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality*, 116.

in ethics and anthropology, the list of modern works devoted to a theological or philosophical analysis of Christian asceticism is disappointingly short.[43]

Furthermore, for all the renewed interest in virtue ethics in the last thirty or so years, surprisingly little attention has been given in such literature to the asceticism necessary to cultivate that virtue in the first place.[44] But what good is it, I would ask, if though a will for virtue is present within a person, how to perform and cultivate it cannot be found (cf. Rom 7:18)? Given this general neglect, my hope, then, is that the foregoing might inspire more thoughtful reflection on and integration of asceticism and specific ascetic practices in both theology and philosophy in years to come.

43 See, e.g., David W. Fagerberg, *On Liturgical Asceticism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013); Richard Valantasis, *The Making of the Self: Ancient and Modern Asceticism* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008); Gavin D. Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Vincent L. Wimbush & Richard Valantasis, ed., *Asceticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). It should be noted that several of these works only touch on Christianity while discussing asceticism more broadly.

44 For two notable exceptions, see, e.g., Daniel A. Dombrowski, "Anger in the *Philokalia*," *Mystics Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (September 1998): 101–18; and Jean Porter, "Virtue Ethics and Its Significance for Spirituality: A Survey and Assessment of Recent Work," in *The Way Supplement* 88 (1997): 26–35, available at www.theway.org.uk/Back/s088Porter.pdf.

St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 60.4 (2016) 505–520

Review Essay: Scenes from Modern Orthodox Theology

Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: From the* Philokalia *to the Present.* London: SPCK & Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-281-07127-2 (UK) 978-0-8308-5121-8(US). 382pp. $35.00.

Ivana Noble, Katerina Bauerova, Tim Noble & Parush Parushev, *Wrestling with the Mind of the Fathers.* Yonkers, NY: SVS Press, 2015. ISBN 978-088141514- 8. 283pp. $29.00.

Several different approaches are possible in the study of historical theology, notably the chronological, the thematic, and the biographical. Each has its strengths and weaknesses. The historical approach focuses on defined periods of time, seeking to trace the development of ideas and movements; the thematic examines the evolution of specific ideas in different authors over time; while the biographical looks at the life, the times, and the thought of individual authors. These broad approaches are, of course, far from water-tight, and mixed approaches are typically found. Classical examples of a chronological-biographical approach and of a thematic approach to patristics are Quasten's *Patrology* and Kelly's *Early Christian Doctrines* respectively.

Fr Andrew Louth's book, as the title suggests, looks primarily at individual Orthodox theologians, arranged chronologically, while the book by Ivana Noble et al. takes a more historical perspective and is structured around five major types or approaches in modern Orthodox theology.

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The book by Ivana Noble et al. throws down the gauntlet to Orthodox theologians. The book's main thesis is that Orthodox theology has become impoverished as a result of the domination of

Journal of Markets & Morality
Volume 20, Number 2 (Fall 2017): 311–323

Review Essay

The Shadow of Constantine and Our Economic Life*

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Introduction

Largely struggling for survival under the shadow of communism in the twentieth century, Orthodox Christian theologians have not developed anything comparable to the traditions of social thought and political theology found among Western Christian traditions, such as Roman Catholics, Calvinists, and Anabaptists. Two recent books, however, make great strides in advancing the state of scholarship in this regard: *Christianity, Democracy, and the Shadow of Constantine* (henceforth: *Shadow of Constantine*), edited by George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou; and *Political Theologies in Orthodox Christianity* (henceforth: *Political Theologies*), edited by Kristina Stoeckl, Ingeborg Gabriel, and Aristotle Papanikolaou. The former refreshingly seeks to set Orthodox perspectives in dialogue with Western ones, while the latter commendably seeks to present the broad spectrum of Orthodox political theologies currently on offer. On these accounts alone, they are valuable texts that deserve engagement for years to come.

Stanley Hauerwas, in his postscript to *Shadow of Constantine*, makes the claim that John Howard Yoder was able to offer a "fresh perspective" on the social gospel tradition stretching from Walter Rauschenbusch to James Gustafson

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* George E. Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, eds., *Christianity, Democracy, and the Shadow of Constantine* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017); Kristina Stoeckl, Ingeborg Gabriel, and Aristotle Papanikolaou, eds., *Political Theologies in Orthodox Christianity: Common Challenges—Divergent Positions* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017).

because he "did not stand in the same tradition" as they; he was "an outsider."[1] It is in that spirit that I wish to commend this essay to Orthodox and other political theologians. My own research focuses on the parallel discipline of Christian social thought. Modern political theology developed originally as a critique of liberal democracy from the right (Karl Schmidt) then the same from the left (liberation theology). Before their time, in between, and to the present, there have also been many, from Rauschenbusch to the Niebuhrs to Aristotle Papanikolaou,[2] who instead formulated diverse theological justifications for it. Modern Christian social thought, similarly, developed in response to the "social question" in the nineteenth century and in dialogue with modern (liberal) market economies, beginning with figures like Pope Leo XIII and Abraham Kuyper[3] and expanding to a wide array of scholars in the present, some harshly critical and some quite affirming, and not without overlap with political theology (e.g., liberation theology, with its economic focus). Thus, while I, too, am Orthodox like many of the volumes' contributors, I am admittedly an "outsider" to the discipline of political theology and hope to offer a "fresh perspective" by raising questions more proper to Christian social thought, which unfortunately remains woefully underdeveloped among Orthodox theologians. This is not due to lack of resources. In his own time, Fr. Georges Florovsky favorably noted, "'Social Christianity' was the basic and favorite theme of the whole religious thinking in Russia in the course of the last century [i.e., the nineteenth], and the same thought colored also the whole literature of the same period."[4]

Indeed, at the end of the nineteenth century, Vladimir Soloviev[5] noted how old paradigms of social philosophy would need to be modified and expanded due to changes in the modern era. From the primitive stage of the clan, in which family, religion, and nation were all conflated, humanity passed through a second stage in the development of modern nation states "from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century inclusive," where piety and pity found their primary expression in different realms: the religious and the political, respectively. This, in turn, "began to pass in the course of the nineteenth century into a third stage, in which "the domain of *material life*," that is, our economic life, has gained its own autonomy.[6]

While Soloviev is right that the economic sphere of life has only recently come into its own, his narrative is somewhat historically inaccurate with regards to the second stage of distinction between religion and politics. Despite the complex and often underwhelming reality,[7] the concrete distinction between church and state arguably has its beginning in ancient Rome with Constantine, who transformed the cult of the emperor from worship (*latria*) in the form of sacrifices to (albeit lavish) veneration. The religion/state distinction was vividly confirmed later in the confrontation between St. Ambrose of Milan and the emperor Theodosius

over the slaughter the latter perpetrated in Thessaloniki. This ancient model, which contained great overlap but clear distinction between religion and politics, is perhaps most quintessentially captured in Justinian's Sixth Novella, in which all of society is divided between the priesthood and the sovereignty, and its welfare depends on there being "splendid harmony" (i.e., *symphonia*) between them.[8] The totalizing tendency to view all of society as a duality of either the ecclesial or the political is as much a legacy of the shadow of Constantine as is any particular arrangement between them. It was an improvement for the time, but Soloviev was right to point to its inadequacy.

This inadequacy is present in several contributions to these volumes. While the focus of many is strictly political, several chapters veer into the economic—but always from beneath that same two-dimensional shadow. It is most evident in the contribution of Pantelis Kalaitzidis, the subtitle of which is "The Church's Theological Foundations and Public Role in the Context of the Greek Economic Crisis."[9] In this chapter, which is otherwise excellent scholarship, Kalaitzidis cites many other political theologians and social critics, but he cites no economists, not even in his footnotes. How can one hope to offer an adequate *description*—not to mention *analysis*—of the Greek economic crisis without using any of the tools of modern economics?

The goal of my essay is, in dialogue with *Shadow of Constantine* and *Political Theologies*, to demonstrate that political theology needs political economy. I use the latter term, as did Lionel Robbins and the classical economists, to mean the normative and interdisciplinary application of the insights of economic science to questions of policy.[10] As Frank Knight put it, "Without an adequate ethics and sociology in the broad sense, economics has little to say about policy."[11] In distinction from positive economics, political economy integrates the insights of political philosophy, sociology, and history together with economic analysis and makes no pretense about being value free. While welfare economics has been the preferred normative approach in recent years, classical political economy has continued in the works of many economists from a wide variety of schools within the discipline.[12] It is far less quantitative and far more open to insights from other disciplines, making it a natural point of contact with political theology and Christian social thought. Examining the issues of economic inequality, the democratic nature of business and markets, and religious liberty, I argue that Orthodox and other political theologians need economics and political economy if they ever hope to step out from beneath Constantine's shadow.

Problematizing and Personalizing Economic Inequality

Aristotle Papanikolaou raises serious questions about the church's social-ethical priorities in his contribution to *Political Theologies*, asking,

> Where is the Church's outcry at the growing income inequality that exists globally? Where is the Church's outcry at the recent report of the *Economist* that states how only 110 people in Russia out of a population of 140 million control 35 percent of the wealth? Why does the Church care so much about gay sex and not about this massive income inequality, which also exists, albeit to a lesser degree, in Greece and the United States?[13]

These are excellent questions. While I tend to think that less is more in general when it comes to official statements from the church, there has been growing discontent over economic inequality in recent years, to the point that there is a real need for someone, whether clergy or laity, to be able to speak intelligently and prophetically about this issue.

Less nuanced, and more representative of that popular discontent, is the following statement from the Roman Catholic scholar Mary Doak: "Our increasingly global economy holds out the hope that all might participate in the benefits of economic development; yet thus far this economic system is evidently more inclined to increase inequality, resulting in a small group of super-rich and massive populations of deeply impoverished people."[14] While Doak is correct that inequality has increased in recent years, the assertion that poverty has simultaneously grown is empirically false. As Max Roser and Esteban Ortiz-Ospina note in the University of Oxford's *Our World in Data* entry on "Global Extreme Poverty," extreme poverty in the world has been on the decline as a percentage of population since the Industrial Revolution and in absolute terms since the 1970s.[15] This means that despite billions more people in the world since that time, the hard number of people living in extreme poverty is actually fewer now than it was fifty years ago, when the world was less globalized and less economically unequal.

This raises not only the question of whether all economic inequality is inherently unjust, but also whether it may even be a necessary accompaniment of economic development and poverty alleviation.[16] Concerning the former, Soloviev offers an important consideration:

> When the Pharaoh issued a law commanding to put to death all the Jewish new-born babes [cf. Exodus 1:15–22], this law was certainly not unjust on account of the unequal treatment of the Jewish and Egyptian babes. And if the Pharaoh subsequently gave orders to put to death all new-born infants and not only the Jewish ones, no one would venture to call this new law just, although it would satisfy the demand for equality.

He concludes, "Equality, then, can be just or unjust."[17] So also inequality can be just or unjust. The insights of economics can help us discern the difference and avoid the depersonalizing rhetoric of indiscriminate denunciations of the "super-rich." In addressing this concern, I will also hint at one possible reason that inequality and poverty alleviation tend to correlate.

Is J. K. Rowling, for example, massively wealthy because of some injustice? Or was it simply that she produced a product (*Harry Potter* novels) that people freely and gladly paid for? I, for one, say it is the latter. She is most certainly "super-rich," as a result not only of book sales but also of film rights, merchandizing, and even a theme park inspired by the fantasy world she created. But, so far as I know, she did not cheat anyone. She created wealth that has had positive economic effects far beyond her own fortune (e.g., for all the people who work for her publisher, make Harry Potter toys, or give tours of Pottermore). Her wealth has simultaneously increased the wealth and well-being of others, despite also propelling her to a state of extreme inequality by comparison to them.

When markets are free or open, when they have as few barriers to entry as possible, then competition thrives, driving producers to increase the quality of products and decrease prices to consumers. As Adam Smith noted, they are able to do this while nevertheless profiting through the division of labor, the expansion of which characterizes all advanced economies.[18] Furthermore, markets are exchange systems, and exchange systems, as distinct from integrative systems like churches and threat systems like the law,[19] are positive-sum due to the subjective nature of economic value. Wealth is a matter of perception: If I want a candy bar more than my dollar, and a gas station clerk wants my dollar more than his candy bar, we both consider our welfare to have increased by exchanging the dollar for the candy bar.

Yet, not all exchanges are free, open, and positive-sum, and not all inequality is just. Papanikolaou is right to continue his line of questioning to the problem of corruption: "Why are the Orthodox Churches globally so silent about the rampant corruption in their countries?"[20] Corruption is a violation of the rule of law, without which markets cannot be free, open, and just, often exacerbating economic inequality. However, we should not stop there. The justice of markets is also endangered through democratically popular and legal means when one interest group successfully lobbies for privileged treatment and protection against competition, what Frédéric Bastiat called *la spoliation légalé* (often translated "legal plunder")[21] and Public Choice economists have called rent-seeking.[22] As I have written elsewhere,[23] healthy businesses, markets, and economies are characterized by a proper attitude toward the *thanatomorphic* character of our economic life, to borrow Perry Hamalis's term,[24] unafraid of the death of business

models, product lines, companies, or even whole industries, and instead poised to adapt, grow, and rise from the ashes of sudden shifts and shocks due to the dynamic nature of economic competition and development. Rent-seeking, by contrast, seeks the force of the state to protect established firms and industries and insulate them from failure, diverting resources to products that people would not otherwise want, mistakenly viewing competition as necessarily zero-sum, and often producing negative-sum results due to opportunity cost and diverting resources into lobbying.[25]

International Corporations and Democratic Accountability

Having problematized economic inequality, I now move to the related claim, common to both Mary Doak and Davor Džalto, that international corporations are insufficiently accountable to democratic control. Džalto goes so far as to say that

> many state structures in their present form, as well as many other sources of political and economic power that formally do not participate in the exercise of political power, and yet have tremendous influence over the lives of other people (such as transnational corporations, for instance), should be dismantled in order to create a more free and just society.[26]

Once again, it is easy to depersonalize a faceless transnational corporation without thinking about all the real human persons that may depend on that business for their livelihood and even be quite satisfied with their employment. So long as Orthodox Christians still believe prudence to be a virtue, we must be cautious about radical proposals like Džalto's.

The end result of trying to put such idealism into practice is often quite different from what one expects. As S. L. Frank put it, commenting on the prime historical example of radical liberalism, "The leaders of the French Revolution desired to attain liberty, equality, fraternity, and the kingdom of truth and reason, but they actually created a bourgeois order. And this is the way it usually is in history."[27] Frank notably wrote this in 1930 after fleeing to Germany from Russia after the horrific societal dismantling by left-wing antiliberals following the 1917 Revolution (of which he was also critical), only to be forced to flee again later, this time to Paris, from the horrific societal dismantling by right-wing antiliberal National Socialists (Nazis) in Germany. The lesson being that such radical dismantling tends to be an impractical means to one's desired ends, no matter the ideological motivation (unless one is a Nazi, I suppose, which Džalto clearly is not).

That said, there is a deeper issue here in that the problem is misdiagnosed in the first place. In reality transnational (and other) corporations are subject to democratic control on multiple levels. If no one chooses to buy their products, they fail. If their workers strike, then production halts, profits fall, and if they are unable to resolve the dispute, they fail. Many companies are publicly traded as well, meaning that the capitalists who own them are many and diverse, and even if they do not hold a controlling 51 percent, they exercise influence through their ability to disinvest from the shares they do own. Indeed, even many workers invest in corporations through 401(k) programs and IRAs, blurring the traditional and overly simplistic Marxist distinction between capital and labor, bourgeoisie and proletariat, oppressors and oppressed. And most importantly, all of these corporations must function within systems of law. Either these laws are passed by democratically elected legislatures or the problem is not that companies lack democracy but that the states whose responsibility it is to properly regulate them do.

Now, it may be that Džalto is simply calling for disinvestment, boycotts, strikes, and more democratic governments. In that case, I have no principled objection, but it would be an exaggeration to call that "dismantling" or to claim, as does Doak, that economic globalization is "thoroughly undemocratic."[28] Rather, once one understands how businesses and markets actually function, it becomes clear that they are thoroughly *democratic*. However, they can be either justly or unjustly so. As already noted, when markets are closed and established actors are protected by discriminating against would-be entrepreneurs—despite this often being democratically popular and obtained through legal means—then Orthodox Christians and other people of goodwill should raise the alarm and democratically advocate for the liberalization of such markets, remembering that market openness comes in degrees and that gradualism is historically preferable to radicalism.

Church, State, and the Religious Marketplace

Many of the contributions to *Shadow of Constantine* and *Political Theologies* do not directly address economic issues at all. Instead, most explore the problem of religious liberty and the relationship between church (or churches) and state. Nevertheless, even these could benefit from the economic way of thinking. In this context, it is helpful to explore how the positive, value-free analysis of economic science can benefit the normative, value-laden discipline of political economy.

The economist Peter Boettke has famously formulated what he calls the "devil and angel test" for value neutrality. The way it works is to ask the following

question: Would both an angel and a devil agree on the analysis but disagree about what policy to advocate on its basis due to differing values? In illustrating this, he uses the example of the marketplace for religion:

> [Adam] Smith contrasts the benefits of competition in religion (in terms of dynamic sermons and thus attendance) with state monopoly in religion (with boring and routine sermons and low attendance). Smith, who valued religion, viewed competition as good for the flourishing of religious belief, but Hume, who despised religion, thought competition was bad and that state-sponsored monopolies were desirable because they would eventually drive religious influence to zero. Note that Hume and Smith just provide another example of the devil and the angel test.[29]

While declining religiosity is a phenomenon common to most Western nations, the United States has always been something of a unicorn in its comparatively high rates of religious participation. From an economic point of view, this is no accident. The market for religion in the United States has been relatively (though by no means completely[30]) free and genuinely neutral (in contrast to French *laïcité*, notably prominent in the jurisprudence of the European Union[31]).

Even in the 1830s, the French diplomat Alexis de Tocqueville noted that "the philosophers of the XVIIIth century explained the gradual weakening of beliefs in a very simple way. Religious zeal, they said, must fade as liberty and enlightenment increase. It is unfortunate that facts do not agree with this theory."[32] In contrast to France, where "the spirit of religion and the spirit of liberty march almost always in opposite directions," in the United States, said Tocqueville,

> The religion I profess brought me particularly close to the Catholic clergy, and I did not delay in striking up a sort of intimacy with several of its members. To each of them I expressed my astonishment and revealed my doubts. I found that all of these men differed among themselves only on the details; but all attributed the peaceful dominion that religion exercises in their country principally to the complete separation of Church and State.[33]

In eastern Europe since 1989, we see something of a counterexample in that Orthodox Churches have experienced genuine revival while holding places of privilege, protection, and influence in historically Orthodox nations (especially in Russia). However, in most of these cases freedom of religion was actually far worse under communism. So the rebirth of religiosity there does not necessarily contradict the foregoing analysis. Religiosity and religious liberty still positively correlate. However, this analysis raises the question of how long before renewed positions of privilege for the Orthodox will erode the piety these nations have

regained. As one religion or pseudo-religion, such as atheism under communism, gains social dominance, there is social pressure for people to hypocritically identify with it and pretend to practice it even if they do not believe it.[34] Given restrictions on freedom of religion in many of these countries (again, especially in Russia), we may reasonably wonder whether this phenomenon might distort the data.

Speaking now more theoretically, we might also wonder what a free market of religion would mean. If the economic analysis of Smith and Hume holds, it would mean more "dynamic sermons and thus [greater] attendance," not to mention more active ministries of mercy. It would mean that we who believe the Orthodox Church has most faithfully preserved the "gospel of Christ, [which] is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16 NKJV) would have to actually prove it. Of course, we would be more vulnerable to the loss of members through competition with other churches and religions, but if we rise to the challenge, we will become better Christians, and through us our nations will become more genuinely Orthodox. If our conviction is not in vain, our parishes will grow as people "see [our] good works and glorify [our] Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). If we have truly been liberated from bondage to the devil through the fear of death by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (cf. Heb. 2:14–15), we ought to reflect the boldness of that liberty in our religious, political, and economic lives, not only out of our own interest, but for the common good and the kingdom of God.

Conclusion

I began this essay by urging Orthodox and other political theologians to step out from the shadow of Constantine, under which our social life is portrayed in the binary terms of only two realms: church or state. To illustrate what this might look like, I examined the issues of inequality, the democratic nature of business, and religious liberty in dialogue with *Shadow of Constantine* and *Political Theologies*. By now it should be clear why I am convinced that political theology, and Christian social thought more generally, needs political economy and the insights of economic science for more nuanced and relevant analysis.

Yet, while adding markets or economics to this church and state distinction is an improvement, I want to conclude by raising the bar a rung higher. Luke Bretherton deserves special commendation for his brief mention of the Dutch Neo-Calvinist statesman and theologian Abraham Kuyper and the tradition of social thought that has been built upon the foundation of his works.[35] While it is rare enough that Orthodox writers will take the time to engage even Roman Catholic sources, it is rarer for them to engage constructively with Calvinists.

Kuyper deserves such engagement because he uniquely stood out as far ahead of the curve when it comes to stepping out from Constantine's shadow.

Perhaps this was easier for Kuyper as a Protestant, and of course his work is not beyond criticism, but his multifaceted theological vision of society is remarkable. For Kuyper, even to speak in terms of church, state, and market is too reductive. Rather each sphere of life—and any that may emerge in the course of history—has its own God-given calling, character, principle, and sovereignty, from church, state, and market to family, art, science, ethics, and education. We Orthodox need not be Kuyperian (not to mention Calvinist), but I submit that we have a lot to learn from Kuyper and commend his thought to any Christian social or political theologians who desire greater nuance not only when it comes to the economic aspect of our lives, but to every other sphere of life as well.

Notes

1. Stanley Hauerwas, "How (Not) to Be a Political Theologian," in *Shadow of Constantine*, 257.

2. See Aristotle Papanikolaou, *The Mystical as Political: Democracy and Non-Radical Orthodoxy* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012).

3. See Jordan J. Ballor, ed., *Makers of Modern Christian Social Thought: Leo XIII and Abraham Kuyper on the Social Question* (Grand Rapids: Acton Institute, 2016).

4. Georges Florovsky, "The Social Problem in the Eastern Orthodox Church," in *Christianity and Culture*, vol. 2 of *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky* (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1974), 136. For a sampling of some of those resources, see Vladimir Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, trans. Natalie Duddington, ed. Boris Jakim, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 282–311; Sergei Bulgakov, *Karl Marx as a Religious Type: His Relation to the Religion of Anthropotheism of L. Feuerbach*, trans. Luba Barna (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1979); idem, "Heroism and Asceticism: Reflections on the Religious Nature of the Russian Intelligentsia," in *Vekhi: Landmarks*, trans. and ed. Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 17–50; idem, "The National Economy and the Religious Personality (1909)," trans. Krassen Stanchev, *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 157–79; idem, *Philosophy of Economy: The World as Household*, trans. and ed. Catherine Evtuhov (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); S. L. Frank, "The Ethic of Nihilism: A Characterization of the Russian Intelligentsia's Moral Outlook," in *Vekhi*, 131–55; idem, *The Spiritual Foundations of Society*, trans. Boris Jakim (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1987), esp. 172–75; idem, *The Light Shineth in the Darkness*, trans. Boris Jakim (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1989); Department of External Church Relations, *The Basis of the Social Concept*

of the Russian Orthodox Church (2000), https://mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/; idem, *The Russian Orthodox Church's Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights* (2008), https://mospat.ru/en/documents/dignity-freedom-rights/; Irinej Dobrijević, "The Orthodox Spirit and the Ethic of Capitalism: A Case Study on Serbia and Montenegro and the Serbian Orthodox Church," *Serbian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 1–13; Krassen Stanchev, "Sergey Bulgakov and the Spirit of Capitalism," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 149–56; Daniel P. Payne and Christopher Marsh, "Sergei Bulgakov's 'Sophic' Economy: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective on Christian Economics," *Faith & Economics* 53 (Spring 2009): 35–51; Alfred Kentigern Siewers, "Traditional Christian Marriage as an Expression of Social Justice: Identity and Society in the Writings of Florensky and Bulgakov," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 569–86; Fr. Michael Butler and Andrew Morriss, *Creation and the Heart of Man: An Orthodox Christian Perspective on Environmentalism*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Acton Institute, 2013); Fr. Gregory Jensen, *The Cure for Consumerism*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Acton Institute, 2015); Dylan Pahman, "Markets and Monasticism: A History and Analysis of Eastern Christian Monastic Enterprise," in *Orthodox Monasticism Past and Present*, ed. J. A. McGuckin, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 8 (New York: Theotokos, 2014); idem, "Asceticism and Creative Destruction: On Ontology and Economic History," in *Mustard Seeds in the Public Square: Between and Beyond Theology, Philosophy, and Society*, ed. Sotiris Mitralexis (Wilmington: Vernon, 2017).

5. I use the spelling "Soloviev" (as opposed to "Solovyov" or "Solov'ëv") in the body of this essay because that was his own preference. See Vladimir Wozniuk, "Vladimir S. Soloviev: Moral Philosopher of Unity," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 323–29

6. Solovyov, *Justification of the Good*, 398. See also Dotan Leshem, "From Ecclesiastical to Political Economy: The Rise of the Social," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 29–39.

7. For an excellent overview of the early relationship between church and state in Constantinople, see Timothy D. Barnes, "Emperors and Bishops of Constantinople," in *Shadow of Constantine*, 175–201.

8. Justinian, *Novella* 6. The English translation here is the second edition of that of Justice Fred Blume, published and revised posthumously by the University of Wyoming Press online in 2009 (first edition 2007), https://uwdigital.uwyo.edu/islandora/object/wyu%3A12399?display=list.

9. See Pantelis Kalaitzidis, "Toward an Orthodox Political Theology: The Church's Theological Foundations and Public Role in the Context of the Greek Economic Crisis," in *Political Theologies*, 151–78.

10. See Lionel Robbins, "Economics and Political Economy," *The American Economic Review* 71, no. 2 (May 1981): 1–10.

11. Frank H. Knight, "Ethics and Economic Reform. III. Christianity," *Economica*, n.s., 6, no. 24 (November 1939): 422. I do not share Knight's pessimism about the usefulness of Christian ethics and social thought for that task, but I agree with the sentiment expressed in this quote.

12. For an excellent example of a work of political economy explicitly based on Christian theological anthropology, see Wilhelm Röpke, *A Humane Economy: The Social Framework of the Free Market*, trans. Elizabeth Henderson (Chicago: Regnery, 1960), 5:

> My picture of man is fashioned by the spiritual heritage of classical and Christian tradition. I see in man the likeness of God; I am profoundly convinced that it is an appalling sin to reduce man to a means (even in the name of high-sounding phrases) and that each man's soul is something unique, irreplaceable, priceless, in comparison with which all other things are as naught.

13. Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Whose Public? Which Ecclesiology?" in *Political Theologies*, 241.

14. Mary Doak, "Power, Protest, and *Perichoresis*: On Being Church in a Troubled World," in *Shadow of Constantine*, 78.

15. See Max Roser and Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, "Global Extreme Poverty," *Our World in Data* (2017), https://ourworldindata.org/extreme-poverty/.

16. See F. A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty*, definitive ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 91–106.

17. Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 388–89.

18. He famously gives the example of the pin factory. See Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, vol. 1 (1776; repr., Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1981), 15.

19. On the distinction, interaction, and overlap between these, see Kenneth Boulding, *Three Faces of Power* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989).

20. Papanikolaou, "Whose Public? Which Ecclesiology?" 241.

21. See Frédéric Bastiat, *La Loi*, in Œuvres *Complètes*, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (1850; repr., Paris: n.p., 1873), 342–93. Translated as *The Law*, in *"The Law," "The State," and Other Political Writings, 1843–1850*, trans. J. Willems and M. Willems (1850; repr., Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2012), 107–46.

22. See, for example, James M. Buchanan, "Rent Seeking and Profit Seeking," in *The Logical Foundations of Constitutional Liberty*, vol. 1 of *The Collected Works of James M. Buchanan* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1999), 103–15.

23. See Pahman, "Asceticism and Creative Destruction."

24. See Perry T. Hamalis, "Democracy and the Dynamics of Death: Orthodox Reflections on the Origin, Purpose, and Limits of Politics," in *Shadow of Constantine*, 127–54.

25. This is not to say that all lobbying is unjust, but that is a topic for another essay.

26. Davor Džalto, "Orthodox Political Theology: An Anarchist Perspective," in *Political Theologies*, 131.

27. Frank, *Spiritual Foundations*, 37.

28. Doak, "Power, Protest, and *Perichoresis*," 79.

29. Peter Boettke, "From Approximate Value Neutrality to Real Value Relevance: Economics, Political Economy, and the Moral Ecology of the Market Order," *Faith & Economics* 49 (Spring 2007): 31.

30. Just ask a Jew, Roman Catholic, or Mormon in the nineteenth century, for example.

31. See Fr. Capodistrias Hämmerli, "Post-Communist Orthodox Countries and Secularization: The Lautsi Case and the Fracture of Europe," in *Shadow of Constantine*, 31–58; Effie Fokas, "European Religious Freedom Norms as a Challenge to Orthodox Churches," in *Political Theologies*, 75–93.

32. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. James T. Schleifer, 2 vols. (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2010), 1:479.

33. Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 1:479–480.

34. See Bruce Wydick, "Hypocrisy and Hypocrites: A Game-Theoretic Note," *Faith & Economics* 59 (Spring 2012): 23–29.

35. See Luke Bretherton, "Power to the People: Orthodoxy, Consociational Democracy, and the Move beyond *Phyletism*," in *Shadow of Constantine*, 66–67. I have published two papers on Kuyper: Dylan Pahman, "F. W. J. Schelling: A Philosophical Influence on Kuyper's Social Thought," in *The Kuyper Center Review*, vol. 5, *Church and Academy*, ed. Gordon Graham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015); idem, "Toward a Kuyperian Political Economy: On the Relationship between Ethics and Economics," *Faith & Economics* 67 (Spring 2016): 57–84.

Chapter 6

Asceticism and creative destruction: on ontology and economic history

Dylan Pahman

Introduction

While often admired for its theological and spiritual depth, Orthodox Christianity does not have anything comparable to Roman Catholics, Neocalvinists, and others in regards to its own unique take on Christian social thought, outside of environmental theology. Precious few scholarly sources focus on economics in particular. Notable exceptions include the following: Vladimir Solovyov's last major work, *The Justification of the Good*, contains a whole book on social morality, including a chapter on economic life.[1] Fr. Sergei Bulgakov, known principally for his controversial, sophianic theology, was a Marxist economist before becoming a politician and only later an Orthodox priest. He wrote a critique of Marx, several essays on economic issues from an Orthodox religious perspective, and a book exploring the philosophical insights of economic ideas.[2] More recently, Daniel Payne and

[1] See Vladimir Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 2nd ed., trans. Natalie Duddington, ed. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 282–311

[2] See Sergei Bulgakov, *Karl Marx as a Religious Type: His Relation to the Religion of Anthropotheism of L. Feuerbach*, trans. Luba Barna (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1979); idem, "Heroism and Asceticism: Reflections on the Religious Nature of the Russian Intelligentsia," in *Vekhi: Landmarks*, trans. and ed. Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman (Armonk, NY; London: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), 17–50; idem, "The National Economy and the Religious Personality (1909)," trans. Krassen Stanchev, *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 157–179; idem, *Philosophy of Economy: The World as Household*, trans. and ed. Catherine Evtuhov (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000). See also Krassen Stanchev, "Sergey Bulgakov and the Spirit of Capitalism," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 149–156.

Christopher Marsh have built upon Bulgakov's work to develop an Orthodox perspective on what they term Christian economics.[3] Alfred Kentigern Siewers, drawing from Bulgakov and Fr. Pavel Florensky, has argued for the importance of traditional marriage for ensuring social justice.[4] Offering his own response to Max Weber's famous thesis on the Protestant ethic, Metropolitan Irinej Dobrijević has written a positive, but not uncritical, Orthodox assessment of capitalism, drawing upon recent experience of the Serbian Orthodox Church.[5] The Moscow Patriarchate has also produced two documents that address a broad array of social-ethical questions, including economic questions.[6] Two recent monographs also pay more scholarly attention to economics: *Creation and the Heart of Man* by Fr. Michael Butler and economist Andrew Morriss and *The Cure for Consumerism* by Fr. Gregory Jensen.[7] Lastly, in my own work I have sought to develop asceticism as an Orthodox principle of social organization.[8]

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[3] See Daniel P. Payne and Christopher Marsh, "Sergei Bulgakov's "Sophic" Economy: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective on Christian Economics," *Faith & Economics* 53 (Spring 2009): 35–51.

[4] See Alfred Kentigern Siewers, "Traditional Christian Marriage as an Expression of Social Justice: Identity and Society in the Writings of Florensky and Bulgakov," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 569–586.

[5] See Irinej Dobrijević, "The Orthodox Spirit and the Ethic of Capitalism: A Case Study on Serbia and Montenegro and the Serbian Orthodox Church," *Serbian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 1–13.

[6] See Department of External Church Relations, *The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church*, 2000, https://mospat.ru/en/documents/social-concepts/; idem, *The Russian Orthodox Church's Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights*, 2008, https://mospat.ru/en/documents/dignity-freedom-rights/.

[7] See Fr. Michael Butler and Andrew Morriss, *Creation and the Heart of Man: An Orthodox Christian Perspective on Environmentalism*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Acton Institute, 2013); Fr. Gregory Jensen, *The Cure for Consumerism*, Orthodox Christian Social Thought, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Acton Institute, 2015).

[8] See Dylan Pahman, "What Makes a Society? An Orthodox Perspective on Asceticism, Marriage, the Family, and Society," in *Love, Marriage and Family in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition*, Sophia Studies in Orthodox Theology, vol. 7 (New York, NY: Theotokos Press, 2013), 179–193; idem, "The Value of Ordered Liberty: The Orthodox View," *The City* (Summer 2014): 53–59.

This paper builds upon my past work to develop more fully the ontology of asceticism and constructively explore parallel responses to that ontology in the study of economic history and public policy.[9] This paper consists of two parts: (1) Drawing upon the Church fathers, Vladimir Solovyov, Fr. Pavel Florensky, and Christos Yannaras, et al., I outline the ontological foundations of Christian asceticism, such as the pluriformity and mutability of the world and personal identity, human mortality, and the potential for growth as well as decay, i.e. for resurrection unto life or to second death, not only at the *parousia* but daily. In particular, I highlight the practice of *memento mori* as one primary ascetic means of transfiguring the present reality of our corruption into resurrected life in the Spirit. (2) I bring this ascetic perspective to bear on the question of economic history, examining Joseph Schumpeter in particular, as well as Nassim Nicholas Taleb, to develop from that history non-predictive policy, analogous to the *memento mori* and other ascetic practices, adapted to the reality of creative destruction and what Taleb calls Black Swans—random, unforeseen shocks that so often cripple fragile systems.

The ontology of asceticism

St. Paul offers the Church in Corinth the following epitome of the Gospel: "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve" (1 Corinthians 15:3–5).[10] In fact, he makes the resurrection of Jesus Christ the sine qua non of salvation, writing that "if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Corinthians 15:17–19). Furthermore, St. Paul adds an existential element. That is, while he insists on the historic resurrection of Jesus Christ and the future, bodily

[9] See principally Dylan Pahman, ""Alive From the Dead": Asceticism between Athens and Jerusalem, Ancient and Modern, East and West," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2016): forthcoming.

[10] All Scripture quotations are NKJV.

resurrection of the dead, he also believes this reality has paramount import for the present: "I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"" (1 Corinthians 15:31–32)

Here we see, even in the New Testament, something of what Perry Hamalis has termed the thanatomorphic character of Orthodox ethics, i.e. that it is "formed by death."[11] He writes,

> *"Death, both spiritual and physical, impacts each of us in profound ways. Few of us have never experienced the heart-wrenching loss of a beloved parent, sibling, cousin, or friend. Similarly, few of us have never experienced a rupture in our relationship with God or an acute sense of being spiritually dead through our sinfulness. The Orthodox Church teaches that these moments of suffering—while extremely difficult—should not be minimized, quickly suppressed, or played down. Rather, these moments serve as invitations from the crucified and risen Lord to properly orient, or reorient, our existence toward our true purpose of resurrection."*[12]

I wholeheartedly agree but would add to this a further dimension. Hamalis seems to limit spiritual death to the experience of sin. In one sense this is wholly correct; sin separates the soul from God just as physical death separates the body from

[11] See Perry Hamalis, "The Meaning and Place of Death in an Orthodox Ethical Framework," in *Thinking Through Faith: New Perspectives from Orthodox Christian Scholars*, ed. Aristotle Papanikolaou and Elizabeth H. Promodrou (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2008), 183–217.

[12] Hamalis, "The Meaning and Place of Death," 215.

the soul.[13] But we actually experience another aspect of spiritual death, which may just as often prompt us *toward* temptation rather than being the effect of our downfall. That is, ontologically speaking, human persons, as created beings, are by nature mutable and changing.[14] Our whole existence, even apart from sin, is conditioned by change—a basic, phenomenological fact—and through change we undergo a continual process of death and resurrection. Yet, just as it is eschatologically, the character of that daily resurrection is conditioned by the state of our souls and the goodness of our actions (cf. Revelation 21:7–8). We either rise to new life or to second death—daily. Pregnant within St. Paul's declaration, "*I die daily*," is the corollary that I rise daily as well. And the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the source of my hope that those daily resurrections are unto new life just as much as, to quote the Creed, "*I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come*." In this sense, what Hamalis and others have termed "spiritual death" may more accurately be referred to as spiritual *second* death. The condition of sin breeds a life of death unto death (cf. Genesis 2:17[15]). The salvation offered to us in Christ Jesus is that "*dying ... behold we live*" (2 Corinthians 6:9)—*not* that we shall not

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[13] See St. Augustine of Hippo, *On the Holy Trinity*, 4.3 in *NPNF*[1] 3:71–73. Especially relevant to asceticism, he writes, "*For as the soul dies when God leaves it, so the body dies when the soul leaves it; whereby the former becomes foolish, the latter lifeless. For the soul is raised up again by repentance, and the renewing of life is begun in the body still mortal by faith, by which men believe on Him who justifies the ungodly; and it is* increased and strengthened by good habits from day to day, *as the inner man is renewed more and more*" (71–72, emphasis added).

[14] On this in the fathers, see Nathan Jacobs, "Are Created Spirits Composed of Matter and Form? A Defense of Pneumatic Hylomorphism," *Philosphia Christi* 14, no. 1 (Summer 2012): 79–108, esp. 82–83; idem, "Created Corruptible, Raised Incorruptible: The Importance of Hylomorphic Creationism to the Free Will Defense," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Theological Anthropology*, ed. Joshua R. Farris and Charles Taliaferro (Surrey, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 261–276, esp. 265; and idem, "On the Metaphysics of God and Creatures in the Eastern Pro-Nicenes," *Philosophy & Theology* 28, no. 1 (2016): 3–42.

[15] The Semitic idiom in this verse is literally "dying, you shall die." Though this carries the meaning of "surely you shall die," as it is commonly translated in English, it is possible that relevant theological nuance is lost that would be more apparent to readers of the Greek, Latin, or Hebrew where the idiom is preserved.

die. This is true for us spiritually as well as physically. And this daily, spiritual dying and rising is the goal of asceticism.

Pope St. Leo the Great, reflecting on how the observance of Great Lent helps us to "*feel something of the Cross,*" continues to insist that "*we must strive to be found partakers also of Christ's Resurrection.*" He grounds this ascetic calling in the dynamic, changing nature of human existence:

> *"For when a man is changed by some process from one thing into another, not to be what he was is to him an ending, and to be what he was not is a beginning. But the question is, to what a man either dies or lives: because there is a death, which is the cause of living, and there is a life, which is the cause of dying."*[16]

As Fr. Pavel Florensky put it, "*The ascetic saints of the Church are alive for the living and dead for the dead.*"[17] Through repentance, we die "to everything" and put to death "*evil selfhood and the lower law of identity,*"[18] by which he means a static conception of one's identity akin to the identity principle of logic ("$I = I$"[19]). The higher law of identity, to Florensky, reflects the dynamic and ever-changing reality of our lives, which we can only live in by rejecting static, essentialist understandings of our own selfhood through grace, asceticism, and love.[20]

The grace of Christ gives to us what we could not obtain ourselves: Firstly, through the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, death is defeated and the way of salvation is opened to us. Secondly, we enter into the life in Christ through

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[16] Pope St. Leo the Great, *Sermons*, 71, in *NPNF*[2] 12:182.

[17] Pavel Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, trans. Boris Jakim (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 5. Henceforth, *PGT*. On Florensky's thought, see Robert Slesinski, *Pavel Florensky: A Metaphysics of Love* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984), esp. 169 regarding asceticism, identity, and transcendence.

[18] Florensky *PGT*, 229.

[19] Florensky *PGT*, 229. See also Siewers, "Traditional Christian Marriage," 576–577.

[20] Florensky *PGT*, 229.

the liturgical year and the sacraments of the Church,[21] where we die with Christ in baptism, are sealed with the Spirit in chrismation, and partake of Christ's shed blood in the Eucharist, that "we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4), and so on. Thirdly, and what is the primary focus of this paper, through ascetic heuristics and practices we deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow Jesus Christ (cf. Luke 9:23; Matthew 16:24), actualizing the grace given to us in the sacraments, continually striving for the acquisition of the Holy Spirit,[22] and martyrically carrying divine grace with us into every aspect of our lives in the world.[23] We cannot live a resurrected life without first dying to ourselves, confronting and even encouraging the sacrificial destruction of our souls. "*Whoever desires to save his soul will lose it*," says Christ, "*but whoever loses his soul for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his own soul?*" (Matthew 16:25–26[24])

As our lives are multifarious and every aspect is constantly subject to change, the ascetic life includes a wide variety of

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[21] On this, see St. Nicholas Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ*, trans. Carmino J. de Catanzaro (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974); Fr. Alexander Schmemann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973).

[22] I here refer to that phrase of St. Seraphim. See "The Acquisition of the Holy Spirit," in *Little Russian Philokalia, Vol. 1: St. Seraphim of Sarov* (Ouzinkie, AK: New Valaam Monastery, 1991), 109–119.

[23] On the connection between martyrdom, asceticism, and witness, see Dylan Pahman, "The Sweat of Christians is the Seed of Martyrdom: A Paradigm for Modern Orthodox Christian Witness," *International Journal of Orthodox Theology* 6, no. 2 (2015): 99–115. On the connection between asceticism and social engagement, see idem, "What Makes a Society?"

[24] I have here slightly amended the NKJV to better reflect the Greek, which does not say "life" (*bios, zoe*) but "soul" (*psyche*) and not, in v. 26, "lose" (*apolesei*) but "forfeit" (*zemiothe*). I would add, but cannot easily convey in translation, that *apolesei*, which is used in v. 25, carries the connotation not simply of misplacing something but of it being destroyed.

practices, even to the point of redundancy.[25] Orthodox Christians, to the extent they are able, pray, fast, give alms, practice solitude and hesychasm, attend vigils, and live chastely—whether by complete abstinence from sexual activity or sexual moderation through the faithfulness between a husband and a wife in the sacrament of marriage. As Vladimir Solovyov put it, "*True asceticism ... has two forms*—monasticism *and* marriage." Indeed, Fr. Alexander Schmemann insisted, "*A marriage which does not constantly crucify its own selfishness and self-sufficiency, which does not "die to itself" that it may point beyond itself, is not a Christian marriage.*"[26] From an Orthodox perspective, no Christian is free from the demands of asceticism; the difference between monks and those in the world is more one of degree than of kind.[27] Ascetic practices take many forms to help us confront the many deaths we experience every day, when our earthly conceptions, ideals, hopes, dreams, and desires come to naught or, perhaps more insidiously, when they seem to be confirmed. In both cases, the problem is being deceived by Florensky's "lower law of identity": we imagine that the things of this life, including our own selves, will persist as

[25] I cannot expand on this at length here, but similar redundancies also can be found in the first two aspects listed above (i.e. the life and work of Christ and the sacramental life of the Church). Nearly every feast of the Church year, we sing about how through *this* event—Nativity, Theophany, Annunciation, Pascha, Pentecost, and so on—we and all the world are saved. Again, we "*confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins*" (Nicene Creed) but also that the Eucharist is the "*blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*" (Matthew 26:28) and also that through the sacrament of confession our sins are forgiven and even that through holy unction we receive the grace not only of physical healing but also of spiritual healing, which again includes the forgiveness of sins. I am reminded of one hymn from the Jewish Passover in which all that God has done for the Jewish people is recounted, and they repeat after each one, "Dayenu!"—"It would have been enough!" So also, our liturgies are full of redundancies—there is something about who we are that needs multiple layers and facets of care in order to properly heal. One method or means might be enough, but through Jesus Christ we receive far more than enough: "*grace upon grace*" (John 1:16).

[26] Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 90.

[27] See Fr. Georges Florovsky, "Christianity and Civilization," in *Christianity and Culture*, The Collected Words of Georges Florovsky, vol. 2 (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1974), 125–126; Pahman, "What Makes a Society?" 183–188.

we conceive them to be when, in fact, they are constantly in flux, even when they do not appear to be. Or else, we are aware that they will not persist and fear it, unwilling to accept their transience and desperately clinging to them as they run like water through our hands, an existential embrace of, rather than victory over, death. So our passions push us toward selfishness and sin.

Evagrios describes how the three most basic ascetic practices combat our most basic passions and psychological faculties: "*the Physician of souls,*" he writes, "*corrects our incensive power through acts of compassion [i.e., almsgiving], purifies the intellect through prayer, and through fasting withers desire.*"[28] And St. Maximus describes the cycle of passions common to our lives apart from salvation: "*Man's will, out of cowardice, tends away from suffering, and man, against his own will, remains utterly dominated by the fear of death, and, in his desire to live, clings to his slavery to pleasure.*"[29] Christ conquers pleasure and desire through his fasting and solitude in the wilderness. He conquers fear in Gethsemane and suffering through Golgotha.[30] The way in which we who are in Christ experience victory over death in these and other areas of our lives is not through avoidance, ignorance, or delusion—that is Florensky's lower law of identity, a denial of the reality of death and thus a denial of the hope of resurrection. Rather, just as Christ tramples down death by death, we pattern our whole lives around dying and rising to new life, year after year, week after week, day after day, breath after breath. "*Every voluntary mortification of the egocentricity which is "contrary to nature,"*" wrote Christos Yannaras, "*is a dynamic destruction of death and a triumph for the life of the person.*"[31] In

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[28] Evagrios the Solitary, "Texts on Discrimination in Respect of Passions and Thoughts," in St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth, *The Philokalia: The Complete Text*, vol. 1, trans. and ed. G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1979), 40.

[29] St. Maximus the Confessor, Ad Thalassium 21: On Christ's Conquest of the Human Passions in On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Select Writings from St Maximus the Confessor, trans. Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken (New York, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 112.

[30] See St. Maximus, Ad Thalassium 21, 113.

[31] Christos Yannaras, The Freedom of Morality (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996), 116.

denying ourselves through ascetic disciplines, we are able to cling more strongly to God, and the love and virtue that come from him, who alone is without change and who is our only true source of life, identity, and stability. It is "*through glory and virtue*" that we "*become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust* [epithemia]" (2 Peter 1:3–4). Through ascetic practices and heuristics, we create a virtuous cycle that prepares us for even unpredictable temptations, disappointments, and tragedy. "*[W]hoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them,*" says Christ,[32] "*I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock*" (Matthew 7:24–25[33]).

While all ascetic practices work toward this end, one practice in particular serves to focus our attention on our ever-present mortality: *memento mori*, the remembrance of death. This practice, like many others,[34] receives the highest endorsement from Evagrios and other desert fathers, "*If you always remember your*

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[32] The phrase "these sayings of Mine," in context, refers to the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, in which Christ details ethical ideals (the Beatitudes), moral instruction ("you have heard it was said..."), and spiritual/ascetic practices (e.g. private and corporate prayer, solitude, almsgiving, and fasting). See Matthew 5–7.

[33] In our present era of modern meteorology, we may miss how unpredictable such storms were—more akin to earthquakes for us today. Similarly, on the need to prepare for the unpredictable, compare Matthew 24:43–44: "[I]f the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

[34] Hence, there is again a natural tendency to redundancy in practice. Many practices are said by the fathers to be a sure way to salvation, but they recommend all of them, not just one. We could see this as an inconsistency in their teaching, but I think a more charitable reading is that they were not content with only one practice, no matter how effective. Relying on just one or two disciplines would be to embrace spiritual fragility and leave oneself vulnerable to temptation in times of laxity or exhaustion in that one habit. In other words, with only one or two disciplines one may still be like the house without a solid foundation: "the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall" (Matthew 7:27).

death," Evagrios taught, "*and do not forget the eternal judgement, there will be no sin in your soul.*"[35] The constant remembrance of one's mortality is the sharpest reminder that our existence is ever-changing and that we are constantly subject to death and in need of salvation. Our existence here can become anchored in Christ, the Logos, and in the moral law rooted in him, if we enter into Christ through faith and grace and if we ascetically imitate his humility (cf. Philippians 2:1–16), confessing with the patriarch Abraham that apart from him, we are, after all, "*but dust and ashes*" (Genesis 18:27). In this way, despite the ever-changing nature of created existence, "*the word [logos] of God ... lives and abides forever*" (1 Peter 1:23; cf. Isaiah 40:8), and we, through it, can abide in eternal life, even now in each passing moment of the present.

Economic history and creative destruction

The foregoing can be summarized as follows: In our spiritual lives, we need a Savior to deliver us from the tyranny of our mortality, daily present to us in a plurality of forms in the inescapable reality of change. Not only do we need a Savoir, but we need some way of receiving the deliverance he wins for us, which is where the Church comes in. Lastly, we need not only to receive deliverance, but then to embody it through asceticism. Asceticism involves a plurality of practices that help us holistically fulfill the exhortation of St. Paul: "*Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God*" (Colossians 3:2). In this way we do not reject earthly life but find it transfigured in the kingdom of heaven, just as we do not hope to escape our bodies but rather that they would be raised as spiritual bodies (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:44). Through an ascetic way of life, particularly *memento mori*, we prepare ourselves for unexpected trials that might otherwise mean our spiritual ruin.

The economic historian Joseph Schumpeter helps us see how economic progress in the midst of our ever-changing created

[35] Sayings of the Desert Fathers, 11.10 in Western Asceticism, Library of Christian Classics, vol. 12, trans. and ed. Owen Chadwick (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1958), 132.

reality does, in fact, follow the pattern of asceticism and practices akin to it. By way of disclaimer, however, I would like to acknowledge that, of course, economic and material progress is not more important than spiritual and moral progress. But, at the same time, it is not an unspiritual matter to care for the economically disadvantaged. Vladimir Solovyov made this point well: "*It is written that man does not live by bread* alone *[Deuteronomy 8:3], but it is not written that he lives without bread.*"[36] So what insight does Schumpeter offer regarding how standards of living have historically been improved?—Creative destruction.

"*[T]he contents of the laborer's budget,*" he wrote (originally in 1942),

> *"say from 1760 to 1940, did not simply grow on unchanging lines but they underwent a process of qualitative change. Similarly, the history of the productive apparatus of a typical farm, from the beginnings of the rationalization of crop rotation, plowing and fattening to the mechanized thing of today—linking up with elevators and railroads—is a history of revolutions. So is the history of the productive apparatus of the iron and steel industry from the charcoal furnace to our own type of furnace, or the history of the apparatus of power production from the overshot water wheel to the modern power plant, or the history of transportation from the mail-coach to the airplane. The opening up of new markets, foreign or domestic, and the organizational development from the craft shop and factory to such concerns as U. S. Steel illustrate the same process of industrial mutation—if I may use that biological term—that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one. This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about*

[36] Solovyov, The Justification of the Good, 394–395.

capitalism. It is what capitalism consists in and what every capitalist concern has got to live in."[37]

Thus, economies have historically advanced due to a process of dying and rising—one company or market displaces another. For Schumpeter creative destruction is important because it mitigates the concentration of power in a monopoly.[38] That is, even when a market is monopolized, the monopoly must still fear the possibility that the whole market will be circumvented by something new, unexpected, and unknown. This displacement, to Schumpeter, is "*the essential fact about capitalism*," which we may still regard as the economic system of most developed and even many developing countries today, though degrees of state intervention and specific forms vary widely. Thus, Schumpeter's observation of how the general welfare, and not just that of the rich, has historically been improved under capitalism—albeit of various forms—ought still to be instructive for us today.

For example, the automotive industry displaced the market for blacksmiths but brought with it a massive rise in the well-being of nearly everyone in and beyond the industry, not just Henry Ford. Even if the state had sought to protect blacksmiths and they had improved their craft to the highest level of efficiency and quality,

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[37] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy*, 3rd ed. (New York; Hagerstown; San Francisco; London: Harper & Row, 1950), 83. For more on Schumpeter's conception of the entrepreneur, see Joseph A. Schumpeter, *The Theory of Economic Development*, trans. Redvers Opie (New Brunswick; London: Transaction Publishers, 1934, 1983). For secondary material on Schumpeter on the entrepreneur and creative destruction, see, e.g. Israel M. Kirzner, *Competition and Entrepreneurship* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 72–74, 79–81; Michael Perelman, "Retrospectives: Schumpeter, David Wells, and Creative Destruction," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9, no. 3 (Summer 1995): 189–197; Aron S. Spencer and Bruce A. Kirchhoff, "Schumpeter and New Technology Based Firms: Towards a Framework for how NTBFs Cause Creative Destruction," *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal* 2, no. 2 (June 2006): 145–156; J. Hanns Pichler, "Innovation and Creative Destruction: At the Centennial of Schumpeter's Theory and Its Dialectics," *Nase Gospodarstvo* 56, no. 5/6 (2010): 52–58; Paul Nightingale, "Schumpeter's Theological Roots? Harnack and the Origins of Creative Destruction," *Journal of Evolutionary Economics* 25, no. 1 (January 2015): 69–75.

[38] See Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy*, 89.

they could never bring about the advances that came from their destruction without transforming themselves into something else entirely. With the advent of the assembly line, not only could cars be made cheaply, they could be bought by the people who made them. Increased mobility changed other markets as well (e.g. mail and pizza delivery, not to mention the widespread effect of trucking).

Since that time the U.S. auto industry has taken serious losses as it has struggled to innovate and adjust to competition from Japan, South Korea, and elsewhere. The American auto industry has proved to be as mortal as the rest of life, but its destruction has meant the significant improvement of the lives of many new autoworkers in other countries as well as many Americans, since cheaper options for reliable cars became available through Toyota, Honda, and others (many of whom have factories in the United States). If protectionism had prevailed, there would still have been an opportunity cost to American consumers, who would have had to spend far more for transportation or settle for lower quality and less reliable used cars.

Other notable instances of creative destruction include the displacement of print newspapers by online media. Many have lost their jobs in this process, but many others—web developers, IT experts, social media marketers, et al.—have gained. Turmoil in one sector is not always a bad thing for an economy as a whole. Protecting firms—such as General Motors—from destruction can cause an economy to miss out on this benefit and postpone inevitable destruction without the benefit of parallel and greater creation. As economist Matthew Mitchell writes,

> *"As protected firms become less innovative, a country's overall economic growth may suffer. This is because, as Schumpeter emphasized nearly a century ago, economic growth thrives on "creative destruction." In a healthy economy, new firms constantly arise to challenge older, less-innovative behemoths. One of the leading experts on entrepreneurship, Amar Bhidé of the Columbia Business School, has argued that big firms, encumbered by larger*

internal bureaucracies, are virtually incapable of capitalizing on radical ideas. Indeed, research finds that new firms are more likely than existing firms to license novel technology. And compared with larger firms, smaller firms are about twice as likely to file "high-impact" patents.

For these reasons, turnover among a nation's largest firms is a sign of vitality. The list of U.S. Fortune 500 companies is illustrative: Only 13.4 percent of those companies on the Fortune 500 list in 1955 were still there in 2010. But not all nations experience the same sort of "churn" among their top firms. To test Schumpeter's theory, Kathy Fogel, Randall Morck, and Bernard Yeung recently examined the link between turnover among nations' top firms and economic growth. They looked at the lists of top firms in 44 countries in 1975 and again in 1996. After controlling for other factors, they found that those nations with more turnover among their top firms tended to experience faster per capita economic growth, greater productivity growth, and faster capital growth. Looking at the factors that correlate with faster firm turnover, they found that "big business turnover also correlates with smaller government, common law, less bank-dependence, stronger shareholder rights, and greater openness [to trade]." Thus, turnover is less likely when firms are privileged."[39]

We may compare the privileged company to the unascetic person. Comfortably sheltered from the reality of her mortality, she views herself statically, according to Florensky's "lower law of identity," despite the dynamic nature of reality. As a consequence, she fails to develop spiritually—and in fact degenerates—due to the fear of death. As St. Maximus notes, her fear enslaves her to

[39] Matthew Mitchell, The Pathology of Privilege: The Economic Consequences of Government Favoritism (Arlington, VA: Mercatus Center, 2012), 21–22.

fleeting pleasures. But death cannot be stopped by ignoring it. It always comes eventually, and like the house built on sand, that person's fall will be great and unexpected. So too, we may think of companies like Solyndra, which despite its desire to manufacture innovative "clean" energy in the form of solar power, went bankrupt just a year and a half after receiving a half-billion dollar loan from the U.S. federal government. Insulated from the reality of the market, in which private banks may not have granted such high-risk loans, Solyndra spent too much time pursuing favors and protection than actually producing viable products. Their fear of death ironically led them more speedily to it.[40]

The factors that make for healthy businesses, markets, and economies, however, respond to the realities of change, death, and pluriformity with practices and policies akin to those that adorn the ascetic life. Like the *memento mori*, healthy companies must always be open to innovation and change, or they will be unprepared when it comes. If possible, a diversity of products is preferable, just as a redundancy of spiritual practices makes one robust to short periods of laxity.

A great example of this would be the Japanese company Nintendo. Known today for video games and consoles, the company began in 1889 making Japanese playing cards. In 1959, they benefitted from the growing popularity of Disney by manufacturing the first cards to feature Disney characters, *"opening up a new market in children's playing cards and resulting in a boom in the card department."*[41] In 1963 they expanded beyond cards to producing other games. In 1970 Nintendo *"began selling the Beam Gun series ... introducing electronic technology into the toy industry for*

[40] See Joe Stephens and Carol D. Leonnig, "Solyndra: Politics infused Obama energy programs," Washington Post, December 25, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/solyndra-politics-infused-obama-energy-programs/2011/12/14/gIQA4HllHP_story.html; "Greenlighting Solyndra," Washington Post, December 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/politics/solyndra-key-players/; and "Solyndra scandal timeline," Washington Post, December 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/politics/solyndra-scandal-timeline/.

[41] "Nintendo History," https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Corporate/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html.

the first time in Japan."[42] In 1973, the company developed "a laser clay shooting system."[43] It was not until 1975, nearly a century after its start and right at the dawn of the new industry, that Nintendo made its first videogame system. Not all of its videogame consoles have been a success. The Virtual Boy flopped, and the Wii U is in trouble.[44] But Nintendo has been a strong company through diversifying its products as well as establishing staple franchises to fall back on, which enable it to take innovative risks. Mario, Pokémon, and Zelda are household names for many Gen-Xers and Millennials, and these franchises and others will continue to profit the company through various venues, whether home or handheld systems or—continuing their past legacy in a very different form—card games. When times changed, Nintendo changed with them and more than once even acted as a catalyst for change. The video game market is very open, diverse, and competitive, and while the gaming system market has less diversity, it also has proven open in the past to newcomers (e.g. Microsoft, Sony) as well as able to bear the losses of those who couldn't compete (e.g. Sega, Atari). Nintendo may not last forever—it too is mortal—but it offers an excellent model for what an analogue to various ascetic practices in business looks like.

For markets in general, benefiting from creative destruction means the more open, diverse, and competitive the market, the better.[45] Closed and monopolized markets are especially vulnerable to being on the receiving end of—rather than benefiting from—creative destruction. On a more macro level, whole economies are in a better position for the good of creative destruction when they are diverse and open as well. Marx and Engels are right to point to

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[42] "Nintendo History," https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Corporate/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html.

[43] "Nintendo History," https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Corporate/Nintendo-History/Nintendo-History-625945.html.

[44] See Alex Fitzpatrick, "Nintendo's New Game Could Save the Wii U," *Time*, May 8, 2015, http://time.com/3849388/splatoon-wii-u-nintendo/.

[45] On the various forms of markets, as well as on the difference between open and closed supply and demand, see Walter Eucken, *The Foundations of Economics: History and Theory in the Analysis of Economic Reality*, trans. T. W. Hutchison (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 129–158.

the varied nature of social life, even if they are wrong in rejecting the value of religion and advocating for violent revolution instead of peaceful reform.[46] Furthermore, despite their and Schumpeter's optimism for the state, historically innovation that sparks creative destruction comes much easier to the private sector than to nationalized industries and corporations. Probabilist Nassim Nicholas Taleb argues that "*a reading of Schumpeter shows that he did not think in terms of uncertainty and opacity; he was completely smoked by interventionism, under the illusion that governments could innovate by fiat.... Nor did he grasp the notion of layering of evolutionary tensions.*"[47]

With Gregory Treverton, Taleb outlines five sources of economic fragility: "*a centralized governing system, an undiversified economy, excessive debt and leverage, a lack of political variability, and no history of surviving past shocks.*"[48] The fewer of these factors that an economy has, the better. Some can be changed through better policy: Governments can be decentralized, distributing more power from central to local bodies; debt can be paid down through increased revenue; leverage can be staved off by decreasing spending and increasing privatization; deficits can be avoided with balanced budget amendments and more responsible fiscal practices; and political variability can be ensured through term limits and minimizing restrictions that limit freedom of association, in this case especially for political parties. Like the ascetic life, the more such practices the better—redundancy is a good thing. And like ascetic practices, most all of these involve limiting oneself—in this case the state—for the sake of a greater good. Governments cannot

[46] See, e.g. Karl Marx, "Society and Economy in History," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York, NY; London: Norton & Company, 1978), 136–142; Friedrich Engels, "Letters on Historical Materialism," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 760–768.

[47] Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *Antifragile* (New York, NY: Random House, 2012), 193.

[48] Nassim Nicholas Taleb and Gregory F. Treverton, "The Calm Before the Storm: Why Volatility Signals Stability, and Vice Versa," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2015), https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/calm-storm.

diversify their economies by fiat, but they can regulate in favor of entrepreneurship, open markets, and sound antitrust measures.[49]

As for "*surviving past shocks*," the only way to create such a history is to enter the future prepared for the shocks that will surely come, just as the true ascetic lives each day before God ready for it to be her last. This does not mean being able to predict those shocks beforehand, just as Christians do not know the day or the hour that Christ will return, but they can be prepared for him to come. Taleb calls these shocks Black Swans and defines them as an event characterized by "rarity, extreme impact, and retrospective (though not prospective) predictability."[50] The more people, communities, and nations learn successfully to recover and even benefit from these shocks and to resist retroactively explaining away their unpredictability, the healthier an economy becomes and the more opportunity there will be for better employment and upward mobility. Orthodox Christians, who confess the risen Christ as Lord and in their ascetic disciplines imitate him in conquering death by death, ought to welcome and encourage such realism in the face of our economic mortality for the sake of the historic economic benefits it brings to all classes of people, as Schumpeter pointed out.

So we can see both macro- and microeconomic policies and practices that resemble asceticism and respond to the same ontological realities as asceticism. But it would be uncritical and

[49] As Eucken put it, "State planning of [market] forms—Yes; state planning and control of the economic process—No!" Walter Eucken, This Unsuccessful Age: Or the Pains of Economic Progress (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1952). Eucken's subtitle, notably, is directed at those who believed economic progress was inevitable and obscured concrete economic details due to this conviction. The ascetic paradigm presented in this paper is decidedly an open dialectic—one either rises to new life or to second death. The only inevitability is death; one's response is a matter of freedom. Thus, progress is not inevitable.

[50] Nassim Nicholas Taleb, The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Random House, 2007), xviii.

overly monumentalist, to use Nietzsche's term,[51] to highlight only the benefits of creative destruction without also addressing the real losses that come with it. I have already noted Solovyov's point that material benefit for the poor is a spiritual task, but one may yet ask, for example: granted that the auto industry lifted many to higher standards of living, yet what about the blacksmith? To be sure, creative destruction shows that economic gain is not the result of a zero-sum game, where wealth is merely redistributed from losers to winners. The economic gains since 1760 highlighted by Schumpeter are important precisely because they show real and substantial increases in total wealth *as well as* a broad distribution of that wealth not only to the rich but also to the middle classes and the poor through more and better opportunities for employment and cheaper and better consumer goods. In some cases, however, people are not able to switch careers, gain new training, or otherwise recover when they are on the destruction side of economic creative destruction. This, however, is where the spiritual practices of asceticism come into direct contact with its economic analogue. A society in which people in their personal lives make a regular habit of self-limitation for the sake of better loving God and their neighbors would be one in which the generosity and hospitality needed by those left behind as economies advance would be present. And, I would add, such people have an advantage over others in already practicing in their everyday lives the sort of disciplines needed for economic health, knowing by personal experience their great potential for good.[52]

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[51] See Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Use and Abuse of History," trans. Adrian Collins, in idem, The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, ed. Oscar Levy, vol. 2: Thoughts out of Season, part 2 (Edinburgh; London: T.N. Foulis, 1909), 1–100.

[52] On a particularly striking example of this regarding risk management, see Rupert Read and Nassim Nicholas Taleb, "Religion, Heuristics, and Intergenerational Risk Management," Econ Journal Watch 11, no. 2 (May 2014): 219–226, http://econjwatch.org/articles/religion-heuristics-and-intergenerational-risk-management.

Conclusion

There is far more to economic history and public policy than what has been briefly covered herein. We may note, in passing, sound monetary policy, the ethics of taxation, the use and misuse of safety nets, the optimal extent and character of regulation, and so on. However, this paper makes advances on the state of scholarship by expounding the underlying ontological presumptions of Orthodox asceticism and using that Orthodox paradigm as a way of approaching economic history and public policy. This analysis is grounded both upon philosophical and historical-empirical grounds; they are not mere abstractions. Indeed, even the ontological and theological foundation of asceticism is rooted in the undeniable, existential facts of change, diversity, death, and resurrection, either to new life or to second death. Future research could apply this paradigm to other areas of social and economic life as well as expand it to accommodate realities that it may be inadequate to assess in its current form, adjusting it to concrete realities and improving upon it rather than falling into a dialectical monism. After all, it would quickly become just another ideology if it were not itself open to its own death and resurrection.

Chapter 11

How is Forgiveness Possible? Toward an Orthodox and Ascetic Answer[1]

Dylan Pahman

Introduction

Debates regarding the relationship between justice and mercy, which generally includes forgiveness, have long occupied a central place in Christian theological discussion. Beginning with the teaching of the Gospels and Pauline Epistles, among others, Christians sought to articulate their perspective in contradistinction to the norms of other various Jewish perspectives at the time, both within and without the Church (cf. Matthew 9:13, 12:7). Further complications have historically centered upon the theological question of the doctrine of the atonement. Yet another significant strand has to do with social ethics and criminal justice. Theologian Jordan J. Ballor (2008), for example, outlines four schools of thought regarding the relationship between retributive justice, restorative justice, and forgiveness: complementary reformists, instrumentalist reformists, separatist radicals, and abolitionist radicals.[2] Beyond all of these questions and

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[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2014 Sophia Institute conference. My thanks to those present. I would also like to thank Dr. Timothy Patitsas, of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, for his helpful feedback on an early draft. This paper was originally accepted by *Christian Psychology* and appears in *Christian Psychology* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2018).

[2] Ballor defines these as follows: complementary reformists "argue for reform of the criminal justice system toward a restorative paradigm" (487) but not by eliminating punitive measures; instrumentalist reformists argue that "the use of punishment is valid if and only if it advances the purposes of restorative justice" (489); separatist radicals "deny in wholesale fashion the compatibility of punishment, retribution, coercion, or force with the principles and practice of restorative justice," where "[t]here may be a degree of implicit reliance on or validation of the continuing existence of state institutions" (491); lastly, abolitionist radicals "not only deny the compatibility of punishment and restorative justice, but actively seek to do away with the criminal justice system" (492).

distinctions, however, is the deeply pressing, personal and existential dilemma: how does one forgive? As the psychologist Robert D. Enright (2001) put it, "Legal justice may not satisfy the angry heart, but mercy can set a person free even if the offender remains unrepentant" (32).

This essay, in a very limited manner, brings together social science research and the Orthodox Christian ascetic tradition on justice, mercy, love, and forgiveness in an effort to answer this question. Drawing from St. John Cassian, St. John Climacus, and St. Nicolas Cabasilas *inter alia*, I outline a three-tiered schema that ties together (1) sin, the antinatural, fear of punishment, and slavery; (2) justice, natural law,[3] expectation of reward, and stewardship; and (3) mercy, the supranatural, love, and sonship (see Table 1 below). On the one hand, preliminary concrete findings of social science research are used to augment, confirm, and complicate this theoretical schema, while, on the other hand, the schema is used as an evaluative tool for the data. Understanding asceticism as the cultivation of virtue[4] through various practices of self-denial in cooperation with divine grace, I conclude by suggesting that forgiveness, as an ascetic act, requires a flowering of the grace of God through personal discipline and situational prudence, sketching a picture of what this could look like and suggesting areas for further research.

An Orthodox Schema for Evaluating the Possibility of Forgiveness

Sin, Justice, and Love

St. John Climacus (1982) begins his *Ladder of Divine Ascent* with the seemingly contradictory affirmation that "[a] friend of God is the one who lives in communion with all that is natural and free from sin" coupled with, at the end of the same paragraph, a commendation of "[w]ithdrawal from the world," which he characterizes as "*a denial of nature* for the sake of what is above nature" (74, emphasis added). Thus, a friend of God "lives in communion with all that is natural," while "[w]ithdrawal from the world" requires "a denial of nature." So which is it? Live in communion with nature or deny it?

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[3] For an interesting, recent, Orthodox take on natural law and moral epistemology, see Goss and Vitz (2014). See also Harakas (1983, 1963-1964). From what I can tell, I lean more toward Harakas's account than Engelhardt's (the focus of Goss and Vitz's article) on the issue of natural law.

[4] Neu (2008) explores the possibility of forgiveness conceived as a virtue. I am more inclined to say that forgiveness *requires* virtue than that it *is* a virtue, however. Notably, Neu also explores the problem of the psychological and moral limits of forgiveness. For my own philosophical and theological analysis of Christian asceticism, see Pahman (2016).

In this same paragraph, Climacus actually outlines a detailed taxonomy of different sorts of people, including, from bad to good: the impious, the transgressor, the Christian, the friend of God, the self-controlled, and the monk. The "friend of God" lives in communion with nature, but the monk—or at least the one who withdraws from the world—goes beyond this, denying nature "for the sake of what is above nature."

Further insight into what Climacus is getting at can be found by looking to a few other saints. For instance, St. John of Damascus (1899) wrote,

> By nature ... all things are servants of the Creator and obey Him. Whenever, then, any of His creatures voluntarily rebels and becomes disobedient to his Maker, he introduces evil into himself. For evil is not any essence nor a property of essence, but an accident, that is, a voluntary deviation from what is natural into what is unnatural, which is sin. (94b)

Thus, sin is antinatural, deviating from our natural vocation of service to God. One text attributed to St. Maximos the Confessor (1981) further addresses what it means to be in accord with nature, describing the function "of the natural law" as being "to grant equal rights to all men in accordance with natural justice" (196). Thus, to act in accord with nature is to act justly, to render to each what is due (*Justinian's Institutes*, 1987, 36-39; Harakas, 1983, 131-132; Metropolitan Peter Mogila, 1762, 161).

We may add to this the following, ascetic progression from the same text:

> It is said that he who does not first reintegrate himself with his own being by rejecting those passions which are contrary to nature will not be reintegrated into the Cause of his being—that is, with God—by acquiring supranatural blessings through grace. For he who would truly unite himself with God must first separate himself from created beings. (1981, 196)

Thus, in rejecting what is antinatural (sin), one becomes "reintegrate[d] ... with his own being," or, as Climacus put it, "in communion with all that is natural." From sin to justice, one then, through ascetic self-denial, opens the possibility of going beyond nature to "what is above nature." If justice means giving to each what is due, and injustice is the violation of justice, then to go *beyond* justice is not to violate it but, rather, to do good even to those who

have no claim of justice to receive it.[5] Or, we might say, to be merciful and embody divine love through grace.

The Slave, the Steward, and the Son

Only a little later on in the first step of Climacus's *Ladder* (1982), he outlines a related distinction between three motivations in the spiritual life, focusing on the life of monks but, as we will see, applicable beyond the monastic vocation:

> The man who renounces the world because of fear is like burning incense, which begins with fragrance and ends in smoke. The man who leaves the world in hopes of a reward is like the millstone that always turns around on the same axis. But the man who leaves the world for love of God has taken fire from the start, and like fire set to fuel, it soon creates a conflagration. (76)

The first motivation is fear of the just punishment of sin; the second is desire for the rewards of doing what is right; the third goes beyond these to love for love's sake. The first only yields the false progress of a fleeting fragrance that "ends in smoke." The second creates more constant spiritual movement, but only circular movement, still lacking any real progress. Only the last, love, "creates a conflagration."

This same distinction can be found in other fathers, linked to the states of slavery, stewardship, and sonship, respectively. In his eleventh conference, St. John Cassian (1895a) records the following exposition of the parable of the prodigal son by one Abba Chæremon of the Egyptian desert:

> If then any one is aiming at perfection, from that first stage of fear which we rightly termed servile ... he should by advancing a step mount to the higher path of hope—which is compared not to a slave but to a hireling, because it looks for the payment of its recompense, and as if it were free from care concerning absolution of its sins and fear of punishment, and conscious of its own good works, though it seems to look for the promised reward, yet it cannot attain to that love of a son who, trusting in his father's kindness and liberality, has no doubt that all that the father has is his... (417)

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[5] For an Orthodox understanding of the atonement that unites justice and mercy in a similar way, see Metropolitan St. Philaret of Moscow (1877/1905/1919), 476.

Thus, the slave is like the incense, characterized by fear and lacking the fullness of the father's house. The hireling (or steward) is like the millstone—motivated by desire and making a more consistent spiritual movement. He is more a member of the household than the slave, but his affective and axiological focus is still consequentialist. The fullness of the father belongs to the son, who is like the "fire set to fuel," which ignites into a conflagration of love.

Nearly a millennium later, this same distinction can be found in St. Nicholas Cabasilas's *The Life in Christ.* This shows a remarkable consistency of one concept throughout time. Cabasilas's use of these three states in a book written for broader audiences than monastics breaks somewhat from Climacus's sharp distinction between the average Christian and the monk who renounces the world and puts him more in line with St. Basil the Great (1983, 236-238) and St. Gregory of Nyssa (1978, 137), who both seem to have used these categories with lay audiences in mind.[6] Both the monk and the layperson, after all, are called to asceticism, even if in significantly different degrees and contexts. It is on the basis of this precedent, and with that important qualification that I would expand Climacus's characterization of the monk to all Christians.

Cabasilas (1974) writes,

> The Spirit permits us to receive the mysteries of Christ, and as it is said, to those who receive Him "He gave power to become children of God" (Jn. 1:12). It is to the children that the perfect love belongs from which "all fear has been driven away" (cf. 1 Jn. 4:12). He who loves in that way cannot fear either the loss of rewards or the incurring of penalties, for the latter fear belongs to slaves, the former to hirelings. To love purely in this manner belongs to sons alone. (224)

Here again, while the slave seeks to obey the commandments for fear of the punishment due to sin, the hireling (or steward or servant) looks for the reward due to those who keep them. The child of God, however, acts from pure love that casts out the fears—praiseworthy though they may be—associated with these former states.[7] The children of God, by contrast, can say with St. Antony, "Now I do not fear God, but I love him: for love casteth out fear" (*Sayings of the Desert Fathers* 1958, 181).

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[6] My thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out the reference to St. Gregory of Nyssa.

[7] Interestingly, Cabasilas here implies that even a laudable desire for reward can degenerate into fear, but that is the subject for another study.

Commenting on these states, Fr. Michael Butler and Andrew Morriss write in *Creation and the Heart of Man* (2013, 62), "[F]ear can be a powerful incentive for action, but actions based on fear, because they are founded on emotion and not on clear reasoning, tend toward the irrational and are therefore untrustworthy." They continue, "A more hopeful disposition can be found in that of a *servant* who obeys the Father out of a desire for reward—the reward of heaven—or, more immanently, for a better world, cleaner air and water, and a cleaner conscience" (63). Lastly, "The best disposition is that of a *son*, modeled for us by Christ himself, who obeys the Father simply out of love for the Father" (66). They argue that this finds its fullest expression in a liturgical orientation toward creation: "We, in imitation of the Father who gives everything to us, return everything to the Father in thanksgiving and love" (67).

We may summarize the foregoing with following schema (Table 1):

Table 1: Three-Tiered Schema

	Tier 1	**Tier 2**	**Tier 3**
State	Slave	Steward	Son
Affective Motivation	Fear of Punishment	Desire for Reward	Love
Axiological Focus	Sin	Justice	Mercy
Metaphysical Focus	Antinatural	Natural	Supranatural

Forgiveness as a Christian Duty of Mercy

So what does this have to do with forgiveness? Forgiveness presupposes a prior breach of what is natural. What is due to sin, according to natural justice, is punishment proportionate to the crime or, as the Mosaic Law put it, "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Exodus 21:23-25; cf. Huston 2008, 34). Forgiveness, however, is not required by natural justice. Sin does not merit forgiveness but punishment. Thus, forgiveness belongs to mercy, going beyond justice to the supranatural love that characterizes the children of God.[8]

Yet this, in turn, creates a complication. Aren't all Christians adopted by God through baptism (cf. John 3:5)? If so, doesn't forgiveness become a specifically

[8] In addition to following from the foregoing theological reflection, it is also Enright's (2001, 26, 32) view that forgiveness is an act of mercy.

Christian duty, regardless of one's spiritual progress, even if it is not, of course, limited to Christians alone in practice? This would seem to be the case. Commenting on the petition in the "Our Father" to "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us," Jesus himself made forgiveness essential to our salvation: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15). A little later in St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus even adds that there should be no limit to such forgiveness: "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:22).

The division between the three states of the Church fathers outlined above cannot, then, be rigid, since Christ seems to unite these motivations in one command. Fear of incurring the just punishment due to our own sins and hope for the reward of forgiveness from our Father in heaven now become the impetuses for acting out of the utmost supranatural love towards others.[9] Beginning with what is servile we advance, through continual practice, to the disposition of love most fitting for those who call upon God as Father.

We might clarify this further with the distinction of St. Paul between the immature child and the mature heir. "[T]he heir," he writes to the Galatians,

> as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (Galatians 4:1-5)

Thus, children who are immature begin with the disposition of slaves and are helped along by "guardians and stewards" until they come of age. This more fluid nuance will become important as we now turn to recent social science findings on the subject of forgiveness.

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[9] Cf. St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew,* 19.11 in *NPNF*[1] 10:134-136.

The Science of Forgiveness

The Best Means towards Forgiveness

From a psychological point of view, forgiveness, defined as "the transformation of victims' motives and attitudes towards the offender from negative to positive" (Wenzel & Okimoto 2014, 464; cf. Enright 2001, 25; Denton & Martin 1998), has been described as a state of "optimal mental health" (Gassin & Lengel 2014, 472) with significant potential social benefits (Poulsen & Carmon 2015; Green, DeCourville, & Sadava 2012; Karremans, Van Lange, & Holand 2005). As such, there is considerable social science literature on the subject, concerning which I can only scratch the surface here.

Relevant to the distinctions above, in which forgiveness would not be a violation of justice, but something that goes beyond justice as an expression of mercy, Michael Wenzel and Tyler G. Okimoto (2014) focus on the possibility that "justice and forgiveness are not only compatible but are functionally related. Forgiveness can help restore a sense of justice ... and conversely, the restoration of justice can facilitate forgiveness" (464). Not only does their article examine the effects of two different forms of punishment, what they term retributive and restorative,[10] it also examines in a second study the influence of mediated restorative justice, e.g., when a third party apologizes to a victim on behalf of an offender.[11] Incidentally, their affirmation of the compatibility of justice and forgiveness gives psychological support to those Ballor (2008) terms complementarian reformists with regards to Christian approaches to criminal justice.[12]

In addition to this, Wenzel and Okimoto (2014) also factor in the concept of an "injustice gap," which they define as "the discrepancy between the victims' entitlements or desired just treatment and their actual treatment, hurt and victimization." Put simply, the injustice gap represents the magnitude of the perceived harm to the victim. They document past research, which has argued that

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[10] These terms are not used uniformly between sources cited here. Wenzel and Okimoto (2014) offer the following definitions: "A *retributive notion* conceptualizes justice as unilateral assertion against the offender. On the other hand, a *restorative notion* conceptualizes justice as achieving a renewed consensus between the afflicted parties. These two understandings of justice are conceptually distinct, yet not necessarily mutually exclusive" (465).

[11] Notably, Eaton, Struthers, and Santelli (2006) found third-party acknowledgement of an offence to be effective in facilitating forgiveness while third-party apology was not.

[12] For some philosophical and practical challenges to the possibility and desirability of restorative justice, see Dzur & Wertheimer (2002). In short, even if restorative justice best facilitates forgiveness, it is still unclear to them whether it can therefore be assumed to better serve the public good than retributive justice.

the greater the injustice gap, the less likely is forgiveness. Thus, any act of justice should increase the likelihood of forgiveness by decreasing the injustice gap—an inverse relationship. Challenging this assumption, however, they "question the validity of the proposition that justice restoration by *any* means promotes forgiveness." Instead, they "argue that the concept of the 'injustice gap' presupposes a unitary understanding of justice, but that when it comes to forgiveness, *not all forms of justice are made equal*" (465; cf. Hantman & Cohen 2010, esp. 625; Worthington 2006, 29-31; Fitzgibbons 1998, esp. 65-67).[13]

The findings of their studies support this hypothesis. They write,

> [The data from Study 2] suggests that social validation of the violated values, which is an element of both offender and third-party apology, is key to a kind of justice experience that is conducive to forgiveness. However, inclusion of the offender in the value consensus, which characterizes an offender apology, seems to be critical for a positive direct effect that adds to the indirect effect via justice, producing a significant total effect of offender apology on forgiveness. In contrast, although not significant, the direct effects tended to be negative (and thus neutralizing any indirect effects) for third-party apology and retributive response, both of which imply an absence of consensus with the offender and may even imply a distancing from, or social exclusion of, the offender. (479)

What we may say, then, is that their findings suggest that direct restorative justice, in which the offender him/herself apologizes and seeks reparation with the victim, is the most conducive form of justice to forgiveness. Wenzel and Okimoto's research is significant in that it confirms the assumption of the patristic schema above that forgiveness does not require a violation of justice. It complicates this, however, by stipulating that in practice some forms of justice are more conducive to forgiveness than others, retributive being the least conducive, indirect restorative justice being in the middle, and direct restorative justice being the most.

This is also confirmed by John M. McConnell and David N. Dixon's (2012) study of self-forgiveness, which notes that in contrast to conciliatory behavior, "the self-focus of shame is more likely to lead to destructive criticism, especially when transgressors label their transgressions as character flaws.

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[13] Ballor (2008) uses the term restorative justice for all four of his classifications. The extent to which his use of this term overlaps with Wenzel and Okimoto cannot be explored herein, however. What this may suggest, however, is that there may be even more nuance to the form of justice employed than Wenzel and Okimoto explore in their article.

Furthermore, shame may evoke an avoidance response in relation to the transgression ... perhaps inhibiting self-forgiveness" (31; cf. Webb et al. 2013; Day & Maltby 2005). Here we see the pastoral importance of classifying sin as accidental and contrary to nature rather than constituent of one's nature (*physis, ousia*) or person (*hypostasis, prosopon*).[14] While McConnell and Dixon are particularly focused on how this affects "transgressors' relational interactions with God," this point would apply more broadly as well. Purely retributive justice does not offer the possibility of reconciliation or reparation. Thus, retributive justice seems to even inhibit the self-forgiveness of offenders in addition to the forgiveness of their victims by closing avenues to reconciliation and recognition of their potential for transformation.

From a therapeutic perspective, Ryan B. Seedall, Mark H. Butler, and Jennifer Z. Elledge (2014) employ Gorsuch and McPherson's (1989; cf. Kirkpatrick 1989; Gorsuch & Venable 1983; Allport & Ross 1967) intrinsic/extrinsic-revised religiosity scale that approximately overlaps the three patristic states outlined in the schema above. This religiosity scale "conceptualizes religious motivation in terms of three dimensions: (a) intrinsic (religion as an important part of daily life, regardless of external benefits ...); (b) extrinsic-personal (religion as an avenue to personal growth and gain ...); and (c) extrinsic-social (religion as a vehicle for social experience and gain ...)" (Seedall, Butler, & Elledge 2014, 131). More generally, Mark S. Rye and Kenneth I. Pargament (2002) speculate on the basis of their study of forgiveness and college romantic relationships, "For many people, forgiveness may be inherently religious" (437). Accordingly, intrinsic religiosity, in which daily religious practice is carried out "regardless of external benefits," fits well with the status of the son who obeys the father out of love without thought of rewards or punishments. Extrinsic-personal fits with the status of stewards, with its consequentialist emphasis on "personal growth and gain." Lastly, extrinsic-social fits more approximately with the status of slaves, since one could say that the primary motivation in this type of religiosity is actually more fear of social shame than it is any true desire for reward.

Regarding the effectiveness of forgiveness intervention in therapy, the researchers found that their hypothesis that intrinsic religiosity would make acceptance of forgiveness intervention more likely was partially confirmed.

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[14] While this stands as a theological and philosophical point, there has been some notable empirical research on personality and forgiveness more generally. This does not affect the point above but offers a helpful counterbalance: sin is accidental to one's personhood and nature, but one's personality may still be significant in the forgiveness process. Not all of these studies agree to what extent, if at all, personality is a factor, however. See Collier, et al. (2010); Schmitt et al. (2004); Watkins & Regmi (2004).

They write that while this generally proved true, "somewhat unexpectedly" extrinsic-personal religious motivations "were also associated with greater acceptability of forgiveness framed as a spiritual issue" (Seedall, Butler, & Elledge 2014, 136). We might note, then, the fluidity of these categories, calling to mind St. Paul's metaphor of maturity. Someone who has moved beyond fear-based to rewards-based spiritual motivation may already be on the way to acts of genuine love and mercy. As such, they recommend that forgiveness intervention also could be cautiously pursued with positive outcomes by adding an emphasis on the personal benefits of forgiveness for the victim, so long as this was not done in such a way that misconstrues true forgiveness.

These findings interestingly shed some light on an economic approach to forgiveness offered by Victor V. Claar and John N. Oswalt (2006). Seeking to determine whether "neoclassical economics can handle a Scriptural view of forgiveness," (71) they distinguish two forms of forgiveness that they term "weak" and "strong." They define the weak form as when "forgiveness has to do with only the victim." Further, they write, "in the weak form of forgiveness, it is indeed possible, where human relationships are concerned, for an injured party to forgive another—regardless of whether the victimizer is repentant." They contrast this with the strong form, defined as forgiveness "that follows repentance by the offender." This, they believe, is more biblical, which I will address shortly. They continue, "Apology is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the strong form of forgiveness. Further, only the strong form holds the possibility of reconciliation. There can be no reconciliation without apology" (75-76).[15]

Wenzel and Okimoto's findings, however, complicate Claar and Oswalt's classification. Perhaps it is just a semantic quibble, but by their terms, the "weak" form of forgiveness seems to be the more difficult one in practice.[16] This is further complicated by biblical examples of this weak and supposedly less biblical form being held out as the *highest* examples of forgiveness, namely, Christ's words from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do"

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[15] How one apologizes, furthermore—whether offering compensation (most effective), admitting fault, or simply expressing remorse (least effective)—may be a significant factor as well. See Schmitt et al. (2004, esp. 481-482). On compensation and admission of fault, see also Kelley & Waldron (2005). Unsurprisingly, sincerity of apology may matter as well. See Merolla (2014).

[16] In addition to what has already been covered regarding restorative justice and reducing the injustice gap, McCullough et al. (2014) also note that attempts at reconciliation make forgiveness easier.

(Luke 23:34)[17] and St. Stephen the protomartyr's echo of this same pardon as he is stoned to death in the book of Acts (7:60). In neither case is there any reconciliation with the offenders prior to forgiveness. In Claar and Oswalt's defense, there is, no doubt, a practical difficulty to achieving the reconciliation that they term the "strong" form of forgiveness since it requires the cooperation of both the victim and the offender. And there is, of course, sufficient biblical grounding for the importance of seeking such reconciliation where possible as well. Indeed, relevant to our schema, we may simply note Christ's beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9). But the fact remains that, from the victim's perspective at least, the "weak" form requires the greater spiritual strength due to the absence of restorative justice for the offence, yet it is no less mandated by the Gospel.

One further and important complication comes from Seedall et al. (2014), who observe, "Misconstruing forgiveness as requiring reconciliation can expose an injured person to real risk for re-injury by an unrepentant offender" (129; cf. Enright 2001, 30-31; Rye & Pargament 2002, esp. 439). Thus, such restorative justice or reconciliation is complicated by the spiritual maturity of the offender and requires a great amount of prudence to effectively orchestrate. Neither Wenzel and Okimoto nor Claar and Oswalt address this seemingly crucial factor, instead unqualifiedly recommending reconciliatory efforts. One unintended consequence would be that in recommending what they believe, for separate reasons, to be an important contributing element to forgiveness, without further qualification they may only increase the injuries to be forgiven, further widening, rather than reducing, the injustice gap that so often stands in the way of forgiveness.

Asceticism and the Hardest Form of Forgiveness

The above research suggests that restorative responses to injury are more likely to facilitate forgiveness. However, this benefit is not universal. Seeking reconciliation carries the risk of increasing the harm by misjudging the spiritual maturity of the offender, the victim, or both. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that the best means toward forgiveness are not always available. What is to be done when reconciliation is inadvisable or otherwise inaccessible? We may recall the Archangel Gabriel's words to the Theotokos, that "with God nothing will be impossible" (Luke 1:37). Certainly, God's grace is vital to all forgiveness and makes even the seemingly impossible possible. But

[17] Claar & Oswalt (2006, 77) mention this example but do not address the apparent contradiction it holds for their classification.

God gives his grace through *means*. We may yet ask, then: What other means are most conducive to forgiveness when the most ideal ones are lacking? How is it possible for someone to imitate Christ, love one's enemies, and forgive an offender regardless of the conditions?

The schema I outlined offers a helpful starting point. Understood fluidly, if one cannot yet forgive out of love, one can still practice forgiveness out of lower forms of motivation as part of one's personal asceticism. Claar and Oswalt (2006) do touch on this. They write, citing L. Gregory Jones (1995),

> Forgiving does not come easily to the novice. Forgiving feels uncomfortable, and we go about it awkwardly. However, with time, patience, and the guidance of a Master Forgiver, we are able to grow in our abilities to forgive others as we ourselves have been forgiven. Forgiving can become cheerful and can become a possible avenue to restore relationships that might remain broken otherwise. As [Desmond] Tutu put it, there is "no future" for relationships without forgiveness. (81)

Drawing on Jones, they employ the metaphor of someone learning carpentry, noting how one must begin at the apprentice level, then become a journeyman, and only after that a master carpenter. They do not go into detail, but this threefold development has resonance with the three statuses as stages of maturity outlined herein as well. Forgiveness, to them, is a matter of continual practice. One who desires to forgive but finds a particular offence or offender too difficult to forgive in the present can nevertheless take heart that any act of forgiveness contributes to a positive habit or virtuous disposition toward forgiveness, increasing the possibility of forgiveness even when the injustice gap is large, and reconciliation is unavailable (cf. Huston 2008, 103-132). This would be an important avenue for further empirical research: To what extent does a regular practice of forgiveness in small matters increase the possibility of forgiveness in greater matters?

We may augment Claar and Oswalt's observation with the Orthodox sacrament of confession. Herein, the ascetic demands of love outlined by St. Maximos meet the liturgical character of sonship outlined by Butler and Morriss. While Claar and Oswalt acknowledge the importance of God as our "Master Forgiver," Aristotle Papanikolaou (2012) adds the role of iconic mediation through "a priest or monastic" in confession as facilitating self-forgiveness and reducing the barrier of egoism that may stand in the way of extending forgiveness toward others. He writes,

> The sacrament of confession is the opportunity to experience the always forgiving God as God's loving presence, God's very life. If the sacrament

> of confession is seen within the framework of ascetical practices, then it is one practice among many that can potentially realize the presence of God as gift and grace; the speaking of truth is a practice that cuts through the false projections of ego to allow the true self to emerge. (178)

If Papanikolaou is correct, then comparing those who regularly take part in confession with those who do not could make for an ideal sample and control group for studying the effects of the continual practice of self-forgiveness and perceived forgiveness from God on forgiveness toward others—another potential avenue for future research.

McConnell and Dixon's (2012) research seems to confirm the potential of this proposal. Their findings suggest that "viewing God's forgiveness in a more personal form, as opposed to a general view, relates more to self-forgiveness." We may speculate, then, that this confirms the advantage of the personal, iconic mediation of confession. However, complicating this, they continue, "Forgiveness of self and perceived forgiveness from God are perhaps intimately connected to the ability to accept and extend forgiveness" (37; cf. Webb et al. 2013). Thus, regular confession may itself help a person become more forgiving of others, but one actually needs to be open to the idea of God forgiving him or her in the first place. While one can create a virtuous circle of developing forgiveness through ascetic and liturgical practice, one may just as easily shut oneself off from giving and receiving forgiveness through a vicious circle of self-exclusion as well.

We may further augment this discussion with Elizabeth A. Gassin and Gregory J. Lengel's (2014) studies of forgiveness, grief, and continuing bonds. They studied prolonged grief and continuing bonds toward the deceased and their effects on forgiveness, distinguishing between internal or psychological continuing bonds and continuing external bonds, such as clinging to a possession of the deceased. While their results were conflicting, they note that "forgiveness (especially in its affective form) is significantly related only with a more psychological form of enduring relationship with the deceased" (473). This suggests that one's perception of the offender, even where reconciliation or further contact of any kind is impossible (in this case, in death), is a contributing factor in one's ability to forgive. They even suggest, "It may be that helping the person foster positive feelings toward the individual he lost is key in restructuring bonds with the deceased in a way that will bring healing and optimism for the future" (474; cf. Hantman & Cohen 2010).

Extending this beyond the deceased to include any offender with whom reconciliation is unavailable, we may say that the ascetic practice of watchfulness—the prayerful filtering of one's thoughts and emotions—as applied toward the passion of anger may contribute to "foster[ing] positive feelings"

toward the offender in such a way as to facilitate forgiveness.[18] In this context, we may note Abba Chæremon's recommendation, in the same conference of Cassian (1895a; cf. 1895b; 1979) quoted above, that "not anger but pity ought to be shown to those who go astray." Anger is a natural response to offence, and acknowledging that anger can be an important first step of forgiveness (Butler, Hall, & Yorgason 2013). However, it is notable that venting anger does not seem to reduce unforgiveness or, for that matter, anger itself (Eaton, Struthers, & Santelli 2006). Thus, finding healthier and more effective ways to reduce anger, such as watchfulness, is an important step in the process of forgiveness as well. If even righteous indignation can be transformed into pity through ascetic practices, such as watchfulness, this affective change may be a key contributing factor toward forgiving even the unrepentant and practicing the mercy required of love.[19]

At best, we may say that we have reason, both theoretical and empirical, to hope that continual ascetic practice may open the possibility of forgiveness for even the worst offenses, even where no prospect of reconciliation in this life is evident.

Conclusion

Scriptural mandates to forgive regardless of circumstances complicate the patristic paradigm outlined herein, requiring fluidity between the tiers of the schema. Papanikolaou (2012) points to the importance of cooperation with divine grace in one's own ascetic practice in the context of his political application of forgiveness. This returns us to the ascetic dimension of the patristic schema outlined above, in which self-denial, and thus openness toward the *energeia* of divine grace, figures prominently in the movement from fear to de-

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[18] On watchfulness in the context of cultivating forgiveness, see Huston (2008, 120-124). See also her section on guarding the heart (124-130), which is closely related and which I would include under a treatment of watchfulness. While Huston is a Camaldolese Benedictine, Orthodox readers would be interested to know that these sections explore the desert fathers, the work of Evagrius of Pontus, the practice of the Jesus Prayer, and the *Philokalia* more generally. Christian watchfulness is comparable to the Buddhist practice of mindfulness, regarding which there has been significant recent neuroscientific research. I would submit that it deserves the same level scholarly attention.

[19] While pity is more specific than empathy, it is certainly a form of it. Empathy figures strongly in discussions of forgiveness, due in part to its inclusion by Worthington (2001, esp. 62-85; cf. Worthington 2006, 74-75; Kiefer et al. 2010; Takaku 2001) as part of the REACH method of forgiveness. For possible gender differences regarding the role of empathy in forgiveness, see Hantman & Cohen (2010); Toussaint & Webb (2005); Paleari, Regalia, & Fincham (2005); Macaskill, Maltby, & Day (2002); Denton & Martin (1998).

sire to love. To deny one's self-sufficiency is to actively affirm the words of the Lord to St. Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Wenzel and Okimoto (2014) confirm the idea of compatibility and progression between justice and forgiveness but also complicate this with a preference for direct restorative justice. This, in turn, is further complicated by the risks and obstacles that stand in the way of true reconciliation between offenders and victims. Future empirical research could shed additional light on the hope that where reconciliation is unavailable, forgiveness may still be possible through the continual ascetic practice of giving and receiving forgiveness as well as recasting the offender through the transformation of anger into pity in the ascetic practice of watchfulness.

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Rule of Faith Orthodox Journal
Volume 1 — November 2019

V. S. Soloviev and the Russian Roots of Personalism

Personalist philosophy is generally understood to have emerged in the middle of the last century. But an earlier antecedent of this important school of thought has been overlooked.

by Dylan Pahman

While the importance of thinkers such as N. Berdyaev, S. L. Frank, and other Russian émigrés to the development of twentieth-century personalist philosophy is widely acknowledged,[1] one major influence on their respective religious philosophies is often ignored in discussions of their contributions to personalism: the nineteenth-century Russian Orthodox philosopher Vladimir Soloviev.[2] While Soloviev does not speak of himself as a personalist, several essential aspects of what came to be called personalism can be found in his thought: viz. the inviolable dignity of the human person, understood in terms of Kant's categorical imperative; the importance of free human action; and the relational nature of persons, advocating a middle way between atomistic individualism and collectivism.[3] Soloviev's personalism is significant not only for its incorporation of German antecedents such as Kant[4] but also for its use of insights from the Western saint Thomas Aquinas as well as from Eastern Christian sources.[5] This paper examines the three personalist aspects of his thought listed above—(1) human dignity, (2) human agency, and (3) human relationality—as he employs them in his *magnum opus* of moral philosophy, *The Justification of the Good*.[6]

Human Dignity

While Soloviev's philosophy has many differences from that of Immanuel Kant, Soloviev credits his German predecessor with being "[t]he founder of

moral philosophy *as a science*."[7] Taking a more theological stance, Soloviev formulates his own "unconditional principle of morality":

> *In complete inner harmony with the higher will and recognizing the absolute worth or significance of all other persons, since they too are in the image and likeness of God, participate, as fully as in thee lies, in the work of making thyself and everyone more perfect, so that the Kingdom of God may be finally revealed in the world.*[8]

However, when explaining what this means for our social relations, Kant's influence can be heard loud and clear:

> Pity which we feel towards a fellow-being acquires another significance when we see in that being the image and likeness of God. We then recognise the *unconditional* worth of that person; we recognise that he is an end in himself for God, and still more must be so for us. We realise that God Himself does not treat him *merely* as a means.[9]

For Soloviev, the categorical imperative comes from taking a God's-eye view of our neighbor, so-to-speak, always looking to the dignity of the human person: "I pity in that being not merely his sufferings but the cause of them—I regret that his actual reality falls so short of his true dignity and possible perfection."[10] As such, the categorical imperative cannot be fulfilled from an individualistic point of view, but requires social and even political action:

> [N]o human being can alone realise either in himself or in any one else that absolute fullness of perfection in seeking which we are likened to God.... Consequently it demands that we should take part in the collective organizations—especially in that of the state as inclusive of all the others—by means of which the historical process is, by the will of Providence, carried on.[11]

So as not to be misunderstood as overly statist, however, Soloviev clarifies, "Not every one is called to political activity or to the service of the state in the narrow sense of the term. But it is the duty of every one to serve, in his own place, that same purpose—the common good—which the state ought to serve also."[12]

We might recognize here the Thomistic claim, reflected in Catholic social teaching, that the state is "the means of promoting the common good in civil

society"[13]—a claim that, of course, must be understood in light of the principle of subsidiarity.[14] We will see below that the same is true for Soloviev as well. For now, we need only note his own grounding of the principle: "*The only moral norm is the principle of human dignity or of the absolute worth of each individual, in virtue of which society is determined as the inward and free harmony of all.*"[15] Thus, human dignity is understood as that God-given worth which requires us to limit our treatment of our neighbor and respect her freedom as a rational animal, because to do otherwise would be to treat her as a mere means to our individual ends.

Human Agency

Soloviev objects to the idea of absolute freedom as a requirement for morality. Determinism, on his account, is grounded in the principle of sufficient reason that "everything that happens … is *determined … by sufficient reasons, apart* from which it *cannot* take place, and *given* which it happens with *necessity.*"[16] He outlines three different kinds of determinism: mechanical (inorganic), psychological (irrational), and "*rationally ideal.*"[17] The last of these he affirms to be not only compatible with rational freedom but necessary for morality. The first is "exclusive of morality" and the second at best only "allows for some moral elements."[18] Minerals are bound by mechanical necessity, irrational animals by psychological. However, since animals have some power of self-determination, freedom is not sufficient for morality to Soloviev: Their actions may be regarded in moral ways—they may be ferocious or meek, brave or cowardly, but they "are not aware of these qualities as either good or bad."[19]

Human beings, conversely, are able to make such judgments. As such, moral action cannot rely on absolute freedom where, quoting Duns Scotus, "nothing except the will itself causes the act of willing in the will."[20] Rather, when it comes to moral action, such actions are determined by the good. We might say that Soloviev's moral necessity is a species of Aquinas's "necessity of end"[21] and in that sense it cannot be arbitrary or absolutely free. Indeed, for Soloviev only evil actions can be arbitrary: "When I choose the good, I do so not because of my whim but because it is good, because it has value, and I am capable of realising its significance."[22] Again, as Aquinas put it, "the good understood is the object of the will, and moves it as an end."[23] Soloviev stipulates, "A sufficient knowledge of the good in combination with a sufficient receptivity to it *necessarily* determines our will in the moral sense."[24] Under these two

conditions,

> The good determines my choice in its favour by all the infinite fulness [sic] of its positive content and reality. This choice is therefore *infinitely* determined; it is absolutely necessary, and there is no arbitrariness in it at all. In the choice of evil, on the contrary, there is no determining reason, no kind of necessity, and therefore infinite arbitrariness. The question then assumes the following form: given a full and clear knowledge of the good, can a rational being prove to be so unreceptive to it as to reject it utterly and unconditionally and choose the evil? Such lack of receptivity to the good that is perfectly known would be something absolutely irrational, and it is only an irrational act of this description that would truly come under the definition of absolute freedom or of arbitrary choice.[25]

To be morally and rationally free, to Soloviev, is to be free from the lower forms of necessity—mechanical and psychological—and bound to the ideal of the good. However, moral freedom, which Soloviev regarded as "an ethical *fact*" is not the end of his understanding of the importance of human agency. He also affirmed "political freedom" as "an ethical *postulate*."[26] To examine this, I turn to human relationality.

Human Relationality

Despite his high claims for the state elsewhere, Soloviev claims that, first and foremost, "the Church" is "the fundamental form of the moral organisation of humanity."[27] In its catholicity, the Church is the fulfillment of the moral meaning of our natural dependence upon one another:

> The individual does not find true freedom when his social environment weighs upon him as external and alien to him. Such alienation is abolished by the conception of the universal Church alone, according to which each must find in the social whole not the external limit but the inward completion of his liberty. Man *in any case* stands in need of such completion by the 'other'; for in virtue of his natural limitations he is necessarily a dependent being, and cannot by himself or alone be a sufficient ground of his own existence. Deprive a man of what he owes to others, beginning with his parents and ending with the state and world-history, and nothing will be left of his existence, let alone his freedom. It would be madness to deny this fact of inevitable dependence. Man is not strong enough and needs *help* in order that his

> freedom might be a real thing and not merely a verbal claim. But the help which man obtains *from the world* is accidental, temporal, and partial, whilst the universal Church promises him secure, eternal and all-sufficient help from God. It is with that help alone that he can be actually free, that is, have sufficient power to satisfy his will.[28]

Soloviev transitions from the role of the universal Church to the role of the state through examining the conversion of the Roman centurion Cornelius in Acts 10:

> If the centurion Cornelius, having become a real Christian, remained, nevertheless, a soldier, and was not divided into two alien and disconnected personalities, it is clear that he must have become a *Christian soldier*. A collection of such soldiers forms a Christian army. Now the army is both the extreme expression and the first real basis of the state; and if a Christian army is possible, a Christian state is therefore even more possible.[29]

Admittedly, the idea of a Christian state was far more plausible at the close of the nineteenth century than it is today. Indeed, Soloviev's own political vision assumes a monarchy with close and positive church-state relations. However, for the purpose of demonstrating his personalism, that context is irrelevant. And in any case, his insights transcend it.

As already noted, Soloviev understood human persons to be "dependent rational animals," to borrow a phrase from Alasdair MacIntyre.[30] Solidarity is a demand of morality due to our natural relation to all other human beings:

> Every single individual possesses as such the potentiality of perfection or of positive infinity, namely, the capability to understand all things with his intellect and to embrace all things with his heart, or to enter into a living communion with everything. This double infinity—the power of representation and the power of striving and activity, called in the Bible, according to the interpretation of the Fathers of the Church, the image and likeness of God—necessarily belongs to every person. It is in this that the absolute significance, dignity, and worth of human personality consist, and this is the basis of its inalienable rights. It is clear that the realisation of this infinity, or the actuality of the perfection, demands that all should participate in it. It cannot be the private possession of each *taken separately*, but becomes his through his relation to all.[31]

Our fundamental relationality is the basis for the realization of our moral development. The good of the individual cannot be fulfilled apart from the common good, and vice versa: "subordination to society uplifts the individual" and "the independence of the individual lends strength to the social order."[32]

There is a certain resonance here with the Roman Catholic articulation of subsidiarity as "a graduated order" that enables the state to "more freely, powerfully, and effectively do all those things that belong to it alone."[33] Social atomism is an idle fantasy to Soloviev:

> *isolated individuals* do not exist and therefore do not grow in perfection. The true subject of moral progress—as well as of historical progress in general—is the individual man *together with and inseparably from the collective man* or society. In other words, the relation between the true significance of the individual and the true force of society is a direct and not an inverse one.[34]

As for politics, "The order of the state is a *relatively* higher but by no means a perfect form of social life, and it therefore has only a *relative* advantage over the organisation based upon kinship."[35] The state does not abolish the primitive clan but rather transforms it into the family as we know it, which retains certain rights by virtue of natural law.[36] And the state is not the highest form of social organization: as I have already noted, for Soloviev this place is held by the spiritual communion of the Church.

Once again, in explaining the morally essential nature of human society in accordance with the categorical imperative, Soloviev reiterates what makes humanity superior to other animals, such as ants, who also have some form of society:

> The right of the person as such is based upon his human dignity inherent in him and inalienable, upon the formal infinity of reason in every human being, upon the fact that each person is unique and individual, and must therefore be an end in himself and not merely a means or an instrument.... Society, therefore, can compel a person to do something only through an act of his own will,—otherwise it will not be a case of laying an obligation upon a person, but of making use of a thing.[37]

Soloviev thus walks a careful line. While insisting on the essential dependence of the individual on society, the inherent relationality of human persons, he is careful not to lose sight of the personhood of the individual as a free rational animal in the social whole that is the basis for her moral fulfillment.

This personalist perspective has wide-reaching social-ethical implications, helping Soloviev affirm, for example, the moral good of patriotism while simultaneously and without contradiction denouncing the moral evil of nationalism.[38] The individual has a duty of piety to the nation, but the nation too must serve the common good, not only of its individual members but of the rest of the world as well. How to walk that line between globalism and nationalism, to be *of* one's country yet *for* the common good of all, is perhaps the most important question facing the world today, and Soloviev's insights, grounded in, and themselves grounding, the personalist tradition, remain as salient for our own time as they were for his.

Conclusion

By the mid-twentieth century, fifty years after Soloviev, Jacques Maritain could write of a "'personalist' current" sweeping across a wide variety of philosophical schools throughout the world. While we should remember Maritain's caution that personalism is not monolithic, we can see in Soloviev the general "phenomenon of reaction against [the] two opposite errors" of atomistic individualism and totalitarian collectivism that characterized later personalist philosophy.[39] Through his likely influence on the Russian émigré community in Paris and elsewhere,[40] and due to the clear resonance of his philosophy with the emergent personalism of the time, we are overdue to acknowledge Soloviev as a significant font of Maritain's "personalist current." Nor should his work any longer remain obscure to personalist philosophers and theologians of today.

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Notes

1. See Robert Bird, "Concepts of the Person in the Symbolist Philosophy of Viacheslav Ivanov," *Studies in East European Thought* 61, no. 2/3, The Discourse of Personality in the Russian Intellectual Tradition (August 2009): 89-96; Kristina Stöckl, "Modernity and Its Critique in 20th Century Russian Orthodox Thought," *Studies in East European Thought* 58, no. 4, Orthodox Christianity (December 2006): 243-269; Gasan Gusejnov, "The Linguistic Aporias of Alexei Losev's Mystical Personalism," *Studies in East European Thought* 61, no. 2/3, The Discourse of Personality in the Russian Intellectual Tradition (August 2009): 153-164; Philipp Fluri, "Personalism: A New/Old Trend in Postmarxist Russian Philosophy," *Theoria: An International Journal for Theory, History and Foundations of Science*, Segunda Epoca 8, no. 19 (November 1993): 149-155; Helmut Dahm, "Russian Philosophy: Traditional and Contemporary Accounts," *Studies in Soviet Thought* 22, no. 3 (August 1981): 165-173.
2. Richard Hughes, for example, makes no mention of Soloviev in his overview of Berdyaev's personalism. This is no criticism for Hughes but simply illustrative of the common trend. Richard A. Hughes, "Nikolai Berdyaev's Personalism," *International Journal of Orthodox Theology* 6, no. 3 (2015): 63-80. It should be noted herein that Russian names admit of various transliterations in Roman characters. Thus, "Soloviev," "Solov'ëv," and "Solovyov" are the same person. I here use "Soloviev" in the body of this paper because that was his own preference. See Vladimir Wozniuk, "Vladimir S. Soloviev: Moral Philosopher of Unity," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 323-329.
3. In his accessible introduction to personalism, Jonas Mortensen identifies the three fundamental values of personalism as "*Humans are relational*"; "*Humans are beings that engage*"; and "*Humans have inherent dignity.*" Jonas Norgaard Mortensen, *The Common Good: An Introduction to Personalism*, trans. Benjamin Marco Dalton (Frederiksværk, Denmark: Boedal Publishing, 2014), 16, emphasis original. I follow him herein by focusing on human dignity, action, and relationality.
4. Soloviev's German preceptors also included Leibniz and Schelling. See Randall A. Poole, "The Neo-Idealist Reception of Kant in the Moscow Psychological Society," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60, no. 2 (April 1999): 319-343.
5. Soloviev cites the Eastern Church Fathers throughout *The Justification of the Good.* On his use of Aquinas, see Vladimir's Wozniuk's notes on the last chapter

of the *Justification*: V. S. Soloviev, "The Moral Organization of Humanity as a Whole," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 339n14, 340n15.
6. All quotes from this work herein are from Vladimir Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good: An Essay in Moral Philosophy*, ed. Boris Jakim, trans. Natalie Duddington (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2005).
7. Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, lxix.
8. Ibid., 152, emphasis original.
9. Ibid., 154, emphasis original.
10. Ibid., 154.
11. Ibid., 154.
12. Ibid., 154.
13. Pope John XXIII, Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (April 11, 1963), 136, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html.
14. See Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (June 29, 2009), 67.
15. Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 231, emphasis original.
16. Ibid., 12, emphasis original.
17. Ibid., 12, emphasis original.
18. Ibid., 12.
19. Ibid., 14.
20. Ibid., 16.
21. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ* Ia 82.1.
22. Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 18.
23. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ* Ia 82.4.
24. Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 18, emphasis original.
25. Ibid., 18.
26. Ibid., 18n-19n, emphasis original.
27. Ibid., 373.
28. Ibid., 373, emphasis original.
29. Ibid., 380.
30. See Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (Chicago and La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1999).
31. Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 176-177, emphasis original.
32. Ibid., 180.
33. Pope Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Quadrigesimo Anno* (May 15, 1931), 80.
34. Solovyov, *The Justification of the Good*, 352, emphasis original.
35. Ibid., 185-186.
36. See ibid., 185-190.

37. Ibid., 229.
38. See ibid., 239-258. See also, Greg Gaut, "Can a Christian be a Nationalist? Vladimir Solov'ev's Critique of Nationalism," *Slavic Review* 57, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 77-94.
39. Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good*, trans. John J. Fitzgerald (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1946), 12.
40. I look forward to future scholarship indicating the precise character of Soloviev's influence on Berdyaev, Frank, et. al.