

## On the Last Bastions of Real Orthodoxy

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

(Matt. 7, 9)



В ДЕНЬ ОТДАНИЯ РОЖДЕСТВА  
ПРЕСВЯТОЙ БОГОРОДИЦЫ ОТ  
КОРЕННОЙ ПУСТЫНИ ДО  
ЗНАМЕНСКОГО КАФЕДРАЛЬНОГО  
СОБОРА ПРОШЕЛ МНОГОЛЮДНЫЙ  
КРЕСТНЫЙ ХОД С  
КУРСКО-КОРЕННОЙ ИКОНОЙ  
БОЖИЕЙ МАТЕРИ

Decadence of belief has direct consequences in daily life. Thus, when Roman Catholic errors were developed in the eleventh century, there followed waves of violent persecutions, invasions, wars, the Crusades, the Inquisition. Indeed, whole books chronicling this have been written, for example the 1987 work of the scholar R. I. Moore, called 'The Formation of a Persecuting Society, 950-1250' or his 'Anti-Semitism and the Birth of Europe' (1992).

Similarly, in the sixteenth century, the development of Protestantism resulted in the loss of prayer and ascetic life, the loss of spiritual understanding and so in any sacramental sense of

man and nature. This led directly to the destruction of monasteries and their secularisation, witch-hunts, persecutions, 'religious' wars, Reformation and Counter-Reformation, industrialisation and colonisation, the exploitation of Non-Western peoples and the rape of their lands. This indicated a lack of principles and integrity, a loss of conscience, the inability to hear the voice of God, the desire only to attend to the material wants of man.

The third and last phase of this spiritual decadence is in humanist secularisation, also known as modernisation. This movement began over a hundred years ago at the beginning of the last century, which rejected God and put sinful, fallen man at the centre of the world. The direct consequences of this anti-civilisation were two World Wars, continual local conflicts, then mass abortion, euthanasia and the whole modern culture of death and suicide. And so most of the remaining Orthodox vestiges and liturgical heritage of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism were largely destroyed in its wake.

However, because this third phase of decadence was global, it also affected the Orthodox world. In 1917 it brought down the last Orthodox Empire. It then attacked the soft underbelly of the Orthodox world, then under British and, after 1945, under American domination. This underbelly was and is in Istanbul, the Middle East, Cyprus, Greece, but now is spreading to Romania and Bulgaria. This decadence is also trying to infiltrate the Orthodox world through Macedonia, Montenegro and the Ukraine, in countless, nationalist schisms funded and orchestrated from North America and Western Europe, according to the old dictum, 'divide and rule'. But nowhere are the results of this spiritual decadence so visible as among fringe Orthodox groups in Western Europe and North America.

When and where did the fundamentally masonic delusions of this third phase of spiritual decadence first appear in the Orthodox Church? They first appeared at the turn of the twentieth century, even before 1914 and 1917, and in St Petersburg. They were linked firstly to the hallucinations of the alcoholic philosopher Vladimir Soloviov, but affected large numbers of the decadent intellectual-aristocratic society. They were also linked with theosophy and occultism, as can be heard in the music of Stravinsky (his 'Rite of Spring' is a hymn to neo-paganism) and the occultist composer Scriabin. These were among those responsible for the bourgeois revolution of March 1917. After the Bolshevik coup d'état in October 1917, these spiritual delusions were taken by the gurus of the infected parts of the Russian emigration to Helsinki and Paris. From here, other self-important 'personalities' took them to other parts of Western Europe, to Belgium, Holland and England, and then, after 1945, to North America.

The clear signs of modernism in the Orthodox world are:

The introduction of the Roman Catholic ('new') calendar; the refusal to celebrate services regularly or fully; the introduction of seating into Orthodox churches and sitting during all services; the abolition of confession before communion; the reading aloud of secret prayers of the Divine Liturgy and the serving of the whole Divine Liturgy with the holy doors open; the replacement of litanies and prayers of the Divine Liturgy with sentimental texts and personal prayers; the refusal to read the last part of the prayer before communion, 'Not unto judgement, nor unto condemnation...'; the rejection of any image of judgement and hell; the attempt to reinstate the heretic Origen; the attempt to alter the Holy Week services by censoring passages, which quoting the Gospels mention the fateful role of the Jews in the Crucifixion; the refusal to call homosexual practice a sin and condemn abortion as a holocaust (because these sins are widespread among modernists); the replacement of theology by philosophy, of the Gospels by Berdiaev and Bulgakov, of the heart by the head.

In other words, the modernists, so many of whom came from aristocratic families, suffer from intellectualisation and with it intellectual snobbery. ‘We will not mix with the peasants’, as they used to say in Oxford and London. Thus, their refusal to give blessings to Orthodox who use the ‘old’ calendar.

Thus, three falls or stages of spiritual decadence have taken place in Christendom in the last thousand years. They are: Catholicisation or Uniatisation; Protestantisation or Desacralisation; Modernisation or Secularisation.

In the face of the reality of such spiritual decadence, some may think of the end of the world, when there will no longer be any more normal Orthodox churches. Thank God we are not there yet. There are still bastions of spiritual strength, in Serbia, in Georgia, in Jerusalem, on Mt Athos, in the monasteries of Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, and in Russia.

Above and below these lines are very recent images of the real thing, real Orthodoxy. They do not show the modernised and degouted fringe Orthodoxy, salt that has lost its savour, of heartless intellectuals who tire us with their boring and spiritually empty theories. Give us bread, not stones! The pictures were taken last week in the provincial city of Kursk, the hometown of St Seraphim of Sarov, on the visit of the Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God to that holy place.

Most Holy Mother of God, save us!

