Evgenii Trubetskoi

Icon and Philosophy

EDITED BY

Teresa Obolevitch

AND

Randall A. Poole

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EVGENII TRUBETSKOI
Icon and Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

Evgenii Trubetskoi

Icon of Russian Philosophy

Randall A. Poole

Evgenii Trubetskoi (1863–1920) exemplified what is best in Russia's religious-philosophical tradition. That tradition began with the Slavophiles Ivan Kireevskii (1806–1856) and Alexei Khomiakov (1804–1860). Trubetskoi embraced their understanding of religious experience, their holistic or integral conception of human nature, and their conviction in the necessity of both faith and reason in the pursuit of truth. His own religious experience inspired his seminal studies of the Russian icon—and they, in turn, inspired the icon studies which form the second part of this book. In the 1880s he was drawn to the Slavophile idealization of Russia, to the "messianic dream of the realization of the kingdom of God on earth through Russia,"[1] but he came to reject it in favor of Christian universalism, while always maintaining his deep personal faith in Orthodoxy.

Trubetskoi's commitment to certain aspects of Slavophilism (its theoretical philosophy) and rejection of others (its social philosophy) helped determine his relation to the two greatest philosophers of nineteenth-century Russia: Boris Chicherin (1828–1904) and Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900), both metaphysical idealists and pillars of the Russian religious-philosophical tradition. Chicherin is widely regarded as the country's preeminent liberal philosopher, and Soloviev as its most important religious philosopher. Trubetskoi combined elements of their thought in his own philosophical worldview. From Chicherin he took the paramount liberal principles of human freedom and dignity, freedom of conscience,

1. Trubetskoi, *Vospominaniia*, 193.

and the rule of law. From Soloviev, to whom he was much closer personally and philosophically, he took the concept of *Bogochelovechestvo* (divine humanity or Godmanhood)—the free human realization of the divine principle in ourselves and in the world (deification)—and found in it the very meaning of life. He used each philosopher to balance the excesses of the other: He accepted Chicherin's view that Soloviev's social ideal of "free theocracy" was dangerously illiberal, while he thought Soloviev's Slavophile-inspired concept of "integral knowledge" offered a much richer account of the full range and depth of human experience than Chicherin's abstract Hegelian rationalism. Integral knowledge became Trubetskoi's lifelong pursuit, the unifying framework for his own powerful, multifarious experience of reality and for his philosophical work—in short, for the synthesis of faith and reason to which he aspired.[2]

From Nihilism to Integral Knowledge

Prince Evgenii Trubetskoi came from one of Russia's most illustrious aristocratic families.[3] One of his brothers, Sergei (1862–1905), was also a major philosopher, disciple of Soloviev, public figure and liberal, and Moscow University professor (serving as the university's first elected rector in the twenty-seven days before his untimely death on September 29).[4] Another brother, Grigorii (1873–1930), was an influential diplomat.[5] The Trubetskoi family was very religious, but in their youth Sergei and Evgenii suffered a loss of faith and experienced a brief "nihilistic period," as Evgenii called it in his fascinating memoirs.[6] The brothers attended gymnasium together, first in Moscow (1874–1877) and then in Kaluga (1877–1881, for their fifth through eighth years of study). As sixth-year gymnasium students (fifteen and sixteen years old, respectively) they were convinced that the natural sciences were the only way to truth (44). Evgenii records that his first doubts about his religious faith arose a year earlier under the influence of Vissarion Belinskii, and then were confirmed by his reading of Henry Thomas Buckle, Auguste Comte, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, and Charles Darwin

2. For an expert exposition of his philosophical and legal views, see Evlampiev, "Filosofskie." See also Osipov, *Filosofiia russkogo liberalizma*, 116–24. For a valuable collection of essays, see Polovinkin and Shchedrina, *Evgenii Nikolaevich Trubetskoi*.

3. For a succinct, valuable study of his life and thought, see Polovinkin, *Kniaz' E. N. Trubetskoi*.

4. Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Sergei N. Trubetskoi*. Ermishin, *Kniaz' S. N. Trubetskoi*.

5. G. Trubetskoi, *Notes*.

6. Trubetskoi, *Vospominaniia*, 43. Subsequent page references to this source cited parenthetically.

(46, 56). His enthusiasm for "Anglo-French positivism" (which in Spencer took the form of a "purely mechanistic worldview") did not last long (57). In the course of their next (seventh) year of gymnasium study, the Trubetskoi brothers turned to the serious, critical study of philosophy, first through Kuno Fischer's *History of Modern Philosophy* (in Nikolai Strakhov's Russian translation), then through Kant. The immediate result was philosophical skepticism, which freed them of dogmatic thought (in the forms of reductive positivism and scientism) but also shook their confidence in the reliability of reason and even in the very category of truth (56–64).

Trubetskoi recounts that the "resolution of the crisis" took place in their last year at the Kaluga gymnasium. His reading of Arthur Schopenhauer was a turning point. He realized that the problem he faced was not only philosophical but also religious (64–65). From his study of Schopenhauer he concluded that God is the transcendent fullness of being toward which the world strives and in which it alone can find its ultimate fulfillment. The relationship between God and world—more precisely, the idea that the value of the relative depends on how we understand its relationship to the Absolute—would remain one of his central themes. Either God exists or life is not worth it, he declared (66). But skepticism had taught him that abstract thought could not demonstrate the reality of God. He was coming quickly to realize that both faith and reason were necessary to grasp truth, and more generally that inner experience (moral, religious, aesthetic), and not just external sensory experience, offered truthful testimony to the nature of reality. The truthfulness of inner experience of divine reality is the very meaning of faith, or a large part of its meaning. For the Trubetskoi brothers, the final confirmation of this took place through their reading of Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and Soloviev's *Critique of Abstract Principles*, both of which appeared at the time in the journal *Russkii vestnik*,[7] and also through their immersion in Alexei Khomiakov's theological works (66).

Evgenii Trubetskoi makes clear that he was powerfully affected by Khomiakov's theory of the church as the Divine-human (*Bogochelovecheskii*) community that makes possible knowledge of God. He wrote, "God can be known only through living *communion* with Him, to the extent that human nature becomes the embodiment of the Divine principle" (67). Knowledge of God (*Bogopoznanie*) was not an abstract truth but an experiential one, acquired in the loving, faithful community of the church. He said that recognizing this, the truth of Christ, brought him the joy of being healed (*istselenie*) in the literal sense of the word, because it was the restoration of inner wholeness (*tselost'*), the integration of reason and will, feeling and

7. 1877–1880 in the case of Soloviev's work, 1879–1880 in the case of Dostoevsky's.

conscience, and all the powers of heart and mind (67). His description of his experience was heavily informed by Ivan Kireevskii's and Khomiakov's account of the disintegrating consequences (for person and society) of abstract rationalism and by their positive concepts of spiritual wholeness, faithful or believing reason, integral personhood, and sobornost.[8]

In his memoirs, Trubetskoi emphasizes that his return to faith, far from resulting in the abandonment of philosophy, caused him to rededicate himself to it: "I came to believe in it like never before, because I felt its vocation was to be an instrument of the knowledge of God" (68). He arrived at this understanding of the task of philosophy under the strong influence of Soloviev's *Critique of Abstract Principles*, with its ideal of "integral knowledge." Trubetskoi thought this ideal should form the program of all future Christian thought, including his own (68). He remained committed to it for the rest of his life.

Moscow University, the Lopatin Circle, and Vladimir Soloviev

In 1881, the Trubetskoi brothers entered the Law Faculty at Moscow University. (Sergei soon transferred to the Historical-Philological Faculty.) Curiously they did not meet Vladimir Soloviev in their undergraduate years, though his works formed the center of their religious-philosophical preoccupations (115). They did have occasion to meet one "very significant person": Boris Chicherin, whose worldview, Evgenii said, was "diametrically opposed" to their own because of Chicherin's opposition to Slavophilism and to Soloviev's mysticism. Nonetheless, what they had in common was more important, namely, their philosophical idealism in the reigning climate of positivism. After their first meeting Chicherin said the young brothers gave him hope for the future of philosophy in Russia. In turn, Trubetskoi wrote that they had deep respect and sympathy for Chicherin until the end of his life (117).

Evgenii Trubetskoi graduated from Moscow University in 1885 as a candidate of law. Following a brief period of military service, he began his academic career at the Demidov Juridical Lycée in Iaroslavl', where he taught philosophy of law from 1886 to 1892. At the same time Sergei began graduate work in philosophy at Moscow University; he was appointed

8. Khomiakov's concept of sobornost refers to the qualities of an ideal community (the Church) united by love and faith, through which the community is ever more illuminated by grace, and the human becomes ever more like the divine. See Poole, "Slavophilism," 145–46.

associate professor there in 1890 and full professor in 1900. Evgenii regularly traveled from Iaroslavl' to Moscow, where he took part in the "Lopatin circle" (*Lopatinskii kruzhok*), which formed around Mikhail Nikolaevich Lopatin (1823–1900), a prominent jurist and chairman of a department of the Moscow Judicial Chamber.[9] According to Trubetskoi's warm account of the circle, "in Moscow at the time there was not a home that so brilliantly embodied the spiritual atmosphere of Moscow cultured society as the Lopatin home" (180). Mikhail Nikolaevich hosted dinners every Wednesday that were attended by Moscow's intellectual elite: jurists, Moscow University professors, litterateurs and journal editors, pedagogues, and other scholars. Evgenii thrived in this milieu.[10]

The Lopatin circle also included a group of philosophers: Mikhail Nikolaevich's son Lev Lopatin (1855–1920), Nikolai Ia. Grot (1852–99), Vladimir Soloviev, and Sergei Trubetskoi, among others. As a result of the close friendship between their fathers, Lev Lopatin and Vladimir Soloviev knew each other from early childhood.[11] Lopatin began graduate work in philosophy at Moscow University in 1882 and became a full professor there ten years later. Nikolai Grot was also (from 1886) a Moscow University philosophy professor. By 1888 these four idealist philosophers, led by Grot, took over the direction of the Moscow Psychological Society (founded in 1885) and transformed it into a broad philosophical society, in fact into the first and most important center of the growth of Russian philosophy over the last three decades of the imperial period.[12] Evgenii Trubetskoi was a frequent contributor to the society's journal, *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii* (*Questions of Philosophy and Psychology*, 1889–1918), and also wrote a chapter for its 1902 symposium, *Problems of Idealism* (as did his brother Sergei). In addition, he served as candidate deputy chair of the society between 1906 and 1909 and gave public lectures for its financial benefit.

It was in the Lopatin circle that Trubetskoi finally met Vladimir Soloviev, in late 1886. From that time on, he later wrote, "all my intellectual life was connected with Soloviev. My whole philosophical and religious *Weltanschauung* was full of Solovievian content and expressed in formulations very close to Soloviev" (191). From the beginning he embraced

9. Ognev, *Lev Mikhailovich Lopatin*, 5. The Court Statutes of 1864 created new large judicial regions, "circuits" (*okrugi*). In each circuit were several courts (*okruzhnye sudy*) and one Judicial Chamber (*sudebnaia palata*), which heard appeals and served as first instance for official and state crimes. See Wortman, *Development*, 261.

10. On the Lopatin circle, in addition to Trubetskoi, *Vospominaniia*, 179–83, see Korelina, "Za piat'desiat let."

11. Luk'ianov, *O Vl. S. Solov'eve*, 105–6. Losev, *Vladimir Soloviev*, 11.

12. See Poole, "Philosophy and Politics."

Bogochelovechestvo, but objected to Soloviev's project to achieve it: "free theocracy," the unification of the Christian churches under the spiritual authority of the Pope and the imperial domination of the Russian tsar. For Trubetskoi the issue was not yet the utopianism of Soloviev's vision—he admits that at this stage "we both stood on the ground of the same utopian and essentially *Slavophile* dream of the messianic task of the Russian people and of the Russian state" (193)—but rather the element of Roman supremacy. His debates with Soloviev were a factor in his decision to study the intellectual history of theocracy in medieval Europe, resulting in two volumes on the "Religious-Social Ideal of Western Christianity." For the first volume (1892), on St. Augustine, he earned the *magister*; for the second (1897), on Pope Gregory VII, he earned the doctorate.[13]

Trubetskoi's dissertations receive detailed consideration in chapters 1 and 4 of this book (part I). They helped to convince him that freedom of conscience and separation of church and state were normative liberal principles which invalidated not only theocracy but also its mirror image, the subordination of church to state in "caesaropapism." All along Soloviev, who was a resolute champion of religious freedom in the Russian empire, had hoped that his ideal of "free theocracy" would help call attention to the condition of the Russian church, which Peter the Great had deprived of its patriarch and which the autocratic state had since controlled through the Holy Synod.

Toward the end of his life Trubetskoi could write that Soloviev's "withering and strong critique of our church-state relations, in connection with his courageous exposure of our caesaropapism, convinced me that in the Catholic ideal of independent spiritual power there is a relative truth, which should be recognized" (114–15). By then Trubetskoi had long worked on behalf of church reform in Russia, precisely to end the synodal system and restore the church's spiritual power (see below). But he always remained highly critical of any possible historical form of theocracy, recognizing that it would inevitably violate freedom of conscience and compromise the church's own spiritual autonomy. In 1909 he wrote that he fervently believed in the kingdom of God but theocracy was "only a human falsification," because "God can rule only *from within*, and not externally." External theocracy in the sense of actual divine power cannot exist on earth, he continued, "because it would be an obstacle in the work of salvation; humanity would rely upon it, which would be the end of Christian progress."[14]

13. Trubetskoi, *Ideal zapadnogo khristianstva v V veke*; and Trubetskoi, *Ideal zapadnogo khristianstva v XI veke*.

14. "Nasha liubov' nuzhna Rossii," 187.

Trubetskoi's university appointments were in the history and philosophy of law, first at St. Vladimir's University in Kiev (1892–1905) and then at Moscow University (1906–1918), where he in effect succeeded his brother Sergei (although he taught in the Juridical Faculty, not Sergei's Historical-Philological Faculty). His university lecture courses were published and seen as classics in the teaching of jurisprudence.[15] His most original and important philosophical works were published within a five-year period late in his life: *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva* (*Vl. S. Soloviev's Worldview*) (1913), *Metafizicheskie predpolozheniia poznaniia: Opyt preodoleniia Kanta i kantiantstva* (*The Metaphysical Premises of Knowledge: An Essay in Transcending Kant and Kantianism*) (1917), and *Smysl zhizni* (*The Meaning of Life*) (1918). In these works Trubetskoi developed his philosophical idealism and religious philosophy—on which see chapters 1 and 3 of this book (part I).

The Philosophy of the Absolute

Trubetskoi's defense of metaphysical idealism is basic and unassailable. He argued that human reason by its very nature involves consciousness of ideals (e.g., truth, the good, and beauty), that these ideals are a priori and cannot be explained by the empirical data of sensory experience, that as pure ideals they are infinite or absolute, and that we are capable of self-determination according to them (which capacity is the highest sense of free will). For all these reasons, he thought the absolute ideals of reason offered solid grounds for belief in the reality of the Absolute. In short, through our ideals we are conscious of the absolute, and this consciousness all but necessarily involves a conviction—or faith—in the ontological reality of the Absolute. Chicherin and Soloviev also took the general view that consciousness of the absolute was intrinsic to human reason, but Trubetskoi agreed with Soloviev that the reality of the Absolute, though certainly a reasonable conclusion, was nonetheless a matter of faith and not, as Chicherin thought, a strictly logical conclusion of thought itself (see below).

Vl. S. Soloviev's Worldview is perhaps Trubetskoi's best known work. It is a massive critical exposition of Russia's greatest religious philosopher. Because Trubetskoi largely followed Soloviev in metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics, it also provides a valuable account of his own views in these

15. These include Trubetskoi, *Istoriia filosofii prava*; Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po istorii filosofii prava*; and Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po entsiklopedii prava*. He also published several essays on law, including: Trubetskoi, "Filosofiia prava professora L. I. Petrazhitskogo"; Trubetskoi, "Novoe issledovanie o filosofii prava Kanta"; and Trubetskoi, "Uchenie B. N. Chicherina." For an authoritative edition of his works on the history and philosophy of law, see Trubetskoi, *Trudy po filosofii prava*.

areas. Trubetskoi wrote that the "basic principle" of Soloviev's philosophy (and of his own) was the absolute, understood as the All-one (*Vseedinoe*), "for the Absolute is that in which everything and everyone are one."[16] He indicates that Soloviev arrived at this metaphysical principle through analysis of human thought and will, in particular of the ideals of truth, justice, beauty, and the good. Their role in human consciousness convinced Soloviev that the absolute was, in Trubetskoi's words, a "necessary supposition of our thought and life."[17] Both philosophers believed that as bearers of ideals, persons are seekers of the absolute, and that this is the most distinctive aspect of our humanity. Human consciousness of, and aspiration toward, the absolute clearly had metaphysical implications.

Trubetskoi adopted Soloviev's approach of proceeding from analysis of human consciousness to metaphysical conclusions. Five years later, in his own analysis in *The Meaning of Life*, he showed that even at the etymological level *con*-sciousness (*so-znanie*) and *con*-science (*so-vest'*) are relational faculties by which human beings can rise above their immediate experiences, relating them to higher ideals in the search for absolute meaning and truth.[18] "The motive principle of any consciousness," he wrote, "consists in this *conscience*, inherent to man, about the absolute; precisely on account of this conscience does he need to know the *judgment of truth* about all that is experienced and about what ought to be in his own acts. Consciousness and conscience express . . . the theoretical and practical aspect of one and the same thing—*the absolute judgment of thought*."[19] It bears emphasizing that Soloviev's and Trubetskoi's philosophy of the absolute was first a philosophy of consciousness (and more broadly of human nature), then a metaphysics and a religious philosophy. This philosophical approach was integral to their central concept of *Bogochelovechestvo*, as is clear in what Trubetskoi says next, in *The Meaning of Life*, about the human capability for the absolute: "It is not only a capability of the human mind, for in conscience the mind and heart are united. It expresses the spiritual ascent of all of human nature. And it is precisely because of this ascent to the Absolute over sensation, over feeling, and over passion that man can be joined with God not by ties of instinctual attraction but by the ties of conscious *spiritual* solidarity that transfigure the soul's life."[20]

16. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:98.
17. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:98.
18. Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 11–28.
19. Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 173.
20. Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 173.

For Soloviev and Trubetskoi, the absolute was both the transcendental and ontological premise of reason. Soloviev made this argument in *The Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge* (1877) and *A Critique of Abstract Principles* (1880), and Trubetskoi adopted and developed it in *Vl. S. Soloviev's Worldview* and in his subsequent works. In its transcendental aspect, the philosophers argued that the absolute was the condition of the epistemic credibility of logic and rational thought: by their nature, logic and rationality are held to be necessarily and universally valid (that is their defining quality) or *true*. In other words, they are held to be absolute. Truth as an ideal, as the criterion by which we make any judgment, is absolute, and from this the philosophers concluded that the absolute was the transcendental condition of rational thought and knowledge.[21] They also concluded that the absolute was the necessary ontological supposition of reason—"*the real Absolute*."[22] Trubetskoi emphasizes that this is a supposition and not a direct conclusion of reason itself, in the manner of the ontological or cosmological proof of God.[23] The Absolute is the premise or a priori condition of rational thought, of truth, and for that reason it cannot be rationally demonstrated. Its reality is more basic and must be taken on faith by the whole person.

According to Trubetskoi, the ontological reality of the Absolute followed necessarily from the transcendental method, though he recognized that this conclusion will prove to be a "stumbling block" for adherents of the prevailing anti-metaphysical currents in contemporary philosophical thought, neo-Kantianism in particular.[24] He sought to convince them in his next book, *The Metaphysical Premises of Knowledge: An Essay in Transcending Kant and Kantianism*. His qualified defense of the transcendental method exemplified his confidence in human reason. Though he recognized the limits of reason and the need to integrate it with faith, he firmly defended it against its detractors such as Pavel Florensky (see chapter 6 in this book, part I). He was utterly committed to the ideal of truth and believed that human beings could recognize it by their use of reason, orient themselves to it, and ever more closely approximate it. It was the very foundation of his philosophy of the absolute and of his further specification that the Absolute was mind—a perfectly idealist position, of course.

Unsurprisingly, Trubetskoi formulated his fuller understanding of the Absolute in *Vl. S. Soloviev's Worldview*: "To believe in our capability for knowledge is generally possible only on the assumption of the Absolute

21. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:98–100.
22. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:101–2.
23. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:99.
24. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:101.

as objective reason and as the meaning of everything," or as "the *logos* of creation."[25] In his next two books he developed his thesis: the very ideal of truth meant that the Absolute was mind, an all-one (*vseedinoe*), absolute consciousness. Soloviev had designated the Absolute as all-unity (*vseedinstvo*); Trubetskoi now made it more clear that all-unity was absolute consciousness. To summarize the essential elements of his argument: 1) truth is the ideal and content of our consciousness; 2) by its nature truth is universal and necessary, which means it cannot be merely the content or product of human consciousness in the limited, psychological sense; 3) therefore it must be grounded in a normative, absolute consciousness, which is itself the Absolute as infinite being or the ground of being; 4) absolute consciousness is unmediated, directly intuitive, self-identical, and "concrete," in contrast to our "abstract" consciousness which mediates everything through the forms of space and time;[26] 5) through truth and other ideals we relate to, and are drawn ever closer into, this absolute consciousness, which is the highest sense of the relational nature of consciousness and conscience; 6) all-unity designates both the Absolute and the process by which we come into ever closer communion with it.[27]

Lest this seem too arid and intellectual, it should be noted that Trubetskoi followed Soloviev in recognizing that all-unity could not be exclusively theoretical but had to embrace all spheres of the human spirit, including ethics and aesthetics. Love and beauty were no less integral to it than truth. In the practical sphere of ethics, all-unity was the metaphysical correlate of the ideal of the good (as in the theoretical sphere it was the metaphysical correlate of the ideal of truth). The practical realization of all-unity depended, at least, on the triumph of human solidarity, the highest expression of which, according to Trubetskoi, was the Christian teaching of universal love. "The meaning of life is revealed in love and in it alone," he wrote.[28] Interestingly we find these words in one of Trubetskoi's expositions of the ethical context and justification of his legal theory. Everything, including law, relates to all-unity and its realization. In its pure metaphysical reality as the Absolute, Trubetskoi conceived all-unity as absolute consciousness (mind) and infinite love.

It is clear that Soloviev's and Trubetskoi's metaphysical idealism, their philosophy of the absolute, could take the form of a robust religious philosophy, and both philosophers gave it that form. Trubetskoi wrote

25. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:103–4.
26. Poole, "Neo-Idealist Reception of Kant," 341–42.
27. Trubetskoi, *Metafizicheskie*, 20–30, 306–32; Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 11–29.
28. Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po entsiklopedii prava*, 45, 49.

that the Solovievian Absolute was "an essentially religious idea; in it we have a philosophical expression of the idea of God." What Soloviev called the "realization of all-unity" is called in religious language the "realization of the Kingdom of God."[29]

Trubetskoi's great work of religious philosophy is *The Meaning of Life*.[30] It is a profound meditation on the following question, one which was made even more poignant by the terrible suffering of the Great War and Russian Revolution: What is the value and meaning of earthly life in relation to the Absolute? Trubetskoi thought that only Christianity could offer a positive solution to the question, because only it understood the Absolute as all-unity, in which God will be all in all (1 Cor 15:28). This Christian conception preserves and sanctifies the value of the world, even as it becomes one with God. The union does not dissolve the world but transfigures it in a way that, again, preserves and sanctifies its value. Trubetskoi was emphatic about this point: "either the indivisible and unmerged combination of God and world is being accomplished and will be accomplished, or the world process in its entirety is meaningless."[31] Here he invokes Chalcedonian Christology, and he repeats the formula in the next paragraph: What is distinctive to Christianity is its doctrine of "*the indivisible and unmerged unity of the divine and human*," specifically in reference to the two natures of Christ but more generally as well.[32] The human (and through the human the world) retains its distinct identity even in combination with the divine, a clear vindication of its intrinsic worth or dignity. The terms Godman (*Bogochelovek*) and Godmanhood (*Bogochelovechestvo*) are efforts to describe this divine-human unity. Its further fulfillment involves the deification of all humanity and creation, or the divine-human realization of the kingdom of God—which Trubetskoi regarded as the telos of the world process and the source of the meaning of life.[33]

29. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:107.

30. See Poole, "Religion, War, and Revolution," 224–34.

31. Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 63.

32. Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 63–64.

33. "God *must* become all in all," he wrote. "That eternal cosmic ideal, personified by the image of Christ the Godman himself, is the ideal of the indivisible and unmerged unity of the *two natures*—God and world (in the person of man)." Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 90.

Liberalism and Legal Theory

Trubetskoi's idealist philosophy of the absolute was also the foundation of his liberalism—on which see the first two chapters of this book. The main principles of his liberalism were human dignity (the absolute worth of the person), freedom of conscience, the rule of law, and human perfectibility. His work as a law professor focused on the history and philosophy of law. Idealism in legal theory typically leads to the defense of natural law, and Trubetskoi's defense of it was spirited. In the philosophy of law and of liberalism more generally, he was closer to Chicherin than to Soloviev, though in these areas too he had certain differences with Chicherin.[34] In a commemorative essay, he explained Chicherin's understanding of the "essence and meaning of law [*pravo*]." In the first lines he identifies Chicherin's two underlying (and tightly interconnected) premises: a passionate faith in human dignity and an exceptional respect for the freedom of the human person.[35] These were Trubetskoi's foundations as well.

The basic principles of Chicherin's philosophy of law are straightforward. According to him, the existence of society requires that the external liberty of people be mutually delimited as right (*pravo*) under coercive juridical law (*zakon*). In one of his definitions, "right is a person's external freedom, as determined by a universal law [*obshchii zakon*]."[36] In his understanding of right, Chicherin generally followed (as he acknowledged) Kant's famous definitions in *The Metaphysics of Morals* that right is the coexistence of everyone's freedom in accordance with a universal law and that it authorizes the use of coercion.[37]

Like Kant and Chicherin, Trubetskoi defined right as reciprocally delimited external freedom or negative liberty, but he thought that identifying coercion as the distinctive feature of law (as Chicherin did) was to mistake law for one of its instruments.[38] A wide range of different types of norms, rules, and motives explain why right is observed; the resort to force is a mark of the violation of right and is applied when law fails, not when it

34. In his book on Chicherin, Evlampiev labeled Trubetskoi one of Chicherin's "intellectual heirs" and included a chapter on him. See Evlampiev, "Religioznoe opravdanie gosudarstva."

35. Trubetskoi, "Uchenie," 353.

36. Chicherin, *Filosofiia prava*, 84, 86. See also Chicherin, *Liberty, Equality, and the Market*, 363–64.

37. Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, 24–25. Chicherin refers to Kant's defintions in his essay, "Kant," in Chicherin, *Istoriia politicheskikh uchenii*, 345–46, 348.

38. As an idealist Chicherin, especially in his mature legal philosophy, recognized the ideal, moral essence of law (human dignity) and he called it natural law or justice. See Poole, "Liberalism," 266–69.

succeeds. When law is upheld, it is because right is respected. In rejecting coercion as the distinctive criterion of law, Trubetskoi's concern was to avoid reducing law to state power and to counter the main thesis of legal positivism that the state is the only source of law.[39] Here is his formal definition of right: "*Right is external liberty, established and delimited by a norm.* Or, what is the same, *right is the totality of norms that on the one hand establish, and on the other delimit, the external liberty of persons in their mutual relations.*"[40] His definition entirely replaces the concept of right under law (*zakon*), a term he generally avoids, with right under norms. Right, as Kant originally put it in *The Metaphysics of Morals*, authorizes coercion, but for the Russian philosopher it does not, or should not, rest on it. His emphasis on norms rather than coercion enabled him to write: "The primary source of right is always and everywhere our consciousness." We must recognize the legitimacy of positive law for it to have force or validity. This, Trubetskoi says, "irrefutably demonstrates the existence of a moral norm or, what is the same, natural law, which forms the ideal basis and criterion of the whole juridical order." He specifies that the absolute value underlying natural law is, of course, human personhood. Natural law, he says, is the same as justice, and it encompasses all the moral norms that justify, or fail to justify, governmental authority and positive law.[41] His claims on behalf of natural law and justice could hardly have been stronger.

The issue of whether coercion was the distinctive feature of law was not the only difference between Trubetskoi and Chicherin. There was a more significant one, to which I have already referred. In his article, Trubetskoi offered the following statement of his own philosophical position: "Our whole life is affirmed by a dual faith: *in the Absolute*, which serves as our end, and *in ourselves*, that is, in the human being as a free actor, called to realize the Absolute in himself and in the world."[42] Chicherin's great service, according to Trubetskoi, was his recognition and philosophical defense of the metaphysical premises of law: the Absolute (God) and the human person (as a free and immortal spiritual being).[43] But Trubetskoi believed that Chicherin was mistaken in thinking that these metaphysical premises could be rationally deduced through the traditional proofs of the existence of God (or in any other way).[44] Rather they must be taken on

39. Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po entsiklopedii prava*, 3–17.
40. Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po entsiklopedii prava*, 11.
41. Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po entsiklopedii prava*, 58–59.
42. Trubetskoi, "Uchenie," 371.
43. Trubetskoi, "Uchenie," 372.
44. Trubetskoi, "Uchenie," 372–74.

faith.[45] Though Trubetskoi does not make it explicit here, his point is clear because it was his deepest conviction: Faith alone preserves the Absolute as the supreme *ideal* that makes possible our inner self-determination, which is the ground of human dignity and the condition of our progress in and toward *Bogochelovechestvo*.

Politics and Religion

Evgenii Trubetskoi, the philosopher, was also a public figure who actively worked for a constitutional Russia (see chapter 2 of this book, part I). He was a provincial zemstvo board member from Kaluga and, with his brother Sergei, belonged to the Beseda circle of zemstvo opposition, formed in 1899.[46] Subsequently he joined the Union of Zemstvo Constitutionalists (established in Moscow, November 1903) and the Union of Liberation (established in St. Petersburg, January 1904). Through these organizations he had a leading role in the Russian Liberation Movement that culminated in the Revolution of 1905. On September 26, 1904 he published an article, "War and Bureaucracy," in the liberal journal *Pravo*. It was a dramatic indictment of the government's handling of the Russo-Japanese War and an unprecedented call in a legal newspaper for the government to reform from above in order to prevent revolution from below. The article gave Trubetskoi a national reputation and launched the constitutionalist campaign in the increasingly free Russian press. According to Evgenii's sister, Olga, "it brilliantly opened an era of new direction in domestic politics."[47]

Trubetskoi took part in the Union of Liberation's national banquet campaign of November–December 1904, speaking at the large banquet which met in Kiev.[48] More important was his role in the Academic Union, one of the first of the professional and intelligentsia unions to emerge from the banquet campaign. The nascent union sought the corporate organization of the Russian professoriate in the Liberation Movement, both in the common interest of constitutional reform and in the particular interest of defending higher learning during a period of rapid social transformation.[49] Its principal goal was academic freedom, which it saw as an essential

45. Trubetskoi, "Uchenie," 375.
46. See Emmons, "Beseda Circle," 489–90, for the Beseda membership list.
47. Trubetskaia, *Kniaz' S. N. Trubetskoi*, 87.
48. Shatsillo, *Russkii liberalizm*, 299.
49. Kassow, *Students*, 217–18.

condition of true education. The first congress of the Academic Union met in St. Petersburg on March 25, 1905.[50]

Samuel Kassow has described the union's "professorial liberalism," a well-articulated professional ethos that involved not only the professors' desire to see the Russian nation (which they distinguished from the tsarist regime) evolve along liberal, constitutional lines, but also their own self-identity as scholars in Russian society:

> Professors who supported democratic and universal suffrage in national politics argued that in the universities it was essential to preserve the rule that only merit and proven scholarly achievement should be the major determinants of power and position. According to Professor Evgenii Trubetskoi, the "university has always been and will continue to be the sanctum of a spiritual aristocracy: otherwise it will cease to exist." Far from contradicting the idea of democracy, this conception of the university was a *sine qua non* for a successful democratic society. "Only a university based on this principle," he warned, "can serve the interests of the people. . . . The nation and the people need a university that will get its job done."[51]

The Academic Union was among the most moderate of the fourteen unions that confederated into the Union of Unions on May 8, 1905. Unlike most of the unions, which would soon adopt the call for a constituent assembly, the professors did not.[52]

At the Academic Union's second congress (August 25–28, 1905), Trubetskoi proposed the establishment of private, free universities to supplement or replace (if necessary during a crisis) state institutions, to provide greater academic freedom, and to counter the gender, national, and religious discrimination in Russian higher education. The congress approved Trubetskoi's proposal.[53] The Academic Union contributed to important gains for the Russian professoriate during this period. These included the imperial edict of August 27, 1905 that granted autonomy to the universities (which enabled Sergei Trubetskoi immediately thereafter to become the first freely elected rector of Moscow University) and the February 20, 1906 reform of the State Council into an upper house with legislative powers equal to those of the State Duma. The reform provided for six deputies to be corporately elected by the Academy of Sciences and the university faculty

50. Kassow, *Students*, 219–23.
51. Kassow, *Students*, 243.
52. Kassow, *Students*, 223.
53. Kassow, *Students*, 228, 234–35.

councils. The Moscow University faculty duly elected Evgenii Trubetskoi to the State Council (February 1907–August 1908).[54] (He served in the State Council again in 1915–1917.)

Trubetskoi participated in the July 9–10, 1905 meeting of the Union of Zemstvo Constitutionalists that took the initiative in forming the Constitutional-Democratic Party.[55] Trubetskoi did become a member of the Kadet party (as it was popularly known), but could not attend (because of the rail strike) the party's first congress, held in Moscow on October 12–18, 1905, and was not elected to its central committee. He was elected to the First State Duma (the new parliament) on the party's ticket. His attendance at the second party congress in St. Petersburg, January 5–11, 1906, convinced him that he already had to part ways with the Kadets, and he promptly resigned. According to Terence Emmons, "This announcement, in the pages of *Russkie vedomosti*, was accompanied by a bill a charges against the party which in several respects foreshadowed the charges brought against the intelligentsia as a whole in the *Vekhi (Signposts)* articles published in 1909."[56] Among these charges was the claim that the party was insincerely monarchist.[57] Trubetskoi also thought that the Kadets were inadequately committed to organic work in the Duma, were inclined to treat it as an instrumental and transitional institution, and were preoccupied with the meaning of the term "constituent assembly," the cherished slogan of the left.[58] Trubetskoi was, no doubt, further provoked by the failure of the party congress to unequivocally condemn the revolutionaries for the December uprising in Moscow (the government was blamed instead). In the middle of November he had published an important newspaper article, "Dve diktatury" ("Two Dictatorships"), in which he counseled work in good faith with the government (for all its shortcomings) in the hope of improving and strengthening it, and warned that an armed uprising might well result in civil war.[59]

It cannot be said that Trubetskoi was very consistent in following the principles underlying his criticism of Kadet political behavior, for he declined possible opportunities to enter the government, where he himself might have been able to work from the inside, "organically," for the consolidation of Russia's new constitutional order. Trubetskoi was one of the

54. Kassow, *Students*, 295, 297.

55. Chermenskii, *Burzhuaziia*, 102.

56. Emmons, *Formation*, 73.

57. Emmons, *Formation*, 56.

58. Emmons, *Formation*, 73.

59. Ascher, *Revolution*, 296–97. The article appeared in *Russkie vedomosti*, November 16, 1905.

first two men (the other was Dmitry Shipov) whom the first Russian prime minister, Count Sergei Iu. Witte, contacted in October 1905 in the hope of including representatives of society (rather than all bureaucrats) in his cabinet. Trubetskoi was to be appointed minister of education, but the negotiations failed.[60] He justified his refusal to enter the government on the grounds that he could not make good on the promises he had publicly made as a leading Kadet.[61]

On July 8, 1906, the government dissolved the Duma. In response the Kadets and their confrères issued an appeal from Vyborg, Finland (where they had convened) to the Russian citizenry to refuse to pay taxes or provide military recruits. Trubetskoi opposed the Vyborg Manifesto, as did a group of Duma deputies (led by Count Petr Geiden and Mikhail Stakhovich from the moderate Union of October 17, the Octobrist Party) who had already taken the initiative in forming a liberal-conservative faction or caucus, Peaceful Renewal, which was legalized as a party in October 1906.[62] At about this time Trubetskoi became a member of the new party.[63] The Party of Peaceful Renewal shared with the right Kadets and left Octobrists a political program of moderate liberalism. This program was advanced in the newspaper that Trubetskoi and his younger brother Grigorii published from March 7, 1906 to August 28, 1910, *Moskovskii ezhenedel'nik (Moscow Weekly)*. Through the newspaper he wished to introduce into Russian political life the concepts of ethics, conscience, and above all human dignity.[64] (On *Moskovskii ezhenedel'nik*, see chapter 2 of this book, part I.)

As a religious philosopher and a person of deep Orthodox faith, Prince Trubetskoi participated in several Moscow religious-philosophical groups. I referred earlier to the Moscow Psychological Society. In addition, he was a member of the "Circle of Seekers of Christian Enlightenment" (*Kruzhok ishchushchikh khristianskogo prosveshcheniia*). As Nikolai Arsen'ev recalls, "It was a circle of people closely united in their Christian faith and rootedness in the life of the Orthodox Church, and of people who lived by

60. Startsev, *Russkaia burzhuaziia*, 10–11.

61. Chermenskii, *Burzhuaziia*, 155. Trubetskoi produced the following impression on Witte: "This is a pure man, full of philosophic views, with great knowledge, a splendid professor, as is said, a real Russian man, in the unspoiled (Union of Russian People) sense of the word, but a naive administrator and politician. A perfect Hamlet of the Russian revolution." Quoted by Startsev, *Russkaia burzhuaziia*, 14 and by Polovinkin, *Kniaz' E. N. Trubetskoi*, 36.

62. Emmons, *Formation*, 358.

63. Pipes, *Struve*, 179; Chermenskii, *Burzhuaziia*, 336.

64. Polovinkin, *Kniaz' E. N. Trubetskoi*, 37.

scholarly, theological and religious-philosophical interests."[65] Trubetskoi also took an active part in the Vladimir Soloviev Religious-Philosophical Society (*Religiozno-filosofskoe obshchestvo pamiati Vladimira Solovieva*), founded in 1905–1906. It survived until the middle of 1918.[66] Having in mind the society's exotic and sensationalist moments, Arsen'ev wrote: "It was more gratifying to hear at the meetings of the Soloviev Religious-Philosophical Society—to counterbalance the often dominant morbidly-voluptuous hysterics—the authoritative and sober, spiritually courageous presentations of Prince Evgenii Nikolaevich Trubetskoi, full of an internal sense of measure and religious authenticity."[67]

After the demise of *Moskovskii ezhenedel'nik*, Trubetskoi turned his energies to the religious-philosophical publishing house and editorial society *Put'* (The Way), founded in 1910 by Moscow financier and philanthropist Margarita Morozova.[68] She also provided financial support to the Religious-Philosophical Society and the Moscow Psychological Society, which cooperated with Put'. Trubetskoi was Morozova's closest collaborator and a major factor behind the publishing venture's success (on their relationship see chapter 5 of this book, part I). Under their direction, Put' brought out a whole series of classics in Russian and Western religious philosophy before it closed in 1919. It was one of the main venues within which Trubetskoi developed his liberal conception of Russian national identity.[69]

Trubetskoi's faith and religious experience convinced him that freedom of conscience was the "most precious of all freedoms," because it was their very condition.[70] He was devoted to the Russian Orthodox Church and had long deplored its subordination to the autocratic state through the synodal system. In 1906 he served on the pre-conciliar commission (*predsobornoe prisutstvie*) that met between March 8 and December 15, following the tsar's approval in March 1905 of plans for a national council (*sobor*) of the Russian Orthodox Church.[71] On April 29, 1917 the church declared its intent finally to convene a sobor. A Congress of Clergy and Laity met in Moscow from June 1–14 in preparation for the sobor. Trubetskoi was elected deputy chair. The congress passed resolutions against separation of church and state but for freedom of

65. Arsen'ev, "O Moskovskikh religiozno-filosofskikh," 30.

66. Polovinkin, *Kniaz' E. N. Trubetskoi*, 47–56. See also Sobolev, "K istorii," 102–14.

67. Arsen'ev, "O Moskovskikh religiozno-filosofskikh," 36.

68. See the major study by Gollerbakh, *K nezrimomu gradu*.

69. See Poole, "Religion," 195–240.

70. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solov'eva*, 1:177.

71. On church reform and planning for the sobor, see Zernov, *Religious Renaissance*, 63–85; Cunningham, *Vanquished Hope*; and Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkov'*.

religion. Orthodoxy was to have primacy before other religions and enjoy a privileged position as the established church.[72] When the church sobor itself opened on August 15 in Moscow, Trubetskoi was elected lay deputy chair and was instrumental, as was Sergei Bulgakov, in its reestablishment of the patriarchate, which took place on November 21 in a magnificent ceremony in the Uspenskii Cathedral in the Kremlin.[73]

Less than a month before the sobor convened, the Kadet party held its ninth congress. Trubetskoi, who had rejoined the Kadets at the party's seventh congress in March 1917, strongly supported changing the party program to designate the Orthodox Church an "institution of public-legal character." The amendments passed.[74] Trubetskoi's support for Orthodoxy as the established Russian church seems to be at odds with his long standing commitment to freedom of conscience. He may well have hoped that the Russian Orthodox Church, with its patriarch restored, would be a powerful symbol of national unity and that in conditions of growing revolutionary anarchy, it had to be elevated over the normative principle of church-state autonomy.

* * *

In these years of war and revolution, Trubetskoi wrote his three famous icon studies: *Umozrenie v kraskakh: Vopros o smysle zhizni v drevnerusskoi religioznoi zhivopisi* (*Theology in Color: The Question of the Meaning of Life in Old Russian Religious Painting*) (1916), *Dva mira v drevnerusskoi ikonopisi* (*Two Worlds in Old Russian Icon-Painting*) (1916) and *Rossiia v ee ikone* (*Russia in Its Icons*) (1918).[75] For him icons were portals into the moral, religious, and national consciousness of the Russian people. His studies of them were inspired by his own religious experience and drew on all his philosophical and spiritual wisdom. As is clear from even the title of the first essay, the icon studies were meant to go together with *The Meaning of Life*, which Trubetskoi conceived as a philosophical and

72. Gollerbakh, *K nezrimomu gradu*, 269-70; Gollerbakh, *K nezrimomu gradu*, 88–91.

73. Gollerbakh, *K nezrimomu gradu*, 276, 278. Generally on the sobor and restoration of the patriarchate, see the excellent account in Evtuhov, *Cross*, 191–206, 219–29.

74. Rosenberg, *Liberals*, 204.

75. The first was delivered at a public meeting of the Soloviev Religious-Philosophical Society in late November 1915 and published as a brochure (Moscow: Ivan D. Sytin, 1916). The second was delivered as a public lecture during the spring of 1916 and was also published as a brochure (Moscow: Put', 1916). The third appeared in *Russkaia mysl'* 39 (January–February 1918): 21–44. See Gollerbakh, *K nezrimomu gradu*, 260. All three essays are translated in Trubetskoi, *Icons*.

theological explication of the spiritual worldview conveyed by the icon. In short, he wanted his own religious philosophy to be read as iconic. The most important elements of this spiritual worldview were human dignity and, as Trubetskoi put it in his first icon study, universal love and peace and "the transfiguration of the world in the image of the Holy Trinity, that is, the inner union of all beings in God."[76] This was the very ideal, he notes, of St. Sergius of Radonezh (1314–1392), founder of the great Trinity-Sergius monastery in Sergiev Posad, north of Moscow and not far from the Trubetskoi family estate. The monastery's Trinity Cathedral (Sobor) is the site of the family's burial vault.[77] For Evgenii Trubetskoi, the Trinity Sobor must have been a resplendent symbol of his most precious ideals: sobornost, all-unity, and Bogochelovechestvo.[78]

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76. Trubetskoi, *Icons*, 19.

77. Polovinkin, *Kniaz' E. N. Trubetskoi*, 9. Evgenii himself is buried in Novorossiisk, where he died of typhus on January 23, 1920. "Sobor" in Russian means both cathedral and council or assembly. The verb "*sobrat'/sobirat'*" means to gather or assemble.

78. Here I follow the suggestive comments in Polovinkin, *Kniaz' E. N. Trubetskoi*, 9. Sobornost was an important source of Soloviev's concepts of all-unity and Bogochelovechestvo.

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PART I

Evgenii Trubetskoi and His Religious-Philosophical Worldview

1

Evgenii Trubetskoi and Russian Liberal Theology

Randall A. Poole

Evgenii Trubetskoi was a Russian Orthodox liberal whose worldview was consistently and at once theological and liberal. The essential liberal principle is respect for human dignity, the idea that human beings are persons or ends-in-themselves, each having an intrinsic and insuperable worth. Trubetskoi embraced and defended this principle throughout his life and work. It connected his theology and liberal political philosophy into one coherent whole, in two basic ways.

First, it made *his theology liberal*, because he thought that even God was bound to respect human dignity and that salvation could not be a matter of external divine determination alone (which would violate human dignity) but had to be a process involving human self-determination. In this he closely followed Vladimir Soloviev, who conceived salvation as deification (*theosis*) through the divine-human project of building the kingdom of God. Soloviev thought that the kingdom of God would come through what Kant called the kingdom of ends:

> In man's consciousness and in his freedom lies the inner possibility for each human being to stand in an independent relation to God, and therefore to be His direct end [*tsel'*], to be a citizen possessed of full rights in the kingdom of ends. Universal history is the realisation of this possibility for everyone. Man who takes part in it attains to actual perfection through his own experience. . . . This perfection attained by himself, this full,

> conscious, and free union with the Godhead, is that which God definitely desires—the unconditional good.[1]

Soloviev's term for this process of deification through free human perfectibility was *Bogochelovechestvo* (divine humanity, also translated as Godmanhood, theanthropy, or the humanity of God). Trubetskoi regarded it as the highest possible expression of religious consciousness in general, precisely because it was premised on human dignity.[2] This, again, is what made his theology liberal.

Second, the principle of human dignity made *his liberalism theological*, because Trubetskoi believed that it entailed a theistic metaphysics. His view was not merely that the principle required a religious-philosophical worldview, but that human dignity *itself provided* a rational foundation for theism because it is a striking example of human consciousness of the absolute (as value, concept, or category). Since nothing in nature suggests the idea of the absolute, the very idea defeats naturalism and substantiates theism. (This argument, which is similar to Descartes's version of the ontological proof, was advanced by Boris Chicherin, in whose works Trubetskoi encountered it.[3]) But for Evgenii Trubetskoi (as for his brother Sergei) the theistic implications of human dignity followed from it not only as an idea (though the argument from consciousness was very important for them), but also from it as life and being—*being a person*.[4] Evgenii Trubetskoi was a man of deep Orthodox faith, but he held that theism was a reasonable, indeed a highly compelling philosophical worldview. His "theological liberalism," in both senses of the term indicated here, is perhaps the most notable feature of his work, including the

1. Solovyov, *Justification*, 150. I have modified the translation in accordance with the Russian text: *Opravdanie dobra: nravstvennaia filosofiia*. Kant himself explicitly affirmed that in the kingdom of ends "the human being (and with him every rational being) is an end in itself, that is, can never be used a means by anyone (not even by God) without being at the same time himself an end." See Kant, *Critique*, 245. For further development, see Poole, "Kant."

2. For his explicit statement of this, see the first extended quote in the section below, "Trubetskoi on Soloviev's Worldview."

3. In contrast to Chicherin, Tubetskoi did not think that the reality of the Absolute could be deduced by reason alone, as in the traditional proofs of the existence of God. Rather, it was a matter of both faith and reason. See Trubetskoi, "Uchenie," 373–75. For Chicherin's approach, see Poole, "Liberalism," 260.

4. Sergei Trubetskoi made this essential argument in his famous essay on immortality. He wrote, "The deeper we know the higher spiritual possibilities of man, the more intimately and deeply we love and know the human person, the more we enter into consciousness of its absolute divine value. . . . Faith in immortality depends on the depth and intensity of this consciousness. One who sees the 'image of God' in the human person does not believe in its annihilation." See S. Trubetskoi, "Vera v bessmertie," 415–16.

two major treatises that are the focus of this chapter: *St. Augustine's Worldview* (1892) and *V. S. Soloviev's Worldview* (1913).

The foundation of Trubetskoi's liberalism, in both his theology and political philosophy, was his idealist conception of human nature, which he shared with other prominent Russian philosophers such as Boris Chicherin, Vladimir Soloviev, Sergei Trubetskoi, and Pavel Novgorodtsev.[5] It was idealist in the basic meaning of the term: human beings are bearers of ideals and can act freely on them.[6] In their philosophical anthropology (or this central aspect of it), the Russian philosophers closely followed Kant, who located the inner source of human dignity in the dual capacity of reason to 1) recognize or posit ideals such as the moral law and 2) determine the will according to such ideals. Kant called this astonishing power "autonomy," "self-determination," or "practical reason."[7] Sergei Trubetskoi called it "ideal self-determination."[8] Russian neo-idealists regarded it as the quintessential human capacity. As we shall see, Kant's conception of human autonomy and dignity was central to Evgenii's liberal theology. It should be emphasized that, for both Kant and his Russian followers, autonomy did not mean anything like radical human freedom from higher ideals. To the contrary, they recognized that freedom itself (free will in its higher, positive sense) consisted precisely in "ideal self-determination." The Russian philosophers, even more emphatically than Kant, thought this capacity refuted naturalism, had metaphysical implications, and substantiated theism. Hence their "religious idealism," as it might be called.

5. See Poole, "Liberalism."

6. For two statements of this basic idealist position, see Trubetskoi, "Toward Characterization of the Theory of Marx and Engels"; and Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po entsiklopedii prava*, 36–52.

7. Kant's most influential account of human autonomy and dignity is the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). His moral theory fundamentally shaped the development of Russian neo-idealism, beginning with Boris Chicherin and Vladimir Soloviev. On this development, see my essays: "Vladimir Solovëv's Philosophical Anthropology: Autonomy, Dignity, Perfectibility"; "The Defense of Human Dignity in Nineteenth-Century Russian Thought"; and "The Liberalism of Russian Religious Idealism." Trubetskoi gives a good, succinct account of Kant's moral philosophy in his essay on the German philosopher in *Lektsii po istorii filosofii prava*. See Trubetskoi, *Trudy po filosofii prava*, 237–54.

8. S. Trubetskoi, "O prirode chelovecheskogo soznaniia," 108; S. Trubetskoi, "Psikhologicheskii determinism," 121.

Five Principles of Trubetskoi's Liberalism

Trubetskoi's fundamental liberal principles followed directly from his idealist conception of human nature. First and foremost was human dignity, which was the source, in turn, of human equality and of natural or human rights. In March 1906 Trubetskoi wrote that liberal democracy had to rest on certain unshakable moral principles, "first of all the recognition of human dignity, the absolute value of the human person as such." Only this "excludes the possibility of reducing the person to the level of a means and guarantees its freedom independent of whether it represents the majority or minority in society." A human being is sacred, Trubetskoi continued, but this recognition demands a definite philosophical and religious worldview. "If man is only a temporary, fleeting combination of atoms of matter, then preaching respect for the human person, for its dignity and freedom, is sheer nonsense: it is possible to speak of respect for man only on the supposition that man is a vessel of the absolute, a bearer of the eternal, abiding meaning of life." This supposition, he adds, is expressed in the biblical idea that humanity is created in the image and likeness of God.[9] Trubetskoi thought that human dignity, "the absolute value of the human person as such," led directly to a metaphysical conception of personhood (personalism).

The second principle of Trubetskoi's liberalism was freedom of conscience, which he called "the most precious of all freedoms."[10] For him and the other Russian neo-idealists, the concept had a dual meaning. First, as inner freedom, it was a synonym for ideal self-determination, which is the core of personhood. Second, as external freedom, it named the human right to seek, express, and live according to one's ideals or beliefs. Clearly freedom of conscience as inner freedom was another way of specifying Kantian autonomy or self-determination as the ground of human dignity. Boris Chicherin regarded this as its "supreme meaning," which is why he thought freedom of conscience was also (as external freedom) "the first and most sacred right of a citizen."[11] Prince Trubetskoi followed this logic. Throughout his main philosophical works (including the studies of St. Augustine and Soloviev considered below), he argued that the ideals that make self-determination possible must, by their very nature, be freely recognized from within; otherwise there is no power of self-determination, only external determination (or coercion). He thought that such ideals were objective, but that their truth needed to be inwardly and freely recognized. Thus for

9. Trubetskoi, "Vseobshchee," 302–3.

10. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:177.

11. Chicherin, *Mistitsizm v nauke*, 62; Chicherin, "Contemporary Tasks," 135.

him freedom of conscience was a very powerful concept: it had both epistemological significance (it specified the condition for the recognition of truth) and metaphysical implications (since ideal self-determination or free will refuted naturalistic determinism).[12]

The third principle of Trubetskoi's liberalism was a corollary of the second. Freedom of conscience entailed respect for the relative autonomy of the various distinct spheres of human experience, inquiry, and aspiration: not only church and state, or religion and politics, but also philosophy, science, economy, and art. This principle held that the free and autonomous development of each sphere enabled the balanced and integrated development of the whole (whether self or society).[13] The spheres are legitimate in their own domain; one cannot substitute for any of the others; they are relatively autonomous parts of a whole in which each has its own place. This liberal principle deeply informed (and was informed by) Trubetskoi's understanding of church-state relations, as we will see.

Trubetskoi's fourth liberal principle was the rule of law, conceived ultimately as the guarantee and protection of human rights. Together with Pavel Novgorodtsev, he was one of the main figures in the Russian revival of natural law. He defined natural law as the higher moral norms that form "the ideal basis and criterion of the whole juridical order."[14] In his view the rule of law ultimately depended not on the threat of coercion but on a highly developed legal consciousness, one permeated with a deep respect for human dignity, a conviction in the inviolability of natural rights, and a keen sense of justice. This position was perfectly consistent with his idealism and directly countered the main thesis of legal positivism that state power is the source of law.

Trubetskoi's fifth and most general liberal principle was human progress or perfectibility, the transcendent culmination of which he imagined to be the kingdom of God.

Christian Humanism

Trubetskoi's liberal theology can be seen as a highly developed philosophical form of Christian humanism. What is distinctive to Christian humanism

12. In *Smysl zhizni* (1918), his profound meditation on Orthodox religious consciousness, Trubetskoi argued forcefully that recognition of the truths of faith (including those conveyed by miracles, revelation, the church, and the very person of Christ) depended on freedom of conscience. See Poole, "Religion," 230–31.

13. For an exposition of this important point, see Valliere, "Theological Liberalism."

14. Trubetskoi, *Lektsii po entsiklopedii prava*, 58–59.

is its emphasis on human capabilities—on human dignity rather than human depravity. Part of its meaning is that the human itself entails the divine, since (as I have suggested) certain core human capabilities refute naturalism and hold theistic implications. (Anti-humanistic forms of Christian thought such as fundamentalism thus deny themselves perhaps our best grounds—certainly our most immediate ones—for theistic belief.) First is reason or consciousness of higher ideals (e.g., truth, the good, beauty), which by their nature are absolute or infinite; such consciousness invalidates positivism, since the positive data of ordinary sensory experience are finite and suggest nothing of the absolute. The very concept of human dignity rests on the notion of absolute value, so it too, or rather it especially, implies the reality of the Absolute. Second is free will, the highest form of which is the capacity for "ideal self-determination." This power overrides external causal determination and again makes naturalism untenable. As Trubetskoi argued eloquently in "Freedom and Immortality," his inaugural lecture at Moscow University: A true appreciation of human dignity, consisting in the combination of reason and freedom which "always is the possibility of self-determination," leads unfailing to the conviction that man is "a vessel of the Absolute." Either freedom, universal reason, and human dignity are delusional defense mechanisms that we use to cope with the certain death that awaits everyone and eventually everything (as naturalism maintains) or, Trubetskoi says, they are real and man is immortal.[15]

On the basis of its conception of human nature, Christian humanism maintains that human beings are capable of recognizing the absolute divine ideal within themselves and of striving to become ever more worthy of it, to approximate it ever more closely, and to realize it ever more fully in themselves and in the world. In biblical language, we are graciously created in the divine "image" but are endowed with capabilities—reason, conscience, free will—that enable us to assimilate progressively to the divine "likeness" by our own efforts. This dynamic, synergetic interpretation of Genesis 1:26 was central to the development of Renaissance humanism, but its roots go back to Greek patristic theology.[16] In sum, the essential position of Christian humanism is the possibility of human progress (or perfectibility) toward the divine.

In contrast to the Christian humanist (or liberal theological) conception is the conservative view that human beings are so corrupted by sin

15. Trubetskoi, "Svoboda i bessmertie," 372, 377. Trubetskoi dedicated this essay to his brother Sergei, to signal their common understanding of freedom, human dignity, and immortality.

16. See Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness*; Jaeger, *Early Christianity*, 100–101; and Poole, "True Meaning of Humanism."

that any capacity for ideal self-determination is radically impaired. This view largely rejects the possibility of human progress, or the possibility that human beings can contribute to or participate in their own salvation. The conservative theological position can be traced to St. Augustine, whose ideas Trubetskoi criticized from his own theological perspective, as we will see. A striking expression of Trubetskoi's Christian humanism can be found in one of his Christological-soteriological formulations: "Christ's complete sacrifice saves man not as sorcery from outside, but as spiritual influence *liberating him from inside* and transforming his nature only on the condition of the *autonomous* self-determination of his will."[17]

Vladimir Soloviev and *Bogochelovechestvo*

The greatest Russian Christian humanist was Vladimir Soloviev, whose influence on Trubetskoi was immense. The central concept of Soloviev's religious philosophy is *Bogochelovechestvo*. It was the vehicle, Paul Valliere has written, "for a principled and profound Orthodox Christian humanism."[18] Bogochelovechestvo refers to the free human realization of the divine principle in ourselves and in the world, to the realization of humanity's intrinsic divine potential—deification or, to use the patristic term, *theosis*. It is the divine-human project of building the kingdom of God and of cosmic transformation in the unity of all (*vseedinstvo*), in which God will be all in all (1 Cor 15:28). In developing the concept, one of Soloviev's main theological sources was Chalcedonian Christology, which confirms that the two natures of Christ, divine and human, are united in his person in perfect harmony, without "division or confusion"—Christ being the integral "Godman." Another patristic source was the doctrine of salvation as deification or theosis, effectively conveyed by St. Athanasius's teaching that "God became man so that man might become God."[19] For Trubetskoi, Bogochelovechestvo was the very "meaning of life," the title of his last book. His religious philosophy, especially in that work, was deeply informed by both Chalcedonian Christology and the idea of deification.

17. Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 204.

18. Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology*, 12. This important study is largely devoted to the development of the concept of Bogochelovechestvo in modern Russian theology.

19. As Richard Gustafson wrote in a seminal essay, Soloviev made theosis "the cornerstone of his theology of Godmanhood." See Gustafson, "Soloviev's Doctrine of Salvation," 39. More recently see Pilch, *'Breathing the Spirit with Both Lungs'* and Coates, *Deification*.

Soloviev gave the patristic sources a modern philosophical development, specifically a Kantian one (I argue) that emphasized human agency and autonomy in the salvific process. He also shifted the emphasis from mysticism and monasticism to full, multi-faceted engagement with the world—a truly modern path to deification, but one which preserves the essential theological anthropology. In Soloviev's conception of Bogochelovechestvo, salvation comes not through divine agency alone but also through human autonomy and perfectibility according to the freely recognized inner divine ideal. It is a divine-human process. In his magnum opus, *Justification of the Good* (1897), Soloviev said that the kingdom of God cannot be expected by the immediate action of God, for "God has never acted immediately"—a striking statement of the need for free human cooperation with divine purposes. "Man is dear to God," he wrote, "not as a passive instrument of His will . . . but as a voluntary ally and coparticipant in His work in the universe."[20]

For Soloviev, Bogochelovechestvo was necessarily a social and cultural project, since human perfectibility, the ever fuller realization and development of human potential, is inconceivable apart from society and history. In his doctoral dissertation, *Critique of Abstract Principles* (1880), he called his social ideal "free theocracy"—"free" precisely because it purported to respect human autonomy, not only in the form of freedom of conscience but also as the rule of law.[21] Elsewhere I have argued that Soloviev's theocratic ideal was modeled on Kant's great vision of the kingdom of ends.[22] For both philosophers, the foundation of society was external right in the *political* community of the lawful state. The rule of law made possible progress to the higher, *ethical* community of the kingdom of ends, which Kant no less than Soloviev thought of as the church. Kant called it the ethical community of "a people of God."[23] The Russian philosopher may have wanted to suggest that the kingdom of God would not be possible until, at least, "free theocracy" was; or, in other words, that the kingdom of God will come only through the kingdom of ends. While "free theocracy" was not necessarily illiberal (or no more illiberal than the kingdom of ends), generally Soloviev's fellow Russian idealist philosophers were confounded by his combination of autonomy, dignity, and theocracy. Chicherin in particular was a harsh critic. He wrote a small book against *Critique of Abstract Principles* and a long

20. Solovyov, *Justification*, 150.

21. See Soloviev, *Kritika otvlechennykh nachal*, viii–ix.

22. Poole, "Kant."

23. Kant, *Religion*, 134.

essay against *Justification of the Good* (1897).[24] He thought the idea of free theocracy was a flagrant violation of freedom of conscience, at one point comparing Soloviev to Torquemada.[25]

Trubetskoi embraced Bogochelovechestvo as his own religious-philosophical framework and made it the foundation of his liberal theology. Like Soloviev, he emphasized that Bogochelovechestvo cannot be achieved without human autonomy or self-determination, and that working toward it is the supreme manifestation of human dignity. Echoing him, he wrote, "The justification of freedom consists precisely in the fact that without it *partnership* [*druzhestvo*] between God and creation would be impossible. A being deprived of freedom, i.e., the possibility of self-determination, could not be a free collaborator [*sotrudnik*] with God, a co-participant in His creative work. And this is precisely what God wants from His partner."[26] Though Trubetskoi largely followed Soloviev in matters of philosophical anthropology and metaphysics, he was sharply critical of him in social philosophy. Like Chicherin, he rejected "free theocracy" as a violation of human autonomy and freedom of conscience. However, Trubetskoi criticized Soloviev on his own terms (i.e., from the philosophical perspective of the idea of Bogochelovechestvo), which made him a more interesting critic.

Trubetskoi on St. Augustine's Worldview

Trubetskoi's first major book was his *magister* dissertation: *The Religious-Social Ideal of Western Christianity in the Fifth Century: St. Augustine's Worldview* (1892).[27] In it his liberal theology and Christian humanism are already clearly evident. Trubetskoi's study of the great father of the Western church and of the founder of medieval theocracy is a penetrating and powerful analysis, especially for its time. Though it stands on its own as a work in medieval intellectual history, in certain respects it was a response to Soloviev, both (negatively) as a critique of any attempt to forcibly realize the kingdom of God and (positively) as an affirmation of the theological anthropology of Bogochelovechestvo, which could not be more different than Augustine's conception of human nature. The book can also be read as an implicit critique of church-state relations in the Russian empire, where

24. Chicherin, *Mistitsizm v nauke*; and Chicherin, "O nachalakh etiki."

25. Chicherin, "O nachalakh etiki," 644–45.

26. Trubetskoi, *Smysl zhizni*, 104–5.

27. Trubetskoi, *Ideal zapadnogo khristianstva v V veke*. Five years later he published a second volume on the theocratic idea in Western Christianity, specifically on Pope Gregory VII and his era: *Ideal zapadnogo khristianstva v XI veke*.

autocratic subordination of church to state was the mirror-image of theocracy. In short, Trubetskoi's burden in *St. Augustine's Worldview* is to defend the liberal theological principles of human autonomy and dignity, freedom of conscience, and the relative independence of the various spheres of human life—church and state first of all.[28]

It would be difficult to find a more determined opponent of freedom of conscience than Augustine, who held that state power should be used against heretics and enemies of the church. Trubetskoi's account of Augustine is fair, sophisticated, and on the whole very critical. He believed that Augustine laid the intellectual foundations of Western theocracy in the Middle Ages and that the medieval Catholic Church cannot be understood apart from him. In the introduction to his study he compares the overall character of church-state relations in the eastern and western halves of the Roman empire, beginning with Constantine. In both the West and East the two spheres of church and state were intermingled and conflated, but in opposite ways. It is significant that Trubetskoi characterizes the two spheres as intermingled, as though they ought not to be, which was precisely his view. In Byzantium the conflation took the form of caesaropapism, state dominance over the church. In the Latin West, it took the form of theocracy proper, the supremacy of church over state. The Roman church enjoyed independent spiritual power compared to its Orthodox counterpart and indeed came to exercise secular powers, compensating for the weak state. Although the church's relative independence contributed over the long run to the dualism of church and state that many historians have seen as an important element of Western liberalism, the church's very power involved its own type of dangers to autonomy, as Trubetskoi will show at some length. At this point, in his introductory remarks, he writes, "The conflation of church and state, having taken the form of worldly despotism in the East, of the dominance of secular power over the church, in the West leads by contrast to the state gradually yielding to the church and to the church taking the form of the state."[29]

The barbarian invasions of Rome had a profound effect on Augustine's worldview, including his ideas of the church's worldly role. Trubetskoi, in reconstructing and analyzing his thought, begins at the more basic level of Augustine's conception of human nature, before proceeding to his social philosophy and teaching on the church. Already at this level the Russian

28. Trubetskoi's treatment of the problem of the correlation of the absolute and relative, supernatural and natural, transcendent and immanent, God and world has occupied Igor I. Evlampiev in a series of articles, including Evlampiev, "Problema."

29. Trubetskoi, *Ideal zapadnogo khristianstva v V veke*, 11. Subsequent page references cited parenthetically.

religious philosopher fundamentally differs with the Western church father. Trubetskoi emphasizes Augustine's extremely pessimistic view of human nature. St. Augustine thought that human nature, in the case both of the individual person and of humanity as a whole, was wracked by sin and could not save itself or even make progress toward salvation. According to him, freedom cannot overcome human weakness and depravity. Left to our own devices, we are doomed. Salvation is possible only externally, by the action of divine grace. Between the overwhelming force of evil and the invincible force of grace, as Trubetskoi characterizes Augustine's outlook, "man is nothing: his freedom is entirely nullified from below or from above" (24). Within this conception of human nature, it is clear that freedom of conscience could have no role.

Trubetskoi, much more sanguine about human possibilities, is highly critical of Augustine's annihilation of human freedom. He refers to it as the "great imperfection" of his teaching and as a fundamental departure from Christianity itself (205, 208). In Augustine's fatalistic theory, salvation is predestined for the elect and is a consequence of the unilateral action of grace, without active human involvement or cooperation. Trubetskoi objects that this is contrary to the "basic Christian principle" that "salvation can be the work [*delo*] of neither God alone nor man alone." Clearly writing under Soloviev's influence, he continues, "the Christian idea of Bogochelovechestvo requires, besides grace's action from above, also the *co-action* [*sodeistvie*] of human freedom in the work of salvation" (202).[30] Bogochelovechestvo, as we have seen, refers to humanity's divine origin, potential and destiny, which it is our task to (co-) realize. It is a powerful affirmation of human dignity and personhood. Both Soloviev and Trubetskoi believed Bogochelovechestvo to be the core meaning of the incarnation. "The Christian ideal," Trubetskoi writes, "requires the perfect reconciliation of human freedom with Divine grace in Christ—the organic unity and interaction of free Divinity and free humanity" (208). With this he levels perhaps his sharpest criticism of Augustine: the church father, in denying human freedom and thinking that the good is wholly a supernatural principle, not an intrinsic human potential to be freely chosen and realized, devalues the human nature of Christ and thus misses the very meaning of the incarnation (89–92, 206–8).

Augustine developed his theory of grace in opposition to Pelagius, who held that the main factor in salvation was free will, the individual

30. In general Orthodox theology has not drawn the sharp opposition between (human) nature and grace that has characterized much of Western Christian thought. See Valliere, "Introduction," 508, and Valliere, "Vladimir Soloviev," 554. Soloviev's view was that grace comes as human beings freely perfect themselves and is a result of that process. See Soloviev, *Istoriia*, 337–42.

effort of the human person. Trubetskoi criticizes Pelagius for his excessive individualism and naïve faith in natural human goodness and rational perfectibility, but writes with sympathy about his overall view of human nature (179–83). Pelagius, in sharp contrast to Augustine, extolled human dignity and the absolute value of the human person (173). Free will and conscience are essential to his idea of man. Paraphrasing him, Trubetskoi says "conscience, in condemning evil as something foreign to us and in recognizing good as *our own*, thus proves the goodness of our nature, a certain holiness inherent to our soul. This is the moral law, written in the hearts of people, of which the apostle Paul speaks" (174). Despite his various criticisms of Pelagius (including aspects of his Christology), Trubetskoi clearly believed (although he could not explicitly say) that Pelagius was closer to the "basic Christian principle" of Bogochelovechestvo than was Augustine's "anti-human" theology, as he often refers to it. While Bogochelovechestvo—the deification of humanity in God (*theosis*)—may not be entirely a *self*-realization of human potential, it rests on conscious human aspiration and self-determination, for an achieved perfection is higher than one by grace alone. It rests, in other words, on freedom of conscience. This is Trubetskoi's underlying criticism of Augustine.

Augustine's view of human nature is the basis for his social philosophy and understanding of the church. He held that since salvation cannot be achieved by human effort but only by grace, our main social and political task is not to strive for progress (which is impossible given human depravity) but rather to establish and maintain order while we await our predestined fate. Order is not a framework for internal development and progress, but rather one for stasis pending external salvation through grace. Augustine's ideal is a timeless universe, in which everything is one and whole, in a perpetual state of peace, rest, and equilibrium (30–31). This is a transcendent ideal, but it is also his model for social and historical reality, one that is antithetical to the very idea of progress. In our fallen state, the best that we can do is to maintain order and prevent further degeneration. Order is not only the framework for salvation through grace, it is already the working of grace, to be further fulfilled in a higher transcendent perfect order.

Together with order, Trubetskoi identifies two other main principles of Augustine's worldview: law and unity. These too are aspects of divine grace and providence. All three metaphysical principles are normative for intramundane reality. The church is their truest historical embodiment. It is to rule as a theocracy over human society, preventing further decay until the end of time.[31] The church, as the earthly embodiment of divine

31. Trubetskoi suggests that Augustine's idea of theocracy was inspired by Ambrose:

order, commands absolute authority. Augustine understood it as "the earthly manifestation of God's power [*Bogovlastie*] in the social order," as Trubetskoi phrases it (106).

Such a conception of the church was obviously incompatible with freedom of conscience. Against enemies of order and unity such as the Donatists and other heretics, the church was to wield the full force of the secular sword (155). More generally, in view of the depravity of corrupted human nature, Augustine maintained that most people can be brought to the good only by force; for the large majority the unity of Christ is inevitably an external, forcible one (155). "The unity of a universal divine organization was his ideal," Trubetskoi remarks, "and it was to be realized through coercion and violence" (156). The necessity of violence followed from his view that human beings do not have free will in relation to the divine. Thus for Augustine coercion, as Trubetskoi puts it, "is the universal and necessary mode of the action of grace. The whole theory is no more and no less than the result of the most complete conflation of the order of grace with the juridical, coercive order" (157).

Augustine's theocratic idea rested on a metaphysical foundation that Trubetskoi calls the "divine unity of all" (66 ff.). Certainly this suggests Soloviev's system of the same name (*vseedinstvo*), but for Soloviev the unity of all specified a cosmic transformation that was to be achieved through human freedom, self-realization, and progress; for Augustine it was an all-encompassing divine order that excluded progress. Indeed he thinks divine all-unity has already been realized. For him unity, order, and law are in themselves an absolute good. He takes their presence in the structure of the natural universe as not only the form of "what is" but also the absolute ideal, the norm of all that "ought to be" (70). This identification of order or unity with the absolute good is, for Trubetskoi, one of Augustine's fundamental errors (72). It conflates the natural and supernatural worlds. Trubetskoi describes the curious results: on the one hand Augustine proclaims that the transcendent divine principle is the antithesis of earthly reality and corrupt human nature, but on the other hand he deifies the natural order. Without a clear border between the natural and the divine, extreme asceticism, which rejects everything temporal because it is not eternal, merges with its polar opposite, the deification of the temporal as eternal. Trubetskoi remarks that this merging of two extremes—ascetic contempt for everything worldly and conflation of the spiritual with the

"In the person of Ambrose the Christian ideal appeared to Augustine as the total dominance of Divine order over life, as an omnipotent church ruling over individual and society, as a *theocracy* in which the worldly principle is subordinate to the spiritual" (44).

worldly—was not peculiar to Augustine but characteristic of the whole structure of medieval Western theocracy (73).

Augustine's treatment of the natural order of the universe as an ideal moral order and embodiment of divine all-unity had perverse consequences. Natural necessity, "what is," is given ethical significance and conflated with "what ought to be." In Trubetskoi's words, "everything in the world is put together excellently and purposefully, *what is coincides with what ought to be*" (74). The Russian philosopher describes this as "false supernaturalism." But it also easily turns into "false naturalism": the moral ideal is reduced to a type of natural necessity, "annihilating any moral freedom" (74). This is the most radical denial of freedom of conscience and the philosophical basis for theocracy and for other types of ideological absolutism (such as communism), as has often been pointed out since Trubetskoi's time. Interestingly he says that Augustine's reasoning anticipates Hegel's idea that "all that is real is rational," and suggests that Augustine's cosmology might be called a system of Christian panlogism (75). In it the individual person is not an end in itself but only a means for the realization of the divine objective order. Hence the "anti-human character" of Augustine's system, in which the divine law triumphs over the individual as natural necessity (78–79).

The culmination of Augustine's system is his teaching about the City of God. Although the City of God is an absolute transcendent ideal, it is also being realized in history, most completely in the church. Despite the imperfection of the historical realm, Augustine thought that, "even now the church is the kingdom of Christ and the heavenly kingdom" (234). The implications of this view are striking, as Trubetskoi makes clear: "Once the kingdom of Christ exists on earth, any other kingdom must disappear from the face of earth" (237). The state has no legitimate existence outside the church. Augustine rejects the idea of an autonomous earthly kingdom (the state) alongside but separate from the church (241). There can be no autonomous sphere whatsoever outside the church as the historical form of the City of God. In a key summary of Augustine's whole approach, Trubetskoi writes that grace and freedom oppose each other "as two mutually hostile social principles, which in their mutual antagonism determine the course of world history. Grace is embodied in the collective organization of the City of God, while freedom appears as an evil, satanic principle, giving rise to the sinful organization of the earthly kingdom" (244).

Trubetskoi's study can be appraised as a penetrating liberal critique of Augustine. At the most fundamental level, the Russian philosopher rejects Augustine's view of human nature as incompatible with human dignity, personhood, and the "basic Christian principle" of Bogochelovechestvo. Augustine's debased conception of human nature excludes freedom of

conscience and thus also the very possibility of authentic human development and self-realization. At another level, Trubetskoi criticizes the church father's cosmology and philosophy of history, which depict the natural and historical worlds as reflections or embodiments of divine all-unity and order. The church is the highest historical embodiment of the City of God and thus ought to rule humanity as a theocracy.

Trubetskoi emphasizes four main consequences of Augustine's conflation of the natural and historical realms with the supernatural and divine ones, or of the relative and temporal with the absolute and eternal. First, it obliterates moral freedom, since the absolute ideal of "what ought to be" already "is" (or will be); the good is realized in the world with the force of natural necessity, without a role for human moral choice and aspiration. Theocracy (or another ideological absolutism) presents itself as the instrument of this necessary realization of the good. Second, making part of the world (such as the church) absolute denies the rest of it autonomy and independent value. Once one part is deified, the rest is rejected. This accounts for the peculiar medieval attitude of simultaneous ascetic contempt for, and deification of, the world. There was no middle ground between these two extremes. Third, without a middle ground, without recognizing the autonomy and value of the world as relative (instead of mistaking it as worthless or absolute), there is no possibility of progress. (This is also the result of collapsing "ought" into "is," since progress requires an ideal.) Fourth, bringing the absolute into the world (again, in the form of theocracy or any ideocracy) necessarily excludes freedom of conscience. And without it the only absolute on earth—the human person—cannot realize its fullest, truly divine potential.

Trubetskoi on Soloviev's Worldview

More than twenty years after his study of St. Augustine, Trubetskoi published his massive two-volume study, *Vladimir S. Soloviev's Worldview* (1913). It is the classic work on Russia's greatest religious philosopher and probably Trubetskoi's best known work. Written after the 1905 revolution and relatively late in Trubetskoi's short life, it is informed by (and further develops) the liberal theological principles that Trubetskoi had defended since the 1890s. The most encompassing of those principles was Bogochelovechestvo, which Trubetskoi identifies as the "immortal soul" and "center" of Soloviev's philosophy.[32] At the same time, he was highly critical of "free theocracy," which he thought was plainly incompatible with Bogochelovechestvo.

32. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:x, 325. Subsequent references

In *Vladimir Soloviev's Worldview*, Trubetskoi's account of Bogochelovechestvo contains the following striking passage, one highly revealing of his own approach to the problem:

> Religious consciousness includes two necessary elements—faith in God and faith in man. The basic content of any religion is faith in the meaning of life. It is clear that this faith cannot have as its object *only* God: in order for life to have meaning *for man*, he must also believe in his own absolute dignity, in himself as a possible participant in eternal Divine life. Faith in God can have absolute value for man only if God can unite with man, without suppressing or absorbing him. This is the same as what is expressed in the idea of Bogochelovechestvo. This idea, as is thus obvious, is not just one of the possible forms of religious consciousness: it is the most perfected, supreme expression of religious consciousness in general—that which all religions have sought and seek with greater or less success [332].

Bogochelovechestvo, Trubetskoi writes, "is the universal principle that unites the positive content of all religions in an organic synthesis" (333). In these pages he draws attention to some of Soloviev's most distinctive formulations of the idea of Bogochelovechestvo—for example, that our likeness to God consists in our capacity for self-determination;[33] that perfectibility or the capacity "to become" is the essentially human attribute;[34] and that it is necessary to distinguish between two absolutes, or two poles of the absolute, where the first is self-subsistent being (God), the second is in the process of becoming (man), "and the full truth can be expressed by the word 'Bogochelovechestvo'" (329–30).[35]

Following Soloviev, Trubetskoi declares that Bogochelovechestvo is the mystery of the universe, its meaning and reason. It is the ultimate end or *telos* of the cosmic process. In a remarkable section of *Vladimir Soloviev's Worldview* called "Bogochelovechestvo and Anthropocentrism," Trubetskoi argues that Bogochelovechestvo is not really anthropocentric: it would be the goal of rational, self-determining consciousness anywhere in the universe, except that "human" in "Bogochelovechestvo" would have to refer to any such consciousness, human or not. In a theistic universe, according to Trubetskoi, extraterrestrial self-conscious and moral beings

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cited parenthetically, all to the first volume.

33. See Solovyov, *Justification*, 145, 152, 176.

34. Solovyov, *Justification*, lv. See also Soloviev, "Meaning of Love," esp. 92, and Soloviev, "Idea of a Superman."

35. The quoted phrase is Soloviev's: *Kritika otvlechennykh nachal*, 323.

are also created in the image of God and strive to realize the divine likeness in themselves and in their worlds. "If God is really *Absolute*," Trubetskoi writes, "then no planet, no heavenly body or constellation in the cosmos, can have any other goal except the incarnation of this Absolute. The entire goal and task of the evolution of these solar systems comes down to preparing a venue for the incarnation of God, to generating a being worthy of receiving God, one capable of uniting with Him without division or confusion" (341). With this last phrase Trubetskoi uses the Chalcedonian formula to describe the emergence of Christ, or Christs, among non-human but self-determining species elsewhere in the universe. This was a startling line of theological inquiry for Russia in 1913. Trubetskoi practiced a type of philosophical theology that, like Soloviev's own approach, was universalistic and opposed to revelation in any arbitrary, brute sense, which is always inimical to freedom of conscience.

It is clear that Trubetskoi made Bogochelovechestvo the central concept of his own religious philosophy, and that in this he was deeply indebted to his friend and mentor. We know that Soloviev thought that the path to Bogochelovechestvo was "free theocracy." Trubetskoi could hardly have been more critical of this element of Soloviev's system. Even in 1913, more than a decade after Soloviev's death and despite Trubetskoi's view that the great philosopher had abandoned his theocratic project in the last several years of his life, Trubetskoi felt obliged to devote many pages of *Vladimir Soloviev's Worldview* to criticizing the idea. Indeed the book's overall framework is the critique of what Trubetskoi takes to be Soloviev's utopianism, in its theocratic and other aspects.

Part three of the first volume covers what Trubetskoi calls Soloviev's "utopian period" (1882–1894). Here Trubetskoi analyzes "free theocracy" at length, but he also discusses it in an earlier chapter, on Soloviev's objective ethics in *Critique of Abstract Principles*. In the earlier chapter, Trubetskoi reconstructs the philosopher's argument that absolute human value entails the metaphysics of the unity of all, that love is ultimately the expression of and longing for such unity, that this conception of absolute morality implies a higher divine order and the divine principle in man, and that all this is the anthropological basis for Soloviev's mystical social ideal of free theocracy. Trubetskoi appreciates, of course, that the very meaning of this ideal is the free, autonomous, human realization of the divine principle. In his close paraphrase,

> The rational [or human] principle serves as the necessary *formal* means for the realization of the divine idea: this means that the divine idea, forming the eternal essence of man, must at the

> same time be freely appropriated by him and rationally realized in external phenomena. It cannot be for him an external necessity; man must, by his own activity, own this idea and *become conscious* of it. The divine principle is not confined to the dark sphere of immediate feeling and naïve, half-conscious faith: that would be contrary to human dignity. The mystical principle must be brought into the form of reason and become an object of free *assimilation* [182].

Trubetskoi remarks that in these reflections on the "true religious principle in normal society" (a section of *Critique of Abstract Principles*), Soloviev's deepest religious experiences are expressed and "perfection of form is in full accordance with depth of content" (183). Nonetheless he is convinced that "free theocracy" can only be a transcendent ideal—Bogochelovechestvo or the kingdom of God—not an earthly order, since once the state is included in theocracy (which is theocracy's typical meaning) then it is no longer free but coercive (178). It is obvious to Trubetskoi that the state cannot be a constituent part of the kingdom of God. His fundamental criticism, which he develops throughout his book, is that "free theocracy" is an immanentization or utopianization of the transcendent ideal of Bogochelovechestvo or the kingdom of God. Since the term "free theocracy" can properly describe only Bogochelovechestvo, there is no good reason to use it (as Trubetskoi might have put the point). But Soloviev did use it—thus confusing the essential differences between transcendent and intramundane possibilities and obscuring the very nature of Bogochelovechestvo, namely, that it can only be freely achieved.

Trubetskoi appreciates that Soloviev wanted to contrast his ideal of "free theocracy" to "abstract clericalism" or false theocracy. Both philosophers emphasized the stark defects of these historical forms: violation of freedom of conscience, displacement of reason by church authority, suppression of civil society and the autonomy of its constituent spheres. But Trubetskoi thinks that any theocracy will reproduce, to greater or lesser extent, these defects. His abiding concern is autonomy not only as self-determination or freedom of conscience, but also as the relative independence of the various spheres of human life. Notwithstanding Soloviev's assurances in *Critique of Abstract Principles* about the "inner relation of social spheres in free theocracy," Trubetskoi does not see how the autonomy of these spheres can be preserved. Soloviev's social ideal is not Cavour's "free church in a free state," but rather, Trubetskoi says, a great theocratic synthesis that "must encompass all spheres of human life—church, state, and economy" (176). In Soloviev's own words, "The

Church as the Kingdom of God must embrace absolutely everything." To Trubetskoi, this sounds like a dire threat to autonomy.

In his preliminary consideration of free theocracy, Trubetskoi points to "one striking utopian trait of this project of the earthly transformation of humanity": it rests on the free subordination of state and economy to the church, which subordination, as Soloviev himself recognized, "presupposes that all members of the given society belong equally to both church and state." This condition cannot, however, be freely met, and therefore, Trubetskoi declares, it violates "the most precious of all freedoms—freedom of conscience" (177). Moreover, the fact that this condition is the premise of free theocracy and yet cannot be freely met reveals the utopian character of the whole project. More generally, "the utopia is expressed in the attempt to fit the Kingdom of God within the framework of the church-state organization, in the dream of making the state into a church, of achieving in it the likemindedness that is possible only in a society of believers." In short, "the utopia consists . . . in the attempt to bring the state with its external coercive mechanism into the Kingdom of God." But if Soloviev's great synthesis cannot be realized within the bounds of state and economic life, Trubetskoi remarks, this does not mean that it is false; we must rather seek its realization in a higher, transcendent sphere of being (178).

Soloviev believed that free theocracy was to be prepared by the reunification of the Christian churches. Trubetskoi was also very critical of this aspect of Soloviev's project. His criticisms are interesting and are part of his fuller discussion of theocracy, to which he turns in part three of his book. Trubetskoi's objection is that reunification of the churches, especially under Rome's direction, would come at the expense of their individual distinctiveness and particularities, spiritual differences that he believes are valuable and ought to be preserved.[36] For this reason, he contends that the division of the churches serves universal Christian purposes better than would one universal church, which, contrary to Soloviev's ecumenical vision, would likely be subject to Romanization. He criticizes Soloviev for equating the Catholic Church with his ideal universal one.

Trubetskoi is specifically concerned that Soloviev's project diminishes the mystical distinctiveness of Orthodoxy. In his 1883 essay "The Great Schism and Christian Politics," Soloviev suggested that the Orthodox Church takes a passive, merely contemplative approach to the divine principle, while the Catholic Church strives to actively realize it in building the kingdom

36. This was also Boris Chicherin's point of view. See Chicherin, *Filosofiia prava*, 111.

of God on earth.[37] Trubetskoi regards this as a crude misrepresentation of Orthodoxy. According to him, "The Eastern church, despite Soloviev, not only does not reject the *effectualness* of the divine principle in man, but, to the contrary, this effectualness—the materialization of the divine and the *deification* of man in consequence of the incarnation of God—is for it the center of all religious life" (482). The difference between the two churches is in their respective approaches to the effectualness of the divine principle: Orthodoxy understands it mystically while Catholicism understands it practically, externally, and institutionally. For Catholicism the divine is a matter of power, as Trubetskoi puts it bluntly. For Orthodoxy it is "the metaphysical source of an inner spiritual-physiological process taking place in man" (483). In another version of the contrast, for the West the church is spiritual power over this world, while for the East it is the mysterious house of God, the place where the divine-human mystery happens (483). In the church Orthodoxy sees a kingdom not of this world (486).

Trubetskoi appreciates that Orthodox mysticism does not exhaust the fullness of the Christian ideal, and that an exclusive mysticism can lead to indifference and enslavement to the world. This is just what happened, he observes, in the case of Byzantine caesaropapism, "which distorts the religious idea of the Christian East" (487). The West, by contrast, preserved the independence of spiritual power from the state's yoke, and this, Trubetskoi remarks, is without doubt the "relative truth of Roman Catholicism." Indeed in this "Roman Catholicism contains an element that is valuable and necessary for universal Christianity" (488). However, Trubetskoi thinks that the exclusive assertion of this practical element, what Soloviev criticized as papism, is more dangerous than the exclusive mysticism of the Orthodox East, because it mistakes the relative for the absolute. "Precisely because the Roman Catholic Church affirms its center *in the world*, and the Orthodox Church—*outside the world*, the world poses a much greater danger for the first," Trubetskoi writes (490). This man of deep Orthodox faith sides with his church, judging that its mysticism is a truer path to the realization of the divine principle in man than the practical Christianity of Rome. But he fully acknowledges that both paths are needed, "and from this point of view," he says, "the separation of the churches has had its good side."

There is a broader point in these reflections. In this world, Trubetskoi writes, the Christian ideal can only be grasped in pieces and only partially realized.

> The *fullness* of the universal truth does not fit within the bounds of mundane, *limited* existence. Coming into our dim earthly

37. See Solovyov, "Great Dispute."

> sphere, the single beam of divine light is inevitably refracted: separate parts of humanity see it differently. And, so long as people remain in their state of sin, imperfection and finitude, any attempt to collect these multicolored rays into one undivided and perfectly white beam of divine light will inevitably fail.

Soloviev's project of church unification is such an attempt, in Trubetskoi's estimation. It shares the fate of his overall vision of the unity of all and absolute synthesis: for Trubetskoi these are transcendent ideals, and attempting to make them immanent realities "inevitably leads to the replacement of the unity of all with something partial, limited, earthly" (492). Here Trubetskoi applies the logic of Soloviev's *Critique of Abstract Principles* to the philosopher himself, or the philosopher as Trubetskoi understands him.

Trubetskoi's view that Orthodox religious consciousness emphasizes the mystical and transcendent informs his final assessment of "free theocracy." This approach is perfectly consistent with his adoption throughout of Bogochelovechestvo as the critical perspective from which he analyzes "free theocracy," since human autonomy, self-determination, and freedom of conscience ultimately depend on ideals that are, by their nature as ideals, transcendent. The immanentization of these ideals in "free theocracy" and other forms of utopianism closes off the possibility of self-determination and so also of human progress toward Bogochelovechestvo. This is Trubetskoi's basic criticism: "free theocracy" defeats Bogochelovechestvo. Much to his consternation, Soloviev uses the term "free theocracy" to mean both Bogochelovechestvo or the kingdom of God—"the free unification of God and man"—and a temporal church-state order (565). If it means the kingdom of God, then it cannot include the state, which is coercive and thus incompatible with the freedom that is the condition of Bogochelovechestvo. Yet Soloviev does include the state as a constituent part of the church in "free theocracy" (536, 565–66). The result is the first of two main contradictions that Trubetskoi identifies: once the state enters into its composition, "free theocracy ceases to be a *free* union between God and man and becomes instead a coercive order" (567). The second contradiction is, of course, that "free theocracy" violates freedom of conscience (569). These contradictions lead Trubetskoi to declare, "'Free theocracy' is just as absurd as 'round square' or 'wood iron.'" In short, "free theocracy" is not free and therefore can describe neither Bogochelovechestvo nor the path to it (576).

The transcendence or other-worldliness of the kingdom of God is a principle of paramount importance for Trubetskoi. "The worst enemy of Christian religious thought," he writes,

> is immanentism, the essence of which consists in the affirmation of the earthly present as ultimate and absolute. In its pure aspect it is expressed in the complete and total denial of the transcendent. For religious thought this open paganism is of comparatively little danger. . . . Much more dangerous for Christian philosophy in general and for Soloviev's philosophy in particular are those mixed, compromised forms of immanentism . . . where the transcendent and Divine are imperceptibly . . . overshadowed by one or another earthly value [88].

"Free theocracy" is the perfect example of such "mixed forms of immanentism" in Soloviev's thought. It typifies how "he settles the problem of the realization of the Kingdom of God on earth by, in essence, constantly neglecting the border between the two worlds" (573). The "earth" on which the kingdom of God is realized is a new and utterly transformed one, where the state, obviously, has been left behind. This new earth is thus not theocratic but anarchic (576). Until its advent, "the state presupposes just that condition of humanity when social life has not yet become the embodiment of the Divine, and when accordingly there has not been an *internal* victory of good over evil . . . as must happen with the organic unification of God and man. . . . This is the whole meaning of the coercive organization of the state, and it is also why the state cannot be transformed into the Kingdom of God or enter as a link into its composition" (578).

Trubetskoi argues that Soloviev's failure to firmly distinguish between the transcendent and immanent realms accounts for his conflation of church and state, the same type of conflation that characterized medieval theocracy (578). The essential principle that Trubetskoi defends here is respect for the relative autonomy of the secular and spiritual spheres, each of which is legitimate in its own domain, has its own tasks, and cannot take the place of the other. The fact that the state belongs to this world and not the next one does not justify a negative attitude toward it. The state has essential positive tasks in its own domain. As Trubetskoi writes, "rejecting Soloviev's theocratic understanding of the state, we are not at all obliged to fall into the opposite extreme of earthly anarchism" (583).

Soloviev himself understood perfectly well the positive tasks of the state, and more generally of law, and he gave them powerful formulation in a number of places, though Trubetskoi's view is that he also completely obscured them in "free theocracy." For Soloviev the virtue of state and law is that they make possible the realization of all higher potentials of human nature, for they are the very conditions of civilized life and peaceful society. By equalizing human relations, law enables people to develop as persons. It is thus an essential spiritualizing force. In *Justification of the Good*, Soloviev

says that society is necessary for people to "freely perfect themselves." But society cannot exist if anyone who wishes can rob, maim, and murder. Law forcibly prevents this and so, according to Soloviev, "is a necessary condition of moral perfection."[38] Or, as Trubetskoi writes, "Anyone who wants human life at some point, though beyond earth's limits, to become heaven, must bless the force that, albeit externally, meanwhile prevents the world from becoming hell" (583). The last phrase is Soloviev's, also from *Justification of the Good*, the very concept of which is progress, or the valuation of the relative as the necessary means to the absolute. Trubetskoi does not refer to *Justification of the Good* in this context, but he does capture its meaning with a famous biblical metaphor: "The path to the Kingdom of God once appeared in a dream to Jacob: it is a ladder whose top is in heaven and whose base is on earth" (582).

Justification of the Good was written during that last several years of Soloviev's life, during what Trubetskoi calls his "positive" period—positive because, in Trubetskoi's view, it was marked by the collapse of Soloviev's theocratic utopianism. He devotes the second volume of his study to this period and to close analysis of *Justification of the Good*. Trubetskoi's belief that Soloviev had abandoned "free theocracy" in his final period makes it all the more remarkable, as noted above, that he devoted so much of his study to critiquing the project. Clearly he thought that freedom of conscience, the autonomy of church and state, and the transcendence of the kingdom of God were principles that still needed to be defended—against the autocracy, which had not fulfilled the promise of freedom of conscience that it had made in the October Manifesto of 1905; against what Trubetskoi disparaged as the Russian "state church," which paid for its privileged status with lost spiritual independence; and against the radical intelligentsia, which sought the forcible realization of its own versions of the kingdom of God on earth.

Trubetskoi's interpretation of Soloviev is on balance a liberal one, both in its embrace of Bogochelovechestvo as the inner, autonomous, human realization of the divine principle and in its criticism of free theocracy. It is likely that Trubetskoi's sharp criticism of free theocracy as a utopianization of the transcendent ideal of Bogochelovechestvo was partly a reaction to contemporary utopian appropriations of Soloviev, though no doubt Trubetskoi thought that free theocracy was itself utopian and that it invited the appropriations it received. He seems to have missed the extent to which Soloviev's social ideal was modeled after Kant's kingdom of ends. It is ironic, given the utopianism of his times, that Trubetskoi thought (writing in 1913)

38. Solovyov, *Justification*, 320, 322, translation slightly modified and without italics in original. See also Soloviev, "Law and Morality," 148–50.

that the new century was marked by a collapse of the utopianism typical of nineteenth-century Russian intellectual life. He believed that the new, sober sense of reality permitted sound assessment of Soloviev's legacy. "Namely in our critical epoch," he writes, "when the catastrophes descending upon us have brought the crushing blow to romantic utopianism in all its aspects and forms, the time has come to understand Soloviev's thought and to give it objective evaluation" (viii). In this Trubetskoi may have hoped to make utopianism a thing of the past by asserting that it already was one. He presented Soloviev as a microcosm of his historical epoch (as Trubetskoi imagined it), arguing that the great philosopher, in the last decade of his life, had triumphed over his former utopianism, repudiating his belief in the kingdom of God on earth.[39] He explained this change by emphasizing Soloviev's new awareness of the power of evil, dramatized in his last work, *Three Conversations on War, Progress and the End of World History, with a Brief Tale of the Anti-Christ*. This particular emphasis (the displacement of Soloviev's humanist optimism by eschatological premonitions) was itself a characteristic reading of the times.[40]

Conclusion

Within five years of Trubetskoi's book on Soloviev, the tsarist regime had collapsed and the Bolsheviks had come to power. Trubetskoi believed that the Russian Revolution had, ironically, brought the Russian Orthodox Church benefit. As he put it in one of his 1919 essays: "In the days of secular prosperity under tsarism, the Church found itself in a condition of deep humiliation and decline. By contrast, the catastrophe of the secular order has been for it a source of creative work and ascent."[41] The process of church renewal began with the national council (*sobor*) that opened in August 1917. Trubetskoi believed that the restoration of the patriarchate

39. Trubetskoi, *Mirosozertsanie Vl. S. Solovieva*, 1:89–91; 2:17–24.

40. By contrast, recent scholarship has tended to emphasize the overall continuity in Soloviev's thought. At the end of his life Soloviev might well have acquired a heightened sense of evil threatening the world, though his response was not passive resignation, but a redoubled commitment to struggling against it (contrary to the Tolstoyan doctrine of non-resistance). This suggests that he continued to believe that historical progress was the necessary preparation for the kingdom of God. As Judith Deutsch Kornblatt put it in her path-breaking article on *Three Conversations*, "salvation comes, even in this most apocalyptic of works, only because of, and by means of, human participation." See Kornblatt, "Soloviev," 70.

41. Trubetskoi, *Velikaia revoliutsiia*, 24. He made this same argument in *Smysl zhizni*, 261–64.

marked a decisive break with two centuries of the church's spiritual slavery, a condition that he diagnosed as one of the underlying causes of the Russian Revolution. One of his last articles was published abroad in English under the title, "The Bolshevist Utopia and the Religious Movement in Russia."[42] In it he pinned his hopes for Russia's national recovery on the popular religious movement that he thought was developing across the country in the wake of the church sobor.

In the last several years of his life Trubetskoi witnessed human beings at their worst, amidst total war, the militarization of life, revolutionary anarchy, and the collapse of the rule of law. He referred to the human capacity for evil as *zverchelovechestvo* (beastmanhood) and had no doubt about the abundance of its historical manifestations.[43] Yet to the end Trubetskoi's theological liberalism sustained his faith in the ultimate triumph of the good and in Bogochelovechestvo as the meaning of life.

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42. See Trubetskoi, "Bolshevist Utopia."

43. Poole, "Religion," 233–37.

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