

# CHRISTIAN ORTHODOXY IN THE MODERN WORLD

BY REV. PROF. VITALY BOROVOY

1. It was with some tormenting anxiety and with a heavy heart that I set about formulating my thoughts and convictions concerning the third theme of the Third Academic Orthodox-Jewish Meeting in Athens. First of all, such an assignment was very unexpected for me. Last year when the meeting was being planned, and the themes were offered for a free choice, I was willing to speak on the "Faithfulness to the Roots and Commitment toward the Future." Secondly, it so happened that I was away in Geneva doing some research in the archives of the World Council of Churches, and when my hierarchical authorities assigned me this task I found myself very much pressed for time (actually I had only a few days). Of course, I am not a novice in the Christian-Jewish dialogue, nor in any other ecumenical dialogue, having participated in many, either on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church or as a member of delegations from the World Council of Churches. This time, however, I was not sure if I would be able at such short notice to make a useful contribution to our meeting on so complex and difficult a theme.

Both components of the theme — Orthodoxy and Judaism — historically speaking are complex and multi-faceted concepts and phenomena, but all the more so as they reveal themselves in the modern world. Orthodoxy is one in its doctrine and historical tradition, but in the modern world Orthodoxy culturally, ethnically and historically is lived out through many independent autocephalous local churches, all living and serving both God and people in different political and social structures. Hence, the diversity of forms for expressing and understanding

their attitude to different conditions of their historical existence in the modern world.

The present-day Judaism is no less complex and multi-faceted in its structure and no less diverse are the components implied in this concept as well as the spheres, forms and methods of its expression and manifestation in the modern world. It is not only a religion, founded on the Bible (Torah), but also a whole system of beliefs, prescriptions and rules of individual, family and communal morality, of worship gatherings in synagogues and of daily practice of piety, of traditional feasts and customs, which were developed in post-biblical time in the Talmud, in the teaching of rabbis and their schools, in the mystical philosophy and symbolism of Kabbalah, in the metaphysical depths of pietism of Hassids. Besides all those aspects of traditional Judaism, present-day Judaism is both Reformed and Liberal Judaism, and the secular emancipated Judaism of Western and Soviet types too.

It is precisely this diversity of the historical manifestation of modern Orthodoxy and modern Judaism that perplexed me. Will I succeed in presenting them both as organically integral paradigms of the modern world in its historical diversity? Then I remembered that no such hesitations ever visited the fathers and pioneers of the ecumenical movements, that the Christian-Jewish dialogue has been successfully maintained for many decades now, beginning with the International Missionary Council's Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews and the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam (1948). I remembered that the Catholic Church has been involved in the dialogue with the Jews for over twenty-five years, since "Nostra Aetate" of Vatican II (1965); while the Orthodox Churches have been involved since 1972, when the First Colloquium on Greek Orthodox-Jewish Relations was held in New York, followed by the First Academic Orthodox-Jewish Meeting in Lucerne in 1977, on the initiative of Metropolitan Damaskinos.

My doubts were totally dispelled when I gave more attention to the main theme of our present meeting — "Continuity and Renewal." It implies that my report should be presented from the perspective of "Continuity and Renewal" of Orthodoxy and Judaism in the modern world. This very fact makes the topic of the present session both understandable and relevant and therefore meaningful for both sides in the meeting — the Orthodox and the Jews.

Both Orthodox and Jews believe that the truth of the Holy Scriptures revealed by God underlies their respective faiths and is preserved within the Holy Tradition in its integrity and continuity. Both Orthodoxy and Judaism, confronted by the challenges and demands of the modern world, need constant renewal: the renewal of inner life, the renewal of

relationships with the external world, and so also the renewal of the interrelations between them.

Any renewal to be real calls for repentance of the past sins, calls for courage to undertake persistent, hard and painful efforts for doing away with the blight and metastases of the pathological development of the socio-political and national structures of the modern world, in which the faithful Orthodox and faithful Jews had to serve God and people. And finally, a genuine renewal demands not only a strong will to change for the better, it also calls for wisdom, prudent consistency and a clear and concrete vision of the goal and methods for developing new relations, so that unwarranted and unreasonable radicalism in the renewing process should not be detrimental to the foundations of our faithfulness, integrity and continuity with regard to the truth of the Holy Scriptures and Holy Tradition revealed by God.

Today, both Orthodox and Jews urgently need the purifying process of repentance and renewal. We all — Orthodox and Jews alike — have much to repent of, to renew and to improve. Certainly, because of a different historical fate and development, our historical sins are different, and our urgency for renewal and improvement is to take different forms and be realized in different spheres of our social and personal life. Such closeness between the principle of continuity and the urgency for renewal and repentance should, to my mind, be the pivot for our discussion and a basis for our further relationships.

2. The belief in God's Revelation as it is presented in the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, shared both by the Orthodox and by the Jews, is a connecting link in the common roots of our respective religious traditions, which later, because of the tragic historical development of the New-Testamental Israel, were doomed to go apart and follow different ways in separation taking the forms of Christianity and of Judaism, as these are perceived now in the pluralistic world of different religions, ideologies and world-views. For all of us this is a real tragedy, in which the mysterious will of God is being accomplished. Its providential implication is concealed from us within our present history. However, this is a tragedy for which both sides — the Orthodox and the Jews — share a guilt. Controversies arise on both sides around this tragedy which led to further alienation and confrontation. Among controversial issues, on the one hand, are accusations of antisemitism brought up against us, and on the other, exaggerated fears of Jewish influence and power. Both these matters entailing mutual accusations and suspicions are equally destructive and harmful for us all. Mutual realization of this fact will help us to focus our dialogue not on what divides us but on what we share in common.

This is what is required by belief in the God of love and peace (2 Cor. 13:11), in the God of our fathers, who presented Himself to Moses, the man with whom He was pleased, in the Burning Bush (in the flame of fire out of the midst of a bush) and said: "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:6). He is the One Who is Being (YHWH), God and Father of all, and we all are brothers for we all are His children of His old covenant on Sinai, which we Orthodox believe has been renewed by Christ, like the covenant of Sinai (Ex. 24:8) by the blood of the New Covenant, the Eternal Covenant.

These two covenants are stages of one and the same religion revealed by God, "two manifestations of one and the same 'God-human process.' During this process of God's covenanting with man, Israel became God's chosen people to whom laws and prophets were entrusted and through whom the Incarnate Son of God received his humanity from the Most Pure Virgin Mary."<sup>1</sup>

Already the apostle Peter was calling upon the followers of Christ to be "always prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence" (1 Pet. 3:15). We Orthodox Christians have but one answer about our hope. This is Christ. Faith in Christ, as God and Savior, is the key to our understanding of the history of the Jewish people at the time of the Old Testament and in the course of consequent development of modern Judaism. Historically, we came from the Old Testament, from the Old Testamental Judaism, hence there is the closest relation between the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament (with its Sinai law and prophets, who heralded the coming to the world of the Savior Messiah from the root of David) was, according to the Holy Scriptures, "our custodian until Christ came" (Gal. 3:24). Christ Himself said that He came to the world not to abolish the law but to fulfill it, and that "not an iota will pass from the law until all is accomplished" (Matt. 5:17-18; cf. Luke 16:17). He also said to a Samaritan woman that "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). The entire preaching of apostles about Christ and the proclamation of the early Christians were founded on the Old Testament. "And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus" (Acts 13:32-33). We are preaching to you, said the apostles, "testifying both to small and to great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said" (Acts 26:22).

3. This particular understanding of the origin, predestination and significance of the Old Testament is clearly expressed in all doctrinal

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1. Archpriest S. Bulgakov, *Christianity and the Jewish Question*, YMCA Press, Paris 1991, *Persecution against Israel*, p. 17.

monuments of the Early Church, in the works and comments to the Holy Scriptures by the holy fathers and teachers of the patristic period, as for example in the *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* by Saint Justin the Philosopher, in the *Against Heresies* by Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, in the works by apologists Aristides and Athenagoras and others, in the comments by Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Basil the Great, Saint Ephraem Syrus, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrose of Milan, Saint Theodoret of Cyrus, Saint Theophylact and other holy fathers of early Christianity. Let us refer, for example, to Saint John Chrysostom. He is very clear in his teaching about the unity and close relation of Old and New Testaments. "Both Testaments have one Lawgiver ... the Testaments differ by name, but there is no contradiction or opposition between them" (vol. III, p. 288). "Apostle Paul reveals to us a great mystery, namely, that both the Old and New Testaments come from one and the same Spirit, that one and the same Spirit speaks in the first and in the second one" (Homily on Psalm 115, with comment on Rom. 4:20-21, vol. V, p. 346). "The two Testaments are sisters born of one Father..." (vol. VI, p. 736-737). "God extends His special care for the people whom He called His own people and legatee" (Homily on Psalm 146, vol. V, p. 536).

This is the teaching of Saint John Chrysostom, the interpreter of the Holy Scriptures and of the teaching of the Church of Christ. This has always been the teaching of the Russian Orthodox Church in full agreement with the faith of the entire Orthodox Plenitude. The eminent hierarch of our church, Archbishop Nikolay (Ziorov) of Warsaw, was speaking in the same spirit of Saint John Chrysostom, when addressing the Jews in 1911, he said: "Your law (i.e., Old Testament) is our law too; your prophets (i.e., the prophets of the Old Testament) are our prophets too."<sup>2</sup> In the same spirit, another eminent hierarch of our Church, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volyn, in condemning the cruelty of the Kishinev pogrom (1903), referred to the Jews, victims of the pogrom, as people "loved by God."

Western fathers and teachers teach about the unity of the Old and New Testaments in the same way. Saint Augustine, for example, says, that the Old Testament sounds like "a harmonious lyre — about the name and reigning of Jesus Christ," while Saint Ambrose of Milan writes: "The Cup of Wisdom is a double cup of the Old and New Testaments. Drink from them, because from them both you are drinking Christ. Drink Christ, because he is the source of life." No doubt, in most cases the Early Church and the holy fathers were not interested in the Old Testament as such, inasmuch as in the first place they saw it as a "custodian

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2. *Warsaw Talks and Speeches*, vol. III. Sab., 1911.

until Christ came." Their approach to the Old Testament was defined by apologetic tasks, which emerged in the days of early Christianity, as well as by the soteriological value of the Old Testamental theology for their polemics with the Jews who had not received Christ.

Thus, for instance, Saint John Chrysostom strongly reproved his contemporaries among the Antiochian Jews and "judaizing" Christians, who continued to observe Jewish feasts and fasts and were still attending worships in synagogues (*Eight Orations against Jews*, vol. I, Book 1, pp. 644-759). The holy father was not motivated by enmity but by his pastoral care for the wavering Christian neophytes who were still under the influence of Judaeo-Christianity and synagogue. All this was not against the unity and kinship of the Old and New Testaments. The father always defended the Old Testament as the Word of God's Revelation — the Holy Scriptures. So, also, in the "The First Oration against the Jews," Saint John Chrysostom clearly warns: "I am not speaking about the Scriptures" (i.e., not against the Old Testament) "no, for the Scriptures have brought me to Christ" (vol. I, p. 656).

The fathers were drawing attention to the messianic content and implication of the Old Testament. This side of the patristic teaching is very important to us. However, it is likewise important to remember the *Consensus patrum*, that is the general agreement of the teaching of the fathers, without raising any single one of them to the dignity of the tradition of the Church, without referring to individual formulations and comments outside their context, for, as a rule, they were meant for a definite historical event, person or group. The Orthodox Church always refused to canonize or announce as prevailing theological opinions and "theologoumena" anything that is merely grounded in "excerpts" from the Holy Scriptures or from the works of the holy fathers outside their concrete context and deep conformity with the interpretation and understanding of the issues raised in them by the Holy Tradition, which is a conciliar conscience and charismatic memory of the Church. The Church is able to discern qualitatively between the dogma of the faith and "individual theological opinions."

Ecclesial creative work, liturgical and iconographic, exceptionally rich in content and filled with the Old-Testamental holiness and prophesy and very much loved by our people, is very helpful for our correct understanding of the Old Testament, and therefore ensures our correct attitude to the Jewish people as the people of the Old Testament. This corresponds to the way in which the Old Testament is treated in the Church. The Old Testament is not only interpreted by exegetes and theologians, but it is also read during the divine services and is an organic part of our liturgical practice and doctrine. The divine service, as it is wonderfully presented by Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)

and his entire school, is a prayerful living through the truths of the Revelation in its New-Testamental fullness and in its Old-Testamental prototype, as the liturgical theology takes off the cover of "foretasting and obliteration" from the Old Testament with regard to God's promises, thanks to the coming of the Messiah Christ as the Savior and the "pioneer and perfecter of our faith" who has done it by his blood of the new and eternal covenant (cf. Luke 22:20; Heb. 12:24; 13:20).

4. So we see the Christian faith and the teaching of the Orthodox Church, as based on the Holy Scriptures and on the Holy Tradition, on the agreed teaching of the Fathers of the Church, and on the liturgical use of the Old Testament, establish close relationship and unity of the two Testaments which compose the "one body of the Truth" (Ephraem Syrus), while seeing in the Old Testament only a preparatory stage to the fullness of the New Testament revelations, but underlining the messianic orientation of the Old Testament to the New Testament. The New Testament is the "fulfillment of the law and prophets" by the blood of the eternal covenant of our Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:20). We believe in him as the Messiah, the Savior, promised by God who came to this world. According to the apostles "We have found the Messiah (which means Christ)" (John 1:41). The followers of Christ, having believed in his name, since the apostolic time have understood themselves as the new people of the New Testament, as the "New Israel" and legatee of God's promises of the Old and New Testaments (Tertullian, *Against the Jews*, 1, 13). "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Early Christianity, after emerging from the Judeo-Christian period, termed itself "the third race," a new people, distinct from the Graeco-Roman paganism and Jewish Judaism, "people of the future" or "people of the eternity," "a new Israel," "the true Israel," direct and immediate heir of all divine and prophetic promises of the Old and New Testaments. Saint Justin, philosopher and martyr, said in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*: "Those who have followed and will follow Christ are the true Israel, the children of the promise, the true successors of those Jews who found justification in times past ... We are the true spiritual Israelite nation and the race of Judah, and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham."<sup>3</sup> Such self-understanding of Christians as the true and new people of God after the rejection of the Messiah-Christ by the Jews preconditioned the nature of the attitude to the people of the Old Testament as to a separate development of Judaism (not of the Old Testament) in all its later forms (Talmudism, Kabbalah, Hassidism and modern secularized reformed liberal Judaism).

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3. *Dialogue* 17:27, 16: 1-4.

Our attitude to the modern Judaism is based on the theological and philosophical-historical vision of the final fortunes of Israel which had not received Christ, as it was exposed in chapters nine, ten and eleven of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans and as it was understood by the Holy Fathers and Doctors of our Church. A well-known Russian theologian and liturgist, V. N. Ilyin, made the following comments to these chapters:

First of all, it should be noted that these chapters leave no foundation whatsoever for any antisemitism in all its forms. But at the same time, these texts show the ideal theological-ontological meaning of "Israelity" as a certain ontological category and thus elucidate a possibility of the empirical Israel to be taken out from this category: "For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel" (Rom. 9:6). Thus an irate prophecy of Saint John the Baptist cried out in the wilderness is proved: "Bear fruits that befit repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham" (Luke 3:8). Christ has come to raise up children to Abraham from the "stones of paganism" ("all nations"), thus establishing the true Kingdom of Israel in the whole world — the Heavenly Zion the new Jerusalem — the Church.<sup>4</sup>

From its very inception, the Church has always prayed for Israel to be saved (cf. Rom. 10:1) and believed that the Gospel leaven would perform a miracle one day and, according to Saint Paul, "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26), for "if the dough offered as first fruits is holy, so is the whole lump; and if the root is holy, so are the branches" (Rom. 11:16).<sup>5</sup> It was for this that the great apostle and teacher of Christianity prayed. Saint Paul himself was a son of the Jewish people, he loved them and worried for their destiny: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1). Thus, the apostle Paul cannot contemplate the end of salvation history without the salvation of the Jews (Rom. 11:25-32). For Paul, the Jews are in a paradoxical situation. They are elect, yet disobedient with respect to the faith in Christ. These Jews are for him in a state of disobedience and Israel's election is presently, as Eckardt correctly notes, a "non-functioning election."<sup>6</sup>

Such teaching of Saint Paul on the soteriological meaning of the mystery of the rejection of the New Testament Messiah-Christ by the Old Testament Israel points to the incompleteness and incompletion of

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4. V. N. Ilyin, "Christ and Israel," *Put*, No. 11, June 1928, pp. 67-68.

5. V. V. Ilyin, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

6. A. Roy Eckardt, *Elder and Younger Brothers*, Scribners, 1967, p. 58; cf. *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Vol. 22, p. 517, 1977, and the agreement of our Prof. Stylianopoulos, *ibid.*, p. 77.



our Christianity. Christianity, though being an expression of the fullness of the truth of the Old and New Testaments revealed by God, historically cannot consider itself the fullness of the accomplishment of divine economy for the salvation of people, since the Old Testament people had not received the New Testament and therefore a historical vocation of Christianity is incomplete, as the fullness of its accomplishment by Christianity also includes the reception of the New Testament Messiah-Christ by the Old Testament people. It means that the ideal fullness of Christianity should include Judaism which received Christ.

This idea, which reflected aspirations and prayers of the Church for the fulfillment of the unity of both Testaments in the fullness of Christianity, was expressed by a theologian, a preacher, of the nineteenth century, a well-known hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Nikanor Brovkovich of Kherson and Odessa. He said in one of his homilies delivered in Odessa that the fullness of Christianity should include the Old Testament Judaism, while the fullness of the Old Testament Judaism would become the fullness of truth only when it becomes Christian.<sup>7</sup> Such self-consciousness of Christians should completely exclude any antisemitism, any wish to belittle the meaning of the Old Testament for the fullness of the salvation of people proclaimed in the New Testament.

The Church has resolutely condemned and rejected Marcion and his notion that the God of the New Testament could not be identical with the God of the Old Testament. The Church has not included an epistle ascribed to the apostle Barnabas (an early monument of the Church of the time of the Apostolic Fathers, the early second century), which may be found in some early codices and was known to Clement of Alexandria and Origen, into the set of canonical books recognized as the apostolic ones, on account of its anti-Judaic treatment of the understanding of the Old Testament. There are some pronouncements in this epistle which are at variance with the apostolic teaching and directed against general Christian traditional treatment of the Old Testament, such as "God makes us understand not to apply to the Jewish law," or, "Do not say that there is the Jewish law, as there is our law." Such pronouncements are in a glaring contradiction with the whole teaching of the Early Apostolic Church and especially with the teaching of the apostle Paul expressed in his letter to the Romans (chapters 9, 10 and 11).

5. The correct Christian attitude to the Old Testament people is incompatible with enmity and condemnation. On the contrary, a Christian understanding of the interrelations of the Old and New Testaments, between Christians and Jews, demands a profound, thoughtful and ob-

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7. *Orthodox Review*, 1884.

jective comprehension and re-interpretation of the post-New Testament development of the religious and spiritual life of the Jewish people as well as a willingness to overcome the medieval and folklore stereotyped patterns in this regard. Such an understanding inevitably leads to a patient and fraternal dialogue with the modern Judaism which has exerted a considerable influence on many aspects of history and life of contemporary humanity. This dialogue should be conducted in the spirit of love, prayer and hope.

There were numerous examples of such a dialogue and of a willingness to pursue it even in the nineteenth century. Here we should recall Bishop Khrisanf Retivtsev of Nizhny Novgorod, an ardent supporter of the dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Jews;<sup>8</sup> Archimandrite Chrystophor, Rector of the Kremenets Theological Seminary in Volyn, and many other hierarchs, pastors and theologians. Proceeding from such dogmatic and theological convictions, hierarchs, clergy and theologians of our Church resolutely and openly condemned any manifestations of antisemitism, enmity toward Jews and pogroms. An example: Archbishop Anthony Khrapovitsky of Volyn denounced the pogrom in Kishinev (1903) publicly and wrote that those cruel murderers from Kishinev must know that they dared to act contrary to Divine Providence, that they became executioners of the people loved by God.

During the well-known Beilis trial, experts from our Church (Prof.-Archpriest Alexander Glagolev of the Kiev Theological Academy and Prof. Ivan Egorovich Troitsky of the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy) firmly defended Beilis and spoke resolutely against the accusations of Jews in ritual murders.<sup>9</sup> Much was done for the defense of Jews from the antisemitic attacks on the part of the extreme radical right-wing organizations by Metropolitan Anthony Vadkovsky of Saint Petersburg. Many other hierarchs and theologians of our Church courageously defended Jews from enmity and accusations on the part of the extreme right antisemitic circles. Among them I can name Metropolitan Makary Bulgakov,<sup>10</sup> Bishop Donat Babinsky of Grodno,<sup>11</sup> Bishop Vissarion Nechaev<sup>12</sup> and Archbishop Makary Miroljubov.<sup>13</sup>

I have also to mention many of our theologians and outstanding religious thinkers, such as Vladimir Soloviev, Nicholas Berdyaev and Father Sergy Bulgakov, who defended Jews against any kind of antisemitism. Soloviev considered the defense of Jews on the basis of Chris-

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8. *Transactions of the Kiev Theological Academy*, September 1861, pp. 1-2.

9. *The Case of Beilis*, stenographic report, Odessa, 1913.

10. *Moscow Church Gazette*, 1881, No. 21.

11. *Addresses and Speeches*, Grodno, 1822, p. 83.

12. *Edifying Readings*, Moscow, 1881, No. 7.

13. *Addresses and Speeches*, Vyatka, 1886; "Russian Jews," Odessa, 1884, No. 25.

tian views as one of the major tasks of his life. For him, the Jewish question was not about whether Jews were good or bad, but about whether Christians were good or bad.<sup>14</sup> Berdyaev continued Soloviev's work in Paris,<sup>15</sup> as well as Father Sergy Bulgakov in his articles "Persecution of Israel," "On Racism" and in the system of his dogmatical trilogy.<sup>16</sup>

A lot was done for the Christian-Jewish dialogue and rapprochement by our famous religious thinkers and philosophers S. L. Frank and L. Shestov, Jews by origin. Participating in this noble work were not only our distinguished hierarchs and theologians. Many priests actively defended Jews and saved them from pogroms. During the Second World War and Nazi occupation, clergy and laity of our Church saved Jews and gave them shelter risking their own neck. Classic examples are Mother Mary Skobtsova, Father Dimitri Klepinin, Father Alexy Glagolev and many others. We all should know about their exploits and write about their sacrificial ministry to their Jewish brothers and sisters for the sake of their salvation. The army of our country, in the struggle against Hitler's Germany, defeated Nazism at the cost of over 20 million lives and liberated the occupied countries of the Eastern, Central, South-Eastern and partly Western Europe, thus interrupting the "final solution of the Jewish question" which was planned and cruelly executed by the Nazis on those territories. Jews were saved from total annihilation.

6. After the Second World War our Church began to set up its relations, co-operation and dialogues with all the Christian world and with many international non-Christian religious organizations and associations, including the Jewish ones. On the international level we realized it through the World Council of Churches by an active participation in the work of its Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, while on the regional and local levels it was done through the Conference of Churches and Religious Associations in the U.S.S.R. held in Moscow and through the two major international conferences of representatives of Christian churches and non-Christian world religions also held in Moscow.

At these conferences we resolutely denounced militarism, racism and antisemitism. We came forward for reconciliation, dialogue and co-operation between all people of good will. Unfortunately, one can see manifestations of antisemitic trends now, as our society faces a difficult time of crisis, disintegration and rise of nationalistic isolation and ethnic chauvinism in our life. The socio-political breeding-ground for their

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14. See his works, "The Jews and the Christian Question," 1884, and "The New Testament Israel," 1885, in vol. 4, *The Collected Works*, pp. 138-185, 207-221.

15. "Christianity and Antisemitism," *Put*, No. 56, May-June 1938, pp. 3-18.

16. See L. A. Zander, "God and the World," Father Sergy Bulgakov's *Philosophy*, in vol. III, Paris, 1948, pp. 429-434.

rise and spreading is to be found among extremists of the radical right-wing chauvinistic groups. The task of the Russian Orthodox Church is to help our people overcome the sin of ethnic enmity and narrow selfish chauvinism. This chauvinism shows itself in the antisemitism that selectively and at will manipulates the so-called "historical, political and economic arguments" and through the groundless and distorted generalizations incites people dispirited by the hardships of life or disintegrated elements in the society against other social and national groups. It stirs up emotions and a sense of grudge against them, including the Jews who often live better and in a more united and friendly manner. This social economical antisemitism is engendered by the vices of the social development of our society. It could be eliminated only through patient education and the introduction of democratic and legal norms of social communal life of people. The Church should help this process with all means available to exert its pastoral influence.

Along with a social, "everyday" antisemitism one can see manifestations of an ideological antisemitism based on the distorted interpretation of history and political developments at the time of the revolution and in the post-revolutionary period of the Russian history. There exist various kinds of understanding of our revolution and the subsequent tragedies. Different assessments are offered regarding the role and meaning of different parties and their leaders, revolutionary groups and individual revolutionaries. Yet, any exaggeration of a national element in history and special emphasis on the nationality of revolutionaries, as if the Jews (or any other nation) were particularly responsible for what happened, are consequences of the one-sided approach and treatment of history.

One may and must expose crimes, terror and horrors of those hard and brutal times. One may and must denounce those who committed crimes irrespective of their political convictions and nationality. But to generalize from crimes and cruelties committed in the years of the revolution, civil war and the decades which followed, to transfer the responsibility from individuals to the nationalities to which those individuals belonged, to arouse enmity and hatred against whole national groups, is to commit sin which is reproved by the very essence of Christian faith.

It is even more dangerous now, at the tragic period of profound crisis in Eastern Europe, the crisis which is fraught with possible social and national outbursts. At this troubled time the Church applies to all people of good will with a salutary exhortation, saying that in the New Testament "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11). "For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken

down the dividing wall of hostility ... thereby bringing the hostility to an end ... in his flesh" (Eph. 2:14-16). It is to all of us that the words of Saint Paul are addressed: "Put off your old nature which belongs to your former manner of life ... put on the new nature ... putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:22-25, 31-32). We should treat one another with these feelings of love and mutual understanding also in the matter of our relations in the modern world, and the God of peace and love, the God of our fathers will be with us.

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