

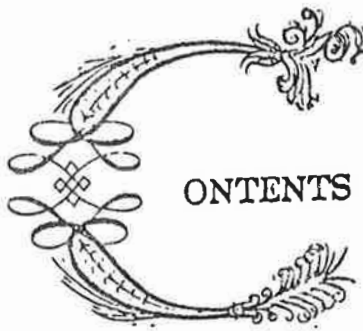
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HENRY BRIGGS MAP OF NORTH AMERICA, 1625.



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THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORTHODOX IKONS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT.

In a previous paper, we discussed the question of the sources and development of *psychostasia* (soul-stations) in Christian art, and asserted that the representation of the weighing of the soul with a balance (a motif borrowed from pagan art) is the only representation of a *psychostasion* which has been popular and widespread in any Christian art, and it has been most popular in post-Orthodox Western art. The appearance of a representation of toll-gates or toll-houses in art is very late and extremely limited. In almost every case, it consists of a simple superimposition of an altered central detail from the ikon of the Ladder of Divine Ascent over the correct central detail of an Orthodox portrayal of the Last Judgment (with, of course, the necessary mis-interpretation of the Ladder). However, the paintings which profess to represent these toll-gates are so abstract, indefinite and illogical that there is considerable question as to whether they were originally intended to be interpreted as toll-gates or toll-houses at all.

We wish to assert that the development of representations of *psychostasia* of any sort in Christian art is a phenomenon which developed outside the Orthodox Church, and that Orthodox ikonography (except where elements were directly borrowed from the West) remained faithful, in their general schemata, to ancient Church prototypes. On the other hand, the gradual development of the *psychostasia* in the ikonography of Western art can be fairly well traced, and it closely parallels theological developments contiguous to it.

The earliest ikonographic representations of the Last Judgment contented themselves with demonstrating that a judgment had taken place, by simply showing the enthroned Christ, with sheep already separated from the kid-goats.¹ [see plates 1, 2 and 3]. There is a considerable superiority in this type of representation, not only in its simple, majestic dignity and its conformity with the texts of Scripture, but also in its simple, clear revelation of the meaning of the word "judgment". As we have discussed above, the act of judgment consists of a simple act of God's Will, of His good and merciful justice, according to which He places each soul in the state proper to itself. In a similar vein, the panel of the tomb of Bishop Agilbert (+680) in St Paul's Church at the Jouarre Monastery (Seine-et-Marne), portrays this simple, ancient Christian understanding. On the first panel, Christ is portrayed in majesty surrounded by the four evangelists (the "Tetramorph" of the vision of the Lord of Hosts). On the large adjoining panel, we see the resurrection on the last day. The faithful have their arms raised in hope and praise toward the returning Lord. In Christ's hand is a scroll (which Hubert, no doubt correctly, interprets as being "The Book of Life").² This is no scene of extended, legalistically defined horrors, but it is, rather, in keeping with the eschatology of the first centuries of Christ's Church. The reposed who were united to the Church were in Its care, and they went to sleep like

* This paper is part of a series which will be published in full later.

PLATES 1, 2 and 3 illustrate three of the earliest Christian portrayals of the Last Judgment and, consequently, demonstrate the Orthodox concept of Divine Judgment. A study of correct later ikons of the Last Judgment demonstrates this same eschatology, but with a more full use of Scriptural symbolism.

[PLATE 1: The Last Judgment. 6th Century Mosaic in St Apollinare, Ravenna, Italy. Christ, attended by His terrible angels separates the sheep from the kid-goats.]



[PLATE 2: 4th Century Terra Cotta Medallion. Here, the Last Judgment is represented with people instead of sheep and kids. Compare this Roman representation with the Kosmas Indikopleustes drawing at PLATE 4-5.]

[PLATE 3: 6th Century Miniature. Here, the Last Judgment is represented by the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. In this representation especially, we see that the condemnation is not a result of God's action, but of man's own free-will choices.]



the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus,³ and were in an expectant rest⁴ until the day of the Second Coming, when they would awaken in paradise (the "Heavenly Jerusalem").⁵ There was no place for an individual, act by act, deed by deed accounting or weighing of the soul, good and bad deeds or books of accounts. The wicked awakened to their own particular judgment. The act of judgment was represented (correctly) as a simple act of the omniscient Will of God (Who, actually speaking, does not need a set of audio-visual aids in order to make up His mind).

This theme is evident in the earliest extant examples of the basic format of the Last Judgment ikons of the Orthodox Church, the σχήματα of Kosmas Indikopleustes (ca 500-550).⁶



[PLATE 4: Earliest known ikon of the Last Judgment in ikonographic format. By Kosmas Indikopleustes, sixth century.]

Here we see some basic elements of format, or σχήματα: the absence of landscaping, the upper hemispherical arch atop the rectangular field, which is divided into parts. Christ is shown as a majestic, but not harsh or brutal, ruler. He is bestowing a blessing and holding either the "Book of Life" or the Gospel,⁷ surrounded by a mandorla of glory. This representation is strikingly similar to the above mentioned relief on the tomb of Bishop Agilbert, which would have been executed no more than a hundred years later.

Subsequent Orthodox ikonographic portrayals of the Last Judgment developed from this, and the earliest existing ikon of the full theme of the Last Judgment follows this format. In this representation, also after Kosmas Indikopleustes (this one, plate 5, is a 9th century copy of the original) Christ is portrayed at the top on a throne, with His hands outstretched, showing the nail-prints. Above Him is Kosmas' hemispherical vault. Beneath the throne, two angels are bowing down. At their feet are the wall of Paradise (compare the Agilbert tomb), the "Heavenly Jerusalem," within which are depicted the faithful of all ages and stations.⁸

At the bottom is gehenna, depicted as a cavern enshrouded with flames, containing sinners. Above gehenna (connecting the two scenes) flows a stream of fire, labeled η' πηγή τοῦ πυρός.⁹ These elements still constitute the basic details of the Orthodox ikonography of the Last Judgment.¹⁰ In later centuries, the scenes became more full, and sometimes, after the beginning of the middle-ages, Western and other non-Orthodox elements began to appear in various places.¹¹ The increasing complexity of these scenes was not a spiritually healthy development, and it was not really in keeping with the basic hesychastic spirituality of the Orthodox Faith. Much of the complexity was derived from a symbiosis with Western art, such as clearly took place in Yugoslavia from at least the 12th century on.

The basic elements did remain intact, however, as we can see from the 14th century miniature in the Ioan Aleksandr prayer book. We must notice here the simplicity of the scene. [plate 6].

This is a matter-of-fact portrayal, devoid of legalistic court scenes, and the demons are not participating in the judgment. Indeed, how can they, when they themselves are among those *being* judged. Here, an angel of God shepherds the self-condemned into gehenna.¹² Notice that the form of an angel with a set of scales has been introduced from the West, but here, as elsewhere in Orthodox ikons, he and the scales are totally incongruous to the rest of the ikon, and this figure is only decorative, playing no actual role in the action.

The judgment is taking place in the fiery river, as if the exposure to the radiance of God's love and righteousness was in itself the judgment — the thing which exposes the sins and deeds of all¹³ and sweeps away the wicked while exalting the faithful.

The more complex forms of this ikon did not begin to appear, evidently, until the eleventh century, when, in the words of the noted expert on Byzantine art, Mr Kurt Weitzman, it "apparently was invented,"¹⁴ perhaps in Constantinople. This same amplified scene was portrayed in the famous 12th century mosaic



[PLATE 5: Traditional Format of Orthodox ikons of the Last Judgment.]



[PLATE 6: 14th Century Miniature in the
Ioan Alexsandr Prayer Book]

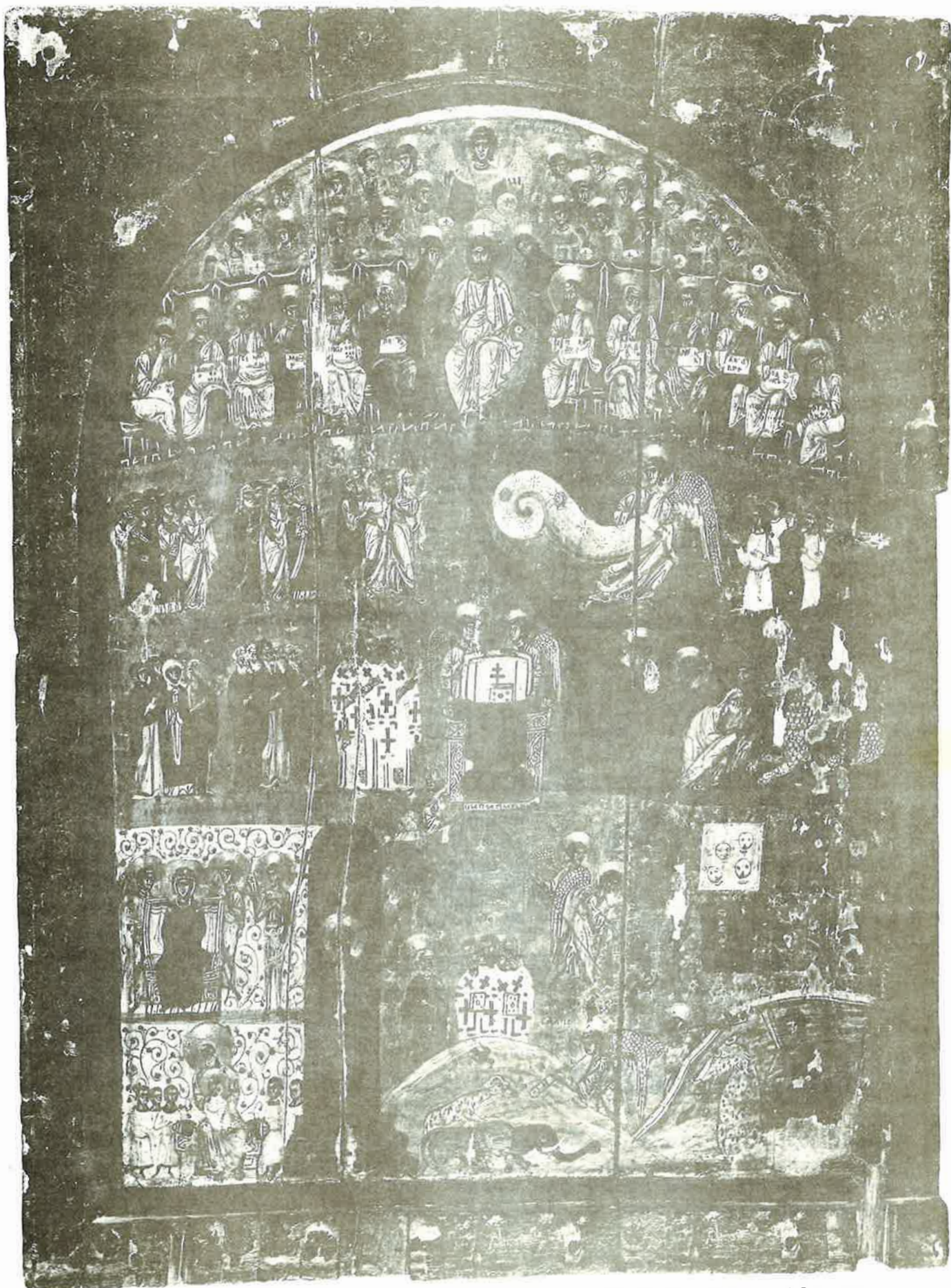
at Torcello, near Venice [plate 7], and in a portable ikon of the same century, which is found on Mt Sinai [plate 8].

The details of this form of the Last Judgment ikon are explained in the ikonographic manuals which appeared after this period, and the contents of these ikons were almost certainly considered before they were painted or executed. The fact is that we cannot be absolutely certain when these details were first used, but we have the explanation of the details in the ikonographic manual compiled from earlier texts by Dionysios of Fourni (1670-1746)¹⁵ for example. Compare his instructions with the schemata drawing of the Torcello mosaic, found on the following page [plate 9].

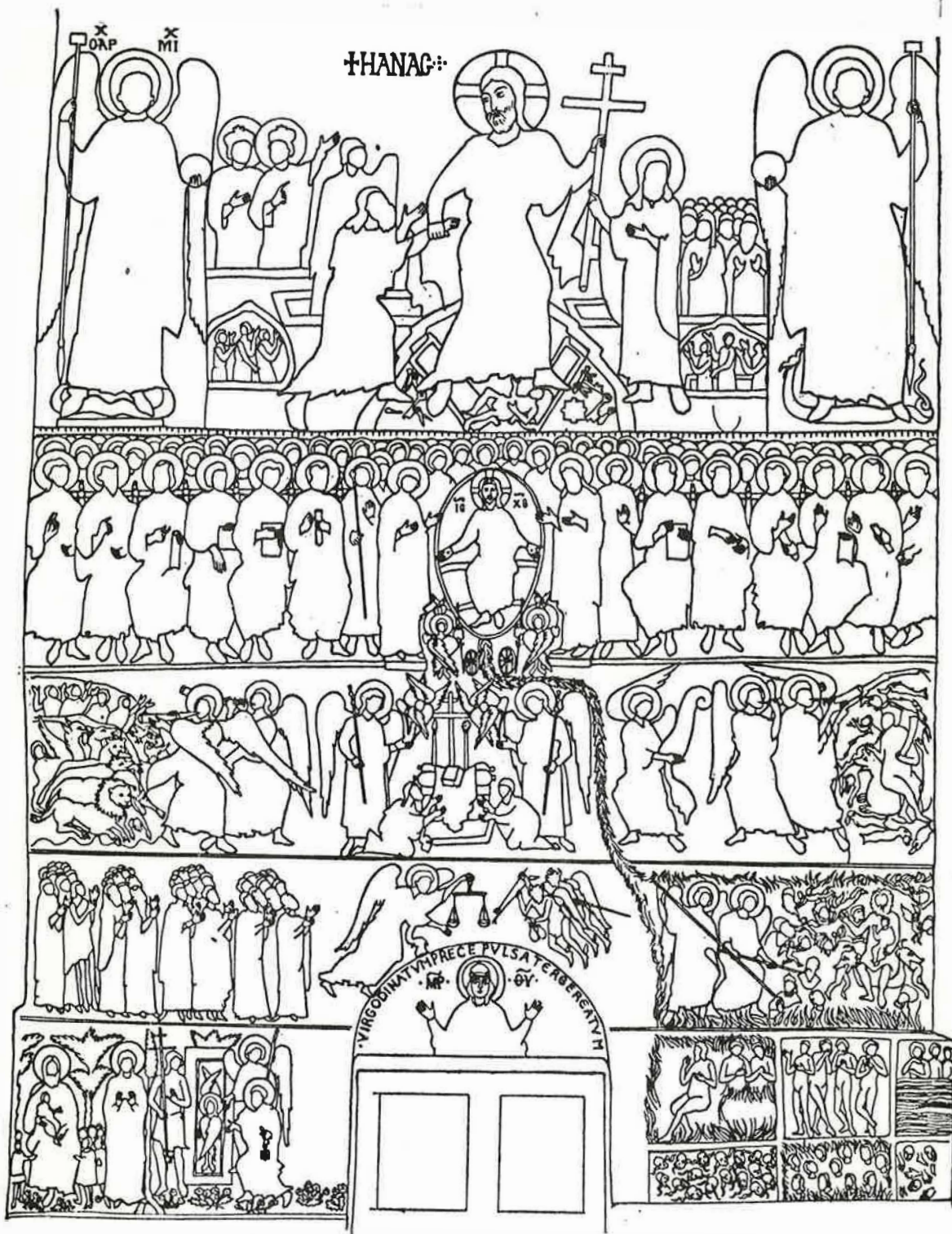
This is the traditional Orthodox manner of portraying the Last Judgment, although a legalistic, hyper-dramatic form of portraying the "torments of gehenna" tended to appear in many, especially later, renditions.¹⁶



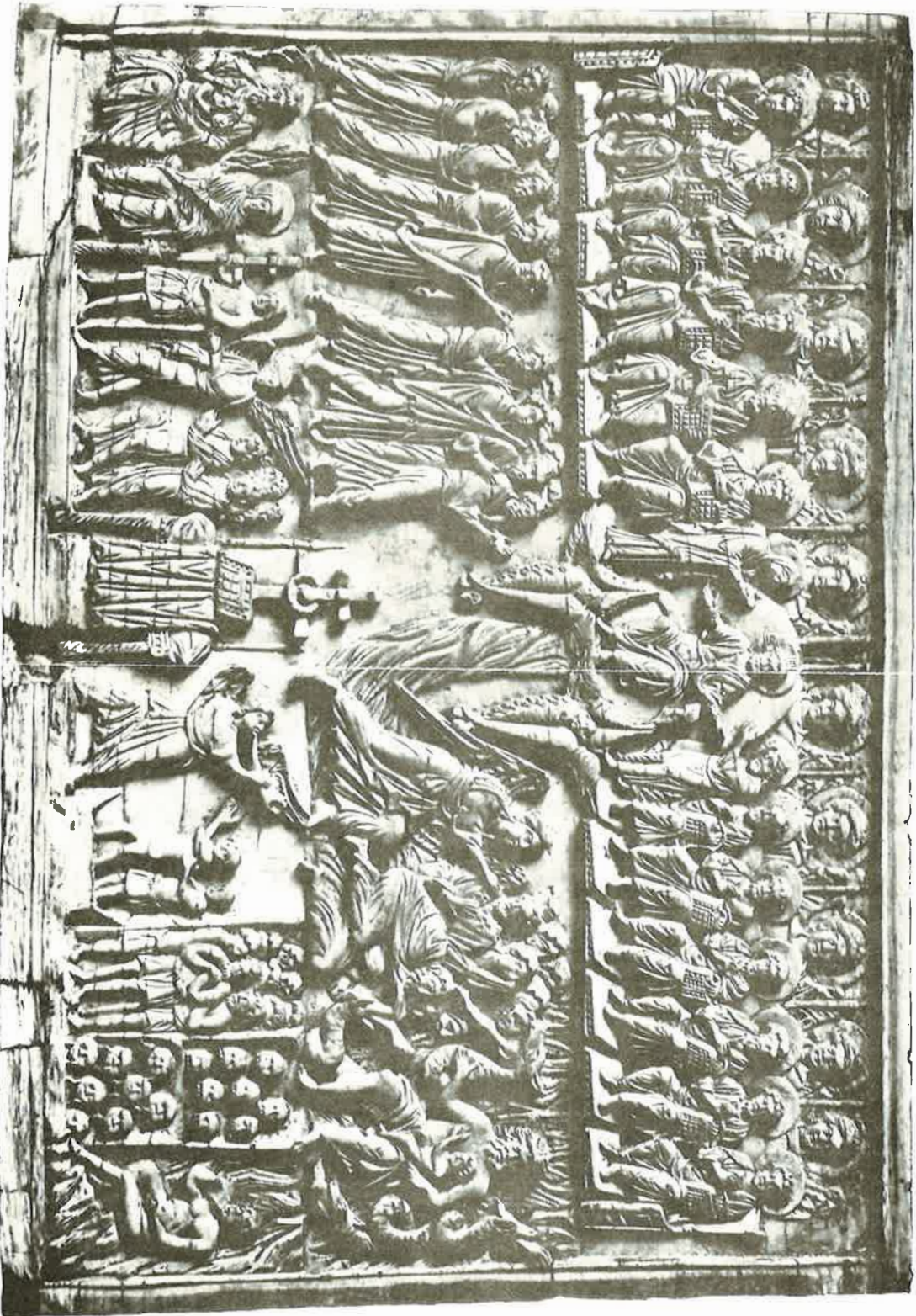
[PLATE 7: The Great Mosaic of Torcello. This 12th Century ikon of the Last Judgment was an imitation of one constructed in the "Great Church" in Constantinople in the same century. Plate 9 is a line drawing of this magnificent mosaic, giving details of its format.]



[PLATE 8: Portable Ikon of the Last Judgment. Presently on Sinai, this ikon was painted in Constantinople in the 1100's.]



[PLATE 9: Line Detail of Torcello Mosaic (see Plate 7). This⁷ line detail is the type found in the Ikonographic Manuals, and it may be used to study the format and content of the Traditional Orthodox portrayal of the Last Judgment.]



[PLATE 10: Eleventh Century Byzantine Ivory Panel]



[PLATE 11: 14th CENTURY DALMATIAN with ikon of the Second Coming. Here, Christ is shown surrounded by the whole creation, identifying Him as its Creator. He is shown as Immanuel (as He also appeared at age twelve in the temple as the Giver of the Law come to reveal the meaning of the Law). Christ is shown enthroned on a rainbow as the God of Noah, with His feet on the fiery wheels as the Ancient of Days. Around Him is the Tetramorph, revealing Him as the Lord of Hosts (Savaoth). Above Christ are the instruments of His Passion, showing Him as the Saviour of the Cosmos which He is now coming to judge in righteousness.]

One thing which is notable in the examples of the ikons given so far, is that the format, the σχήματα, of these ikons remains faithful to the earliest known portrayals (and probably originated with Kosmas Indikopleustes); even when the ikon is elongated sideways, that is, when the rectangular plane runs from side to side, rather than up and down, as in the 11th century Byzantine ivory [plate 10].

Notice also, that even in the contorted arrangement of Theodosy Denisovich's fresco of the Judgment (ca 1508) in the Annunciation Cathedral in Moscow, the basic schemata of Kosmas remains intact (the picture is stretched sideways to accommodate a doorway and the shape of the wall). The stream of fire flows on a long, meandering course, decorated with curious pretzel-shaped puffs of smoke or billows of flame. Coincidentally the lay-out is similar to the Last Judgment from the paraecclesion of the Khora Church in Constantinople (ca 1320).¹⁷

Thus, we see that the more ancient ikons representing the Last Judgment portrayed the simple theological facts of the Last Judgment as they really are, as an act of the Will of God, as a simple, straightforward act of the good and righteous justice of God. A little later, we find more definitive ikons, which are set forth in the ikonographic manuals and are the Traditional Orthodox representations. They still bore considerable simplicity, and were devoid of heavy legalism and excessive delight in gruesome terror. The central detail, a very ancient ikonographic feature, which is according to Scripture (Dn.7:9-10), is the stream of fire which pours forth from the feet of Christ and winds like a river into gehenna, where it totally fills and inundates the state called "hell." The fire represents, of course, the love of God, and we are taught here that it is the radiance of God's love which both warms and radiates and gives joy to the faithful, and burns and torments the wicked.¹⁸ Those souls which in this life preferred "darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil," will, in the next life, after the resurrection, find no such darkness, but will not be able to hide from that light which they hated in this life. There, bathed in the everlasting light of God's love, which they rejected but cannot now escape, their conscience, which is like a never-dying worm, will torment them,¹⁹ and the passions they loved and heaped upon themselves in this life will be as serpents round about them. In other words, they will abide forever in the state they chose for themselves while in this life.²⁰ The judgment is accomplished simply, straightforwardly, and the stream of fire from before the feet of Christ will sweep away the wicked, as St John Chrysostom says, "*Let us then not permit ourselves, by making this brief time a time of carelessness and remissness, to fall into everlasting punishment, but let us watch and be sober, let us do all things, and make it all our business to attain to that felicity, and to keep far from that river of fire, which rushes...before the dread judgment seat. For he who has once been cast in must remain forever; there is no-one to deliver him...*"²¹ Similarly, St Theodore of Studion says, "...and when the stream of fire will issue forth from Your seat of Judgment, then save me from these flames which cannot be cool-

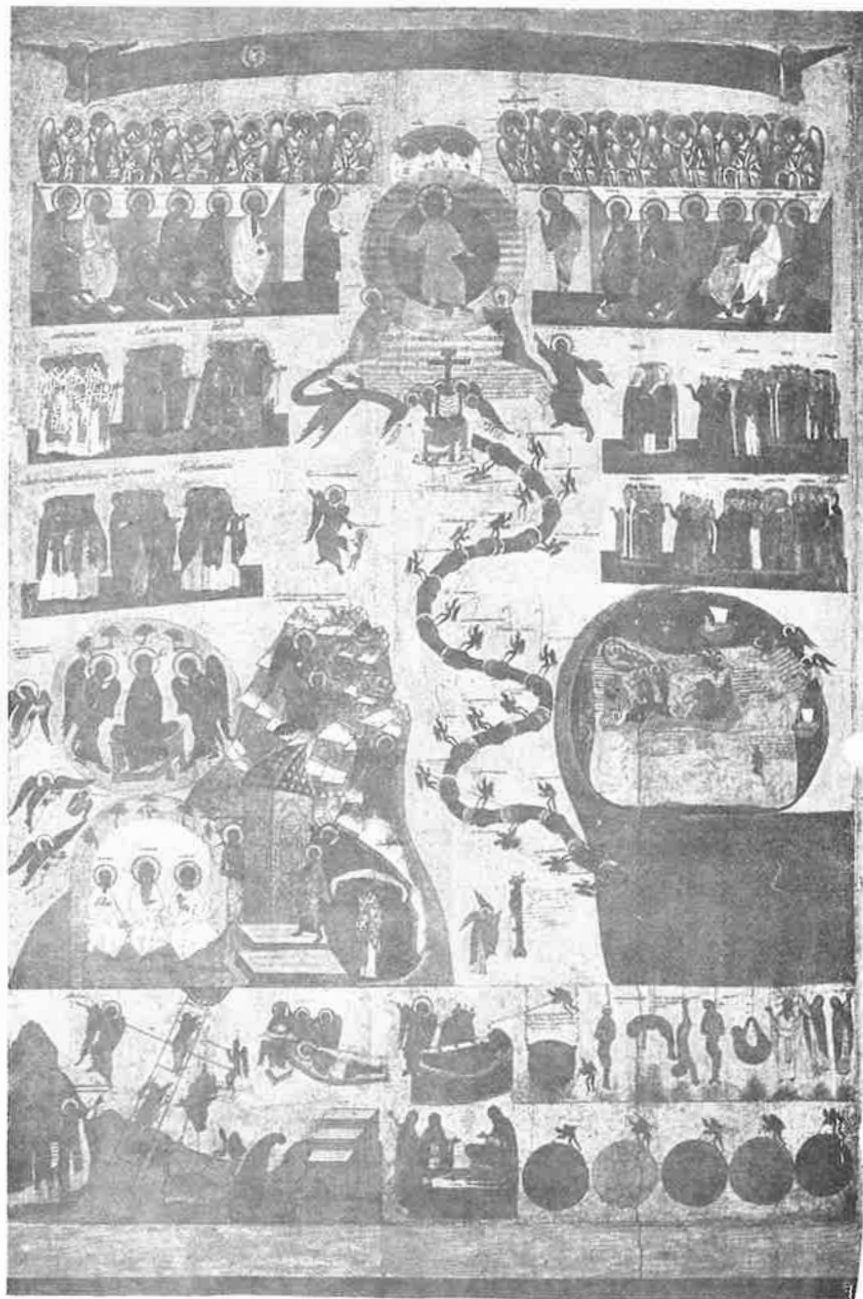
ed."²² For the wicked, there is the "lake of fire" and for the faithful, a "glassy sea blended with fire" (Rev.15:2).

From the mediaeval era onward, and especially in the 12th century, we begin to find some disturbing developments in the ikonography of the Last Judgments in Western art. They begin to become more overpowering, often crude and hideous. There seems to have grown up a sort of morbid and macabre fascination with the torments of hell, and these became ever more anthropomorphized, more varied and usually more disgusting, and, in them, there is a final, eternal triumph of Satan.²³ Indeed, it might be interesting to study the relationship between the later development of the ghastly and morbid portrayals of the now complex and legalistic torments of hell with the advent of the Black Plague.

Interestingly enough, parallels may be found in the development of Western theology, spirituality and social life, with the developments of the sadistic morbidity in this aspect of the Last Judgment ikonography. There were no such developments in the Orthodox world, and so one must surmise (and we shall later try to demonstrate this) that these elements were borrowed from the West. The 13th century Last Judgment in the Church of the Saviour at Nereditsa, near the Hanseatic city of Novgorod is an example of a rendition which seems calculated to overpower one with a morbid fear of God, in place of a love-filled Christian fear, and with horror in place of hope. One might suspect that it was influenced by those same developments in Western theological thinking which spawned the Inquisitions²⁴ and which would later inspire the murderous aberrations in the mind of John Calvin.

Notably, the device of the "weighing of souls," which was borrowed originally in the West from illustrations of the Egyptian Book of the Dead and pyramid art, began to appear in some Orthodox representations of the Last Judgment. Formerly, as in the Last Judgment in the Great Church and at Torcello, these figures were almost decorative and had a highly incongruous, if any, function. In the 13th and 14th centuries, this began to change, and the psychostasia began to appear as such in some Orthodox ikons. The earliest and heaviest such Western intrusions appear, as one might suspect, in Yugoslavia, where there was a natural symbiosis of the inter-mixed Latin and Orthodox populations. The art at the Dechani Monastery may be studied in order to see this effect: the appearance of the psychostasion of the weighing of the souls appears in an active manner in a 14th century fresco here, in which is also shown, in purely Latin fashion, Christ brandishing a sword. In order to discover the origins and developments of the psychostasia in Orthodox ikonography, we have examined its origins in Western art, since that is where its source is to be found. Now, however, we must look at one very strange and radical innovation in Ukrainian ikonography, which was borrowed into Russian usage: the inexplicable and irrational replacement of the stream of fire which flows from the judgment seat into gehenna, with a serpent. Although there is no way this form could be logically or reasonably in-

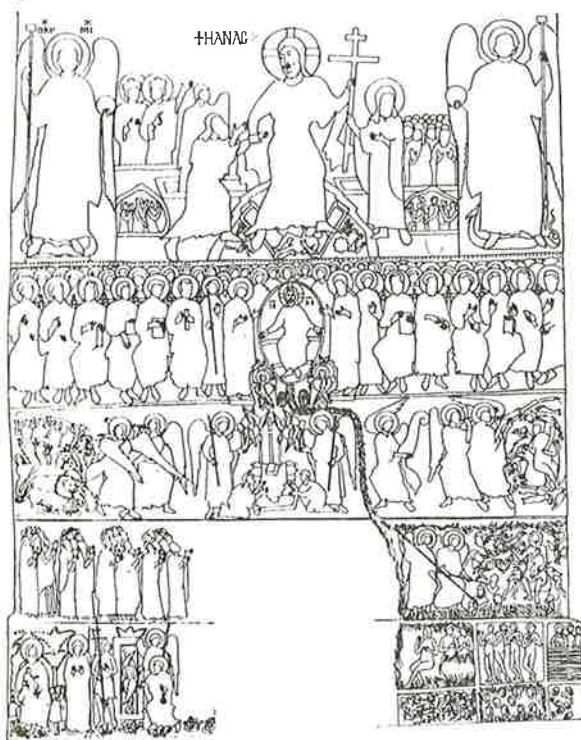
terpreted as representing the myth of the aerial toll-houses, this interpretation has been given to it in some cases. Here is one version of this radical and illogical innovation:



[PLATE 12: Distorted Portrayal of the Last Judgment. 17th Century Novgorod School. This Ikon is Presently in the Hann Collection, Pittsburg, Pa. USA]

[PLATE 13: SCHEMATA OF THE CORRECT, TRADITIONAL ORTHODOX PORTRAYAL OF THE LAST JUDGMENT. This schemata is shown without any of the later corruptions which developed in the West, and sometimes spilled over into Orthodox art.

The actual Last Judgment Ikon is laid-out in three tiers, plus a representation of Gehenna and of Abraham's Bosom and the etimasia. Its theological content is identical to that of the very earliest extant examples of Last Judgment ikons, those of Kosmas Indikopleustes.



THE RESURRECTION: Is shown first, reminding us of the victory of Christ, and the source of our own Resurrection.

FIRST TIER: Christ is seated upon a high throne, attended by the hosts of which He is Lord, the Apostles and Saints (standing in ranks). The rainbow throne identifies Christ as the Old Testament God and Judge, the God of Noah and the God of John's Revelation; the seraphs at His feet identify Jesus Christ as the Lord of Hosts of Isaiah's vision, and the fiery wheels and stream of fire, as the Ancient of Days. When prophets are shown with open scrolls, the scrolls read: "I beheld until the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit" (Daniel); "For, behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven ...and the wicked shall be stubble" (Malachi).

SECOND TIER: The general resurrection and etimasia. On one side, the dead who have been consumed by beast, buried in the earth, etc, are shown coming forth restored. On the other, the bodies of those resting in the seas are seen arising.

ing forth restored. On the other, the bodies of those resting in the seas are seen arising.

THIRD TIER: The souls of those who have fallen asleep in the Lord are shown in hope and expectation. The souls of the unrighteous are not shown at all.

GEHENNA: After the judgment, the self-condemned are shown in gehenna. Note that it is God's angels, and not demons which thrust them into gehenna. Notice also, that on the one side, the righteous behold the stream of fire in hope, expectation and joy, whilst the unrighteous receive it as stubble receives a fire. This third tier and gehenna are a very dramatic and important revelation, which is discussed at length elsewhere in this paper.

The last two segments of the ikon show, on His right, Abraham's bosom and the gate of paradise, and on the left, the chambers of gehenna, indicating the degrees of the self-inflicted tortures of the consciences of the wicked. Note that those in gehenna are no longer human, for they have lost the "likeness and image of God".

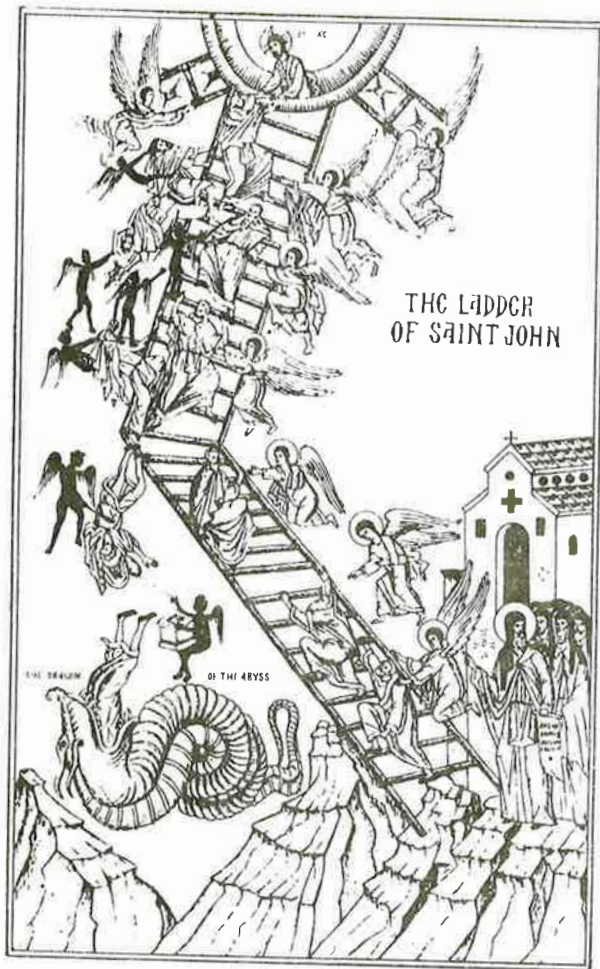
This deformity of the Traditional ikon of the Last Judgment (see fn 15) first appeared, as nearly as we can discover, in the Ukraine in the late 16th century.²⁵ There are two interpretations of it, one which is technically correct, another which is quite fantastic and wholly illogical. The first is made by the famous expert in Byzantine and Russian art, Dr David Talbot Rice, who explains the serpent (logically) as reaching up from gehenna to receive and swallow down the wicked. While this idea changes the theology of the actual ikon, it is at least, as we said, technically correct and logical. The serpent, like the fiery stream in a real Orthodox ikon, does run from the feet of Christ to gehenna. Let us notice, however, that in deforming one theological and Traditional aspect of this ikon, another quite major change has occurred: Christ is no longer identified as the Lord of Hosts and the Ancient of Days. Neither the fiery wheels and stream of fire, nor the Tetramorph are here.²⁶ Missing also is the rainbow throne which is prescribed by the fourth chapter of Revelations. This radical deformity of the ikon, therefore, has created a great perversion of the Orthodox Faith.²⁷ Interesting also is the location of Sts Adam and Eve in this ikon. Traditionally, they are shown prostrating themselves at the etemasia.²⁸ Here, they have been moved up to the throne of Christ, as a part of the Deesis, replacing the fiery wheels.

Now let us look at the other interpretation, which is quite startling in the further deformities it makes in the theology of the Last Judgment ikon and the teachings of the Church. In this interpretation, we are told that this ikon portrays the soul-stations (toll-houses) through which the soul of a reposed person must pass after his death.²⁹ This interpretation, aside from introducing a new and novel doctrine into the Church, is completely illogical. If the figure of the serpent represented the pathway to heaven (a sort of pneumatic tube purgatory) through which the souls of the reposed had to pass, then why does it originate in the depths of gehenna? It would rather have to be shown originating at a corpse, a coffin, at least at a graveyard. Or are we being taught here that all souls are cast into hell (to be purged?) and then led through the aerial toll-houses (represented here by the sets of twin ping-pong balls in the pneumatic tube serpent)?

The Traditional Orthodox portrayal of this scene is perfectly Scriptural (as usual), and portrays an actual, Biblical vision of it. The holy great prophet Daniel describes it thus:

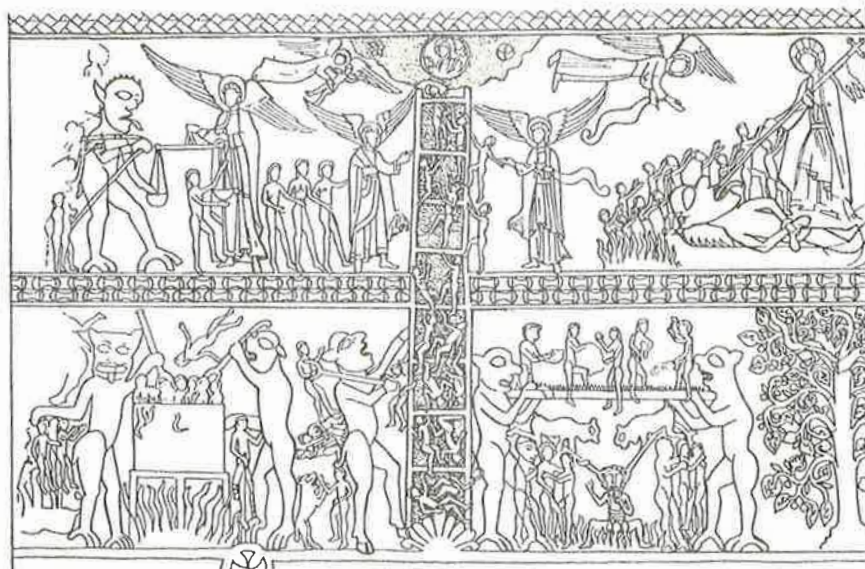
"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, Whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him...the judgment was set and the books were opened" (Dn.7:9-10; cf Rev. Ch 4-Ch.10). [see plate 13].

What, then, is the source of this radical innovation which sets aside the Traditional, Scriptural portrayal of the Last Judgment? Those who would defend it tell us themselves that it comes from a dream reported by a person whose own life story leads us to strongly suspect that he was in a very severe state of spiritual delusion (*plani; prelest*), one Gregory of Thrace.³⁰



[PLATE 14: THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT. This ikon portrays the teaching of St John of the Ladder concerning our spiritual struggle in this life, and the words of Apostle Paul found at Ephesians 6:12, on the same subject. The "Ladder of Divine Ascent" was perverted in the West into the "Ladder of Divine Judgment", and from this perversion came the distorted and perverted "ikon" supposedly of the aerial toll-houses (see Plate 10). Note that in the supposed "toll-house ikon", all the basic elements of the Ladder have been superimposed over the correct elements: the metaphorical "Dragon of the Abyss" has been perverted into a serpent, which replaces the ladder in the ikon. To this, a variation of the purgatory myth is admixed with the crude myth of the "aerial toll-houses", and a novel doctrine is created, supported by a radical innovation in ikonography and an abject distortion of several clear doctrines of the Faith, as well as of the teaching of St John of the Ladder.]

[PLATE 15: THE LADDER OF DIVINE JUDGMENT, from the Doom in Chaldon, Surrey, U.K. Such horrifying Doom pictures as this were found throughout the West, and doubtless contributed considerably to the spread of atheism. They spilled over into the Orthodox world and are reflected in such ikonographic perversions as Plate , and others.]



This is, of course, not the only source of it. There is a whole collection of fantastic, apocryphal literature which seeks to insinuate the pagan psychostasia myths into Orthodox teachings.³¹ Moreover, one is struck by the similarity of the format of this psychostasia serpent and its little demons with the imagery and format of the ikon of The Ladder of Divine Ascent [see plate 14].

The Ladder of Divine Ascent, which portrays the words of Apostle Paul about our struggle for salvation *during this life*, "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*" (Eph. 6:12), as explained in the book of the same title by St John of the Ladder: It teaches us about the struggle and ascent of the Orthodox believer during his life on earth. As St John of Raithu says of the instruction in *THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT*, "*As a ladder set up, they will lead aspirants to the gates of Heaven unharmed and blameless, so that they may pass unhindered the spirits of wickedness, the world-rulers of darkness, and the princes of the air.*" Read this book and observe that all this is to take place during a person's lifetime, not afterward; this is the theme of the ikon of the Ladder also (naturally). It does not seem without significance to our question here that, in the West, in very many texts, one finds The Ladder of Divine Ascent referred to as "*The Ladder of Divine Judgment.*"³² [see plate 15].

This radical ikonographic innovation consists, then, in the wilful removal of all Traditional and Scriptural identification of Christ as the Lord of Hosts and the Ancient of Days, and the substitution of it with the Latin interpretation of the Ladder and of Paul's words to the Ephesians (6:12). The theological justification for this radical deformity and doctrinal innovation is a series of fantastic literature and highly questionable dreams, and interpretations of various reported dreams and over-extensions of some wrongly translated and misinterpreted patristic metaphors. It seems that no less a spiritual writer than Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov, who was, of course, educated in the then prevalent Latin milieu of Russian seminaries, accepted this novel interpretation, saying of Paul's words at Ephesians 6:12: "*THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT WHATEVER (emphasis in the original) that the holy Apostle Paul is speaking of them [the after-death aerial toll-houses] when he declares that Christians must do battle with the spirits of wickedness under the heavens (Eph. 6:12)*" (Vol 3, *WORKS*, p. 138, in Rus.).

This is a startling statement, considering that St John Chrysostom gives us precisely the opposite understanding in his *HOMILY 21 ON EPHESIANS* where, citing this very same verse, he says, "*But what stupidity is this, not to think the present a season of war...*" Moreover, he says the same in his *HOMILY 2 ON 2 TIMOTHY* (§ 1), *HOMILY 39 ON 1 CORINTHIANS* (§ 6) and in many other places. Nor does St Gregory of Nyssa understand the verse at all in the way Bishop Ignaty interprets it so adamantly (see his *AGAINST EUNOMIUS*, Bk.2, 15:5-6. St Leo the Great, in his *SERMON 39 ON LENT*, also shows that there can indeed be considerable doubt about the interpretation of Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov and the Latin milieu from which he drew it. It is especial-

ly interesting that St Athanasios the Great, in his *LIFE OF SAINT ANTONY* also gives us precisely the opposite interpretation of this verse to the interpretation offered by Blessed Bishop Ignaty. In his biography of St Antony, St Athanasios cites Ephesians 6:12 three times, and in each, he makes it clear that there can be no doubt whatever that the Apostle is here referring to our struggle during our earthly life.³³ The Saint says, on these three occasions:

"Thus living, let us keep guard carefully, and as it is written, 'keep our hearts with all watchfulness' [Prov.4:23]. For we have terrible and crafty foes — the evil spirits — and against them we wrestle, as the Apostle said, 'not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places' [Eph. 6:12]...The demons therefore, if they see all Christians, and monks especially, labouring cheerfully and advancing, first make an attempt to attack by temptation and place hinderances to hamper our way, to wit, evil thoughts. But we need not fear their suggestions, for by prayer, fasting and faith in the Lord their attack immediately fails...If here also they find the soul strengthened by faith and hopeful of mind, then they bring their leader to their aid...When the prince of the demons appears in this wise...not even then ought we, the faithful to fear his appearance or give heed to his words. For he is a liar and speaks never a word of truth...And he was bound by the Lord as a sparrow that we should mock him. And with him are placed the demons his fellows, like serpents and scorpions to be trodden underfoot by us Christians... Let us then not heed his words, for he is a liar: and let us not fear his visions, seeing that they themselves are deceptive... they are rather the preludes and likeness of the fire prepared for the demons who attempt to terrify men with those flames in which they themselves will be burned. Doubtless they appear; but in a moment disappear again hurting none of the faithful, but bringing with them the likeness of that fire which is about to receive [them] themselves. Wherefore it is unfitting that we should fear them on account of these things; for through the Grace of Christ, all their practices are in vain". (Para. 21-24, emphasis mine).

Take note that all this occurs while we are "thus living", and it is completely clear from the text that all this is to take place in this life. There can, then, be no doubt whatever that the holy Apostle Paul was speaking, not about some sort of imaginary after-death toll-houses, but about the struggle of Orthodox people in this life. For, note also in paragraphs 28 and 40-43 of the biography of St Antony, that the demons are actually powerless. St Athanasios again cites this verse (Eph. 6:12), at paragraph 51, where he clearly says that this wrestling "not against flesh and blood" etc, occurs in this life. St Antony himself, on his death-bed admonishes his monks, "And do you be watchful and destroy not your long discipline, but as though now making a beginning, zealously preserve your determination. For you know the treachery of the demons, how fierce they are, but

how little power they have. Wherefore, fear them not, but rather ever breathe Christ, and trust Him." (para. 91).

These are the only times Ephesians 6:12 are cited in *THE LIFE OF SAINT ANTONY*. Where then is this, "there can be no doubt whatever" which was spoken with such dogmatic emphasis? For again, St Athanasios the Great, in his *FESTAL LETTER NUMBER ONE*, tells us that the feasts and fasts call us to the war of this life, and says, "...now these things [the old law] were typical, and done as in a shadow. But let us pass on to the meaning and henceforth leaving the figure at a distance, come to the truth, and look upon the priestly trumpets of our Saviour, which cry out and call us, at one time to war, as the blessed Paul says, 'We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this dark world, with wicked spirits in the heavens' [Eph.6:12]..."

To this, St Ambrose of Milan concurs also, saying of Paul, "Worthy indeed was he to be gazed upon by angels, when he was striving to attain the prize of Christ, when he was striving to live on earth the life of angels, and overcome the wickedness of the spirits in the heavens, for he wrestled with spiritual wickedness [Eph.6:12]. Rightly did the world gaze upon him, that it might imitate him..." (*LETTER 63*, para. 71). And not only once does he teach us that this wrestling and struggling with the aerial powers takes place in this life, but in paragraph 6 of his sermon against Auxentius, he says the same thing, not of Paul only, but of us all; and this much he says again clearly in paragraph 106, Book Two of his *ON BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION*.

St John Cassian, too, sweeps away this attempt to erroneously use Ephesians 6:12 as a testimony in favour of the toll-gate myth, for his understanding of the verse is in full accord with the host of the God-bearing fathers, rather than with that of the toll-gate theologians. See for example, St John Cassian's *INSTITUTES* Book 5, Ch. 18; Ch.19; *CONFERENCES*, Seven, Ch. 21; Ch. 32; Ch.33; Eight, Ch.2; Ch.14; Thirteen, Ch.14.

Likewise, St Gregory the Theologian says of Ephesians 6:12 that this wrestling and struggle takes place in this life, involving both body and soul, "that [we] may inherit the glory above by means of a struggle and wrestling with things below, being tried as gold in the fire by things here, and gain the object of our hopes..." (*ON HIS FLIGHT FROM PONTUS*, para.17; see also para. 84).

Let us turn now to the scant and rare examples we have from the ancient Church of portrayals of the "particular judgment," and explore, together with them, the words of our Holy and God-bearing fathers, to see what we might learn concerning the "particular judgment," if such a name can be used at all.

(CONTINUED).

FOOTNOTES: THE PSYCHOSTASIA IN CHRISTIAN ART, PART 2.

1. Mt.25:32-33. The actual text reads "kids," not "goats" as in the KJV, etc. St John Chrysostom explains the verse: "He indicates the disposition of each, calling the one 'kids,' the other 'sheep,' that He might indicate the unfruitfulness of the one, for no fruit will come from kids; and the great profit from the other, for indeed from sheep great is the profit, as well from the milk as from the wool, and from the young [offsprings], all of which things the kid [ἔρως] is destitute." (HOMILIES ON MATTHEW, 79:4)
2. Hubert, J., "Les cryptes de Jouarre" (4^e congrès de l'art du haut moyen-ages) (Melun; Seine-et-Marne, 1952).
3. cf Aries, Phillipe, WESTERN ATTITUDES TOWARD DEATH (John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1974) pp.29-33.
4. see, for example, St Aphraat the Persian, ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, para. 18-20, and St Athenagoras of Athens, ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, Ch.16 (in THE TLINGIT HERALD and ORTHODOXY CANADA, Vol 6, Nrs 6-7, 1979).
5. see especially, St Ephraim the Syrian, HYMN EIGHT ON PARADISE, esp. ode 11. (loc cit).
6. see Ainalov, D.V., THE HELLENIC ORIGINS OF BYZANTINE ART (Rutgers; New Brunswick, N.J., 1961) esp. pp. 31-45.
7. The lozenged background behind Christ [PLATE 5] is interesting, because this motif was often used in portrayals of the mandylion, the "ikon-not-made-by-man". The face of Christ here is like the usual early portrayals of the mandylion.
8. Hubert, J., *ibid.* Also discussed in Aries, P. loc cit.
9. Literally, "the wellspring of fire", showing that Christ is the source, that is, the love of Christ God is the source of the stream of fire. see *Sacra Parallela*, Par. gr. 923, for 67v, *Codices e Vaticanis selecti*, X (Milan, 1908); Winsteadt, E.O., THE CHRISTIAN TOPOGRAPHY OF COSMAS INDICOPLEUTES (Cambridge, 1909).
10. The hemispherical arch disappears in many cases, in order, perhaps, to accomodate the shapes of walls, but see [PLATE 8].
11. see Part 1 of this work.
12. see St Gregory the Theologian, ORATION 16:8, for example. Notice here too that at the Last Judgment, our accusers will be, not the demons of the psychostasia myths, but our own past thoughts and deeds — our conscience (cf fn. 13 and 19 below). In many Western representations, it is the demons and not God's angels who are shown ushering the self-condemned souls into the fiery stream. This is an element of that peculiar triumph of the demons which took place in Western art and, to a certain degree, in Western theology.

13. St Basil the Great says, in his Homily on the Psalms (33:4; 48:2) that by "the Judge's countenance" is meant the Divine illumination which sheds light in our guilty hearts and points to our own sins as our only accusers, which (because of the Divine illumination) will rise up before us in our memories. Similarly, St Cyril of Jerusalem says, "The terrible countenance of the Judge" will bring the truth forth in you (Cat. Lec.15:25). cf St Ambrose of Milan, LETTER 2:9 ff, 73:3; EXP ON PSALMS 1:55 ff and EXP ON LUKE'S GOSPEL, 2:60; 2:82; 10:49.
14. Weitzmann, K., THE IKON (George Braziller; N.Y., 1978) p.84.
15. Available in English as THE PAINTER'S MANUAL OF DIONYSIUS OF FOURNA, tr. by Paul Hetherington (The Saggiarius Press; London, 1974). Note that in the official Church instructions for painting ikons of the Last Judgment, no mention is made of the scales or balances, the "weighing of the souls" or of any form of psychostasia. Both Dr Gabriel Millet and Dr Paul Jessen point out that, after researching the matter, they could find no mention whatever in any of the ikonographic manuals on the Holy Mountain or Greece of the angel and scales or psychostasia. Dr Jessen also examined the spurious "Vision of St Ephraim the Syrian" which was often cited by earlier art historians as a possible source of the "weighing of the souls" device. He concluded that there was nothing in it which could possibly be thus construed, and he concluded that there was no concept of psychostasia in Orthodox teaching or art, but that the "weighing of the souls" image was of Western origin (see Jessen, P., DIE DARSTELLUNG DES WELTGERICHTS BIS AUS MICHEL ANGELO, Berlin, 1883. p.17ff). The spurious work called "The Vision of St Ephraim" is of an unknown origin. It was once popular in Western Europe, where it was likely composed, probably in early mediaeval times. The work was long ago discredited. It does not seem ever to have been translated into Greek, and we do not know if it found its way into any of the Slavic tongues.
16. Nevertheless, compare the almost peaceful, composed faces of the damned in, for example, the Torcello Mosaic [PLATE 7] and the "Sinful Kings" in the 13th century fresco of Milieshev, Serbia, who are perfectly aware that they are in the condition which they themselves chose, with the sadistic, almost pathological portrayals of the damned in Western art, such as, for example, the tympanum of Autun (which is not even one of the worst examples).
17. There is an extremely interesting aspect of all these portrayals of the Last Judgment and Second Coming (see PLATE 11). That is the revelation contained in them about the Old Testament Theophanies. Notice that in almost all these representations, Christ is shown seated upon a rainbow, as the One Who had judged the world in the days of Noah — He is the First and the Last Judge. Moreover, at His feet, one sees the fiery wheels from Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days (Dn. Ch. 7), showing that Jesus Christ the Son is Himself the Ancient of Days. He is also often accompanied by the Tetramorph of Exekiel's vision of The Lord of Hosts (see, eg, PLATE 11) (Ez.1:5-10) and/or by the attending

Seraphims of Isaiah's vision of the Lord of Hosts (Is.6:1-5, cf fn 27 below), showing clearly that Jesus Christ the Son is the Lord of Hosts (see Jn.12:41). See, for example, the Torcello Mosaic [PLATE 7], and the fresco by Theodosy Denisovich in the Annunciation Cathedral in Moscow, in which the fiery wheels are especially prominent. Thus, Christ is shown to be both the First and the Last Judge, and He Who was to come, is come and shall come.

18. see fn's 12 and 13, for example. This is a theme which, as Dr Alexander Kalomiros stresses, "needs to be preached with great insistence, and from which, not only the West but we Orthodox have departed in great numbers, causing men to fall to atheism, because they are revolted against a falsified angry God full of vengeance against His creatures. What you write on pages five and six is very important, that the stream of fire, which burns in the state called 'hell' represents the love of God which both warms and gives joy to the faithful, and burns and torments the wicked, because they are not able to hide from that light which is everywhere and which they hate, although it is full of love and kindness. We must urgently understand that God is responsible only for everlasting life and bliss, and that hell is nothing else but the rejection of this everlasting life and bliss, the everlasting revolt against the everlasting love of God. We must urgently remember and preach that it is not a creation of God but a creation of our revolted liberty, that God did not create any punishing instrument which is called hell, that God never takes vengeance of His revolted creatures, that His justice has nothing to do with the legalistic 'justice' of human society, which punishes the wicked in order to defend itself...That our everlasting spiritual death is not inflicted on us by God, but is a spiritual suicide, everlasting because our decision to be friends or enemies of God is a completely free and everlasting decision of the free spiritual beings created by God, a decision which is respected by God eternally and absolutely." (from Dr Kalomiros' review of this article).
19. This is the meaning of our Saviour's parable, "When you go with your accuser (adversary) to the magistrate, make diligent to be reconciled and be delivered from him in the way lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer cast you into prison" (Lk.12:58). As St Dorotheos (INST. THREE. Para. 42) and others explain, the "adversary (accuser)" is a person's conscience with which he must be reconciled while in this life ("in the way"), since he can do nothing once he leaves this life. If a person does not repent and so become "reconciled," then he will prove to be his own accuser (adversary) before the judge (the conscience being an integral part of us and not a slanderer but a true witness). "In the way" is this life, and being "brought before the magistrate" is death. Here, the magistrate (the Judge) simply hands one's soul over to His angel (the "officer") who takes it to the state appropriate to itself — in this case, some sort of darkness, the "prison". Again, there is no room for any kind of "toll-gates" or aerial judgments, haggling over individual sins, weighings, etc., but only the omniscient and good decree (called metaphorically, "judgment") of the all-good and righteous Judge.

20. see fn. 18.
21. HOMILIES ON ST JOHN'S GOSPEL, 12:3.
22. Ode Six.
23. Note that in Western religious art, Satan and his minions are rewarded on judgment day, by being granted eternal power to fulfil their lusts against man. They are shown fulfilling their greatest desire, to torture and torment human beings eternally, with every conceivable instrument of torture. A close study of this art, and some corrupted Orthodox paintings, shows something more drastic. In a whole series of Western "dooms," we must conclude (from a careful study of the themes) that Satan is not even being granted this eternal power, but that it is naturally his. How intentional this is, we cannot say, but to a certain degree at least, the Manichean doctrine of dualism is clearly present. This same Manicheanism (more directly, Mithraicism) is fundamental to the "toll-house" theology.
24. It is interesting that the masters of the Inquisition considered themselves, not torturers, but purgers, and they based their deeds upon the ideas of the Doctrine of Purgatory itself. Thus, as in their ikonography and theology, the demons are the purgers of Purgatory, the inquisitors placed themselves in the role of demons, and the Pope in the role of the prince of the demons, the master of the purge.
25. We have not been able to find an earlier example of this grotesque and radical innovation.
26. The Tetramorph is not shown so often as the Seraphims of Isaiah's vision of the Lord of Hosts (Is. 6:2). Inasmuch as the Holy Fifth/Sixth Council resolved that the Holy Evangelists not be historiated as beasts or animals, this seems to be the only case in which it is done. It may be that the Tetramorph is permitted in ikons of the Second Coming and Last Judgment because of the unity of the vision of Ezekiel and that of John the Divine concerning the Last Judgment and the foundation of the law. The Tetramorph is used only in this prophetic representation, but cannot be used in other instances.
27. It is significant that these radical theological novelties appeared in the same era that the portrayals of God the Father began to be accepted broadly, together with the heretical teaching that the Lord of Hosts (Savaoth) was the Father — a teaching which St Hilary of Poitiers clearly names as a heresy, saying, "And if you, in your heresy, do not know that it was God-the-Only-Begotten Whom the prophet saw in that glory (Is.6:1-5), then hearken to the Evangelist: 'Isaiah said this because he saw His glory and spoke of Him' (Jn.12:41)" (THE TRINITY, 5:33; cf 12:47). At the same time, the heretical teaching that the Ancient of Days (Dn. Ch. 7) was God the Father, and portrayals of a so-called "Father" as the Ancient of Days, came to be accepted.

28. Etimasia (ἐτοιμασία) "preparation of the throne." From Ps.9:8, "He has prepared His throne, and He Himself will judge the world in righteousness; He will judge the peoples in uprightness." (cf Dn.7:13-14; Mt.25:31; Mk.14:62; Lk.22:69; Hb.8:1; 10:12; Rv.4:2-8, etc). The etimasia shows the throne prepared for Christ from all ages, and the prophecy of His Second Coming. Usually, the Gospel book is shown on the etimasia indicating that Christ is invisibly present and reigning in His Church on Earth. Sts Adam and Eve are usually shown worshipping before the etimasia.

29. It is possible that attempts to portray this teaching may have been later misinterpreted, in the light of some fantastic literature, such as Gregory of Thrace's wild tale about The Journey of Theodora. In later ikonography, attempts were made to portray how people were self-condemned at the Judgment (both the so-called "particular" judgment and the last judgment) and tormented for eternity by their own various passions and vices. Different vices and passions were portrayed in various places and at various times. The legalistic number twenty-one (3x7), etc, are obviously Latin inventions, and in ikons, the number has never been static, and the vices represented have never been the same ones. By an unfortunate trend, these vices and their respective self-torments began to be anthropomorphized (perhaps in the same way the Jordan River, the seas, etc, were often anthropomorphized) in the form of little demons with instruments of torture, or, sometimes, as serpents (as in the Torcello Mosaic). During some periods of theological decline, and under the influence of fantastic literature and spiritual delusion (plani; prelest) (such as the cited Theodora tale) these representations became identified with the old pagan astral cult toll-houses, and the pre-judgment of the souls by the Nome deities in the Egyptian Osiris cult literature (from which the "weighing of the souls" imagery was obtained). Indeed, as we shall assert later, these toll-houses are merely an illogical mutation of these pagan myths and a confusion of them with the Ladder of Divine ascent and the Latin myth of Purgatory.

30. The autobiography of Gregory of Thrace is singularly unedifying. An itinerant who, while being neither a serious ascetic and in no clear-cut obedience, nevertheless took every dream or fancy as a direct revelation from God, and produced a series of fantastic dream-visions. In addition to the heresy-filled "Tale of Theodora's Journey," he also claimed to have had an "out of body experience" in which he saw God the Father personally, and heard Him remonstrating with some "unrighteous Jews" who had died. This, of course, is no longer merely delusion, it is already insanity.

31. For example, the Egyptian apocryphal work, THE TALE OF JOSEPH THE CARPENTER, and a Nestorian work, based on the Ishtar myth, which was very popular in Russia, THE PASSION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD (also called THE DESCENT OF THE VIRGIN MARY INTO HADES, etc).

THE TERRIBLE TOWER

After the flood waters had gone, Noah and his children began to farm the peaceful land. The sons and daughters of Noah began to have children and their families grew bigger and bigger. Soon each of these families became so large that they had to move to different places in their big valley and find their own farms or work. Some herded sheep, others planted grapes and fruit trees. Still others began to make pots, pans and dishes of copper and sell them to the rest of the people. Each person found some useful work to do, and everyone glorified God, and worshipped Him correctly.

The people built small towns, then large towns, and finally, they built a big city in the midst of their beautiful valley, and after that, they began to feel proud. In fact, after a while, Satan began to tempt the people to think that they were as important as God Himself. The people became so proud that Satan got them to build a huge tower, as a temple in which they could worship themselves instead of God.

For many years, the people worked together to build this terrible tower. Everyone worked: some made bricks, others carried them up the tower, while still others built each new floor. Before they knew it, the people had become slaves to their own terrible tower, serving it and working on it instead of praying to God and doing useful work.

Satan had made the people his slaves through the terrible tower. Everyone turned away from God.

But God did not turn away from the people. He still loved them and so He saved them from Satan's terrible tower.

God saw what man was doing, and He said, "Now that they have begun to do such a sinful thing, there will be no end to the other sinful things they will do." This means that, since people had become so proud, Satan would be able to lead them into even more terrible and evil deeds. So God said, "We will save man from being a slave to this work of Satan. We will make each family speak a different language. That way, they will not be able to plan new sins together, and they will not be so proud."

This is just what God did. He willed that each family would now speak a new, different tongue. The people were terrified. They all began to speak differently, and a great fear

came upon them and they all fled in different directions.

Soon, each family started its own country and the terrible tower began to crumble to dust.

After the flood waters had gone, Noah and his children began to farm the pleasant land. The sons and daughters of Noah began to have children and their families grew bigger and bigger. Soon each of them became a great nation.

(Continued: God Chooses a Special Nation)

Each person found some useful work to do, and everyone glorified God, and worshiped Him correctly. The people built small towns, then large towns, and finally, they built a big city in the midst of their beautiful valley, and after that, they began to feel proud. In fact, after a while, Satan began to tempt the people to think that they were as important as God Himself. The people became so proud that Satan got them to build a huge tower, as a temple in which they could worship themselves instead of God.

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30 AUGUST
SAINT RONAN
OF IRELAND

Our holy father Ronan was born in Ireland, but after many years he was ordained and became a missionary monk. The Saint went to Brittany in France and built a small cell for himself. He found many Christians there and began to teach them about the true spiritual life.

Soon, people were flocking to the Saint to hear his Gospel teachings. Even the king came often, to be taught by God's servant. There was an especially pious man named Grallon who lived nearby, and he came to the Saint more than all the rest.

Grallon's wife, however, became angry that her husband spent so much time with the Saint. She began to hate St Ronan and Satan could see that she would be helpful to him in his efforts to destroy the man of God. Being led by the evil-one, the wife began to slander the Saint and tell all kinds of lies about him to everyone. Some people believed these evil stories. But the king and most of the people knew that Saint Ronan was truly a man of God and they continued to love and respect him. Grallon's wife, however, would not stop her evil lies and, because she was causing so much trouble among the people, St Ronan decided to move to another place. He built another cell in the neighbouring province. Here, another pious man stayed with him and helped him.

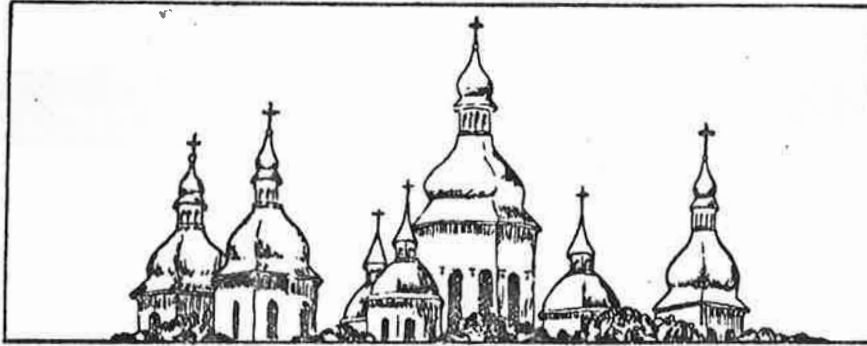
Again, people came from all around to learn from the Saint. God gave His servant many gifts of Grace so he would be able to help the faithful.

Finally, St Ronan became very old and the time came for God's angels to take his holy soul. Many people came to the Saint's funeral and several ill people were healed at his coffin.

After many years, Saint Ronan's sacred relics were carried to the town of Tavistok, in Britain, where they remained thereafter.

Through his holy prayers, may we learn to endure slander peacefully, live the gospel of our Saviour and find salvation for our souls.

Amen!



40

SAINT NIFONT

(8 APRIL)

For Thy sake I have borne reproach...for the zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up and the reproaches of them that reproach Thee are fallen on me" (Ps.68:10).

These words were fulfilled to the grave by the great Russian zealot of Orthodoxy, Saint Nifont. He strove diligently to keep the Russian church from falling away from the body of the Holy Church, which is the same thing as being separated from the Lord Himself.

In the days of Abbot Timothy, Saint Nifont struggled as a monk in the Caves Monastery, imitating the holy fathers, adorning himself, by prayer, vigil and fasting, with every virtue.

When the blessed John, Bishop of Novgorod, retired from his cathedra after twenty-five years of toil and struggles, to end his life in hesychastic struggles in a monastery, St Nifont was elected by the people as their new bishop. He was consecrated in Kiev by the Most Reverend Michael, Metropolitan of Rus', and his bishops.

In Novgorod, St Nifont began to work with great zealousness to strengthen the Orthodoxy of his diocese and his rational sheep. He built a new stone church, named for the Most Holy Theotokos, in the very centre of Novgorod. The cathedral church of Christ the Divine Wisdom (St Sofia), he had decorated with ikons, and covered the top with pewter. He became a true shepherd of his flock, and a peacemaker. Once, a war broke out between Novgorod and Kiev. St Nifont took a council of the Novgorodian leaders and met the Kievans who had taken up arms. The Saint pacified both sides and a war was averted. In like manner, he pacified every arguments and reconciled every enmity. Thus did the holy-one care and struggle diligently for the eternal life of his flock. The servant of God always remembered the words spoken of the Most Holy Trinity, "His commandments are eternal life." With all his strength, the Saint sought to lead his sheep away from violating God's commandments. Those who

did violate the law of God, he clearly reproved "with patience and long-suffering" (2Tm.4:2).

The zeal of this blessed pastor is testified to by the following event. In the time of his episcopacy, the people of Novgorod drove away their prince, Vsevolod Mstislavovich. They invited Prince Svatoslav Olegovich to govern them. After he arrived, Prince Svatoslav attempted to enter into a marriage which was contrary to the canons of the Church. The blessed hierarch not only declined to perform the marriage, but also forbade the clergy to even regard the betrothal as being lawful. When the prince had the wedding served by priests he had brought from elsewhere, the blessed-one audaciously reproved him, imitating the Scripture, "I spake of Thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed" (Ps.118:46).

The Saint showed even greater zeal, however, when he defended the whole Russian church from crime.

When the Metropolitan of Kiev, Michael, reposed, the Great Prince of Kiev, Izyaslav Mstislavovich, decided upon Klim the Philosopher, a monk of the schema, as a replacement. The prince wanted, however, to have Klim consecrated Metropolitan without the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. To this end, a council of the bishops of Rus' was gathered. It consisted of Onuphry of Chernigov, Theodor of Belgorod, Euthimy of Pereyaslavl, St Nifont of Novgorod and others. At this council, St Nifont would, under no circumstances, agree to a new metropolitan being consecrated without the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch. He firmly proclaimed that this was contrary to the tradition of the Holy Church which, by holy baptism had enlightened the Russian church from the cathedra of Constantinople and made the children of Rus' to be sons of the Orthodox East, that is, God's children. St Nifont stood so courageously against the unlawful desires of the prince, holding the Russian church from falling away from the Orthodox East, that is, from God, citing God's word, "the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" (Col.3:6). Five bishops agreed with St Nifont, but the prince, not wishing to be humiliated, did not heed the blessed-one and, prevailing upon those who sided with him, did as he wished. On his command, Klim was consecrated, at Bishop Onufry's advice, with the skull of St Clement, the Pope of Rome, instead of with the blessing of the living Patriarch of Constantinople and thus the Metropolitan of Kiev occupied the cathedra in an anti-canonical fashion. Having thus become Metropolitan of Kiev, Klim attempted to force the blessed Bishop Nifont to serve the Divine Liturgy with him. But the zealot of Orthodoxy replied to him:

"Since you did not receive the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, but unworthily took upon yourself the pastoral office, having pre-empted unworthily and unjustly what does not belong to you, you are a true wolf. Therefore, just as I did not agree earlier to your consecration, I now also refuse to serve with you or to commemorate you at Divine

services, just as you do not commemorate the patriarch from whom you were supposed to receive a blessing."

Then, Klim became angered at the Saint and he pressed upon the prince and his supporters to send St Nifont into imprisonment or to cause him some kind of evil. Prince Izyaslav contented himself, however, with preventing the Saint's return to Novgorod and held him in the Caves Monastery under house arrest.

The Saint was not at all grieved by this, but to the contrary, rejoiced and thanked God that he was deprived of his rightful place for the sake of Orthodoxy and had returned to his silent life among the saints.

When the Christ-loving prince George Monomakhovich defeated Izyaslav, St Nifont was returned with honour to Novgorod. The Novgorodians, who had been like sheep without a shepherd, met the Saint with joy.

Soon after this, the Patriarch of Constantinople heard of St Nifont's zealousness and, following the custom of the fathers, sent him an epistle in which he praised the Saint's wisdom and firmness, and likened him to the ancient fathers, who before had stood for Orthodoxy. St Nifont read the Patriarch's epistle and blessing, and was aroused to yet greater zealousness, and for his many toils, he received a reward from the Chief of the shepherds, Jesus Christ.

Some time after his return to Novgorod, St Nifont heard that the Ecumenical Patriarch was sending a delegate to Rus', Metropolitan Konstantin, to dethrone the wrongfully consecrated Klim, and to occupy the cathedra of Kiev himself. St Nifont was filled with spiritual joy and, desiring to meet Bishop Konstantin, he set out for Kiev, and again took up residing in the Caves Monastery.

Soon, however, he fell ill. Three days before his repose, the blessed-one informed the brethren of a wonderful dream:

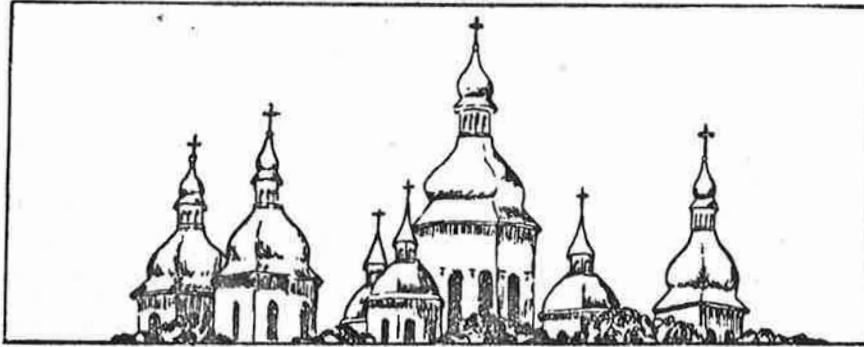
"Once, I returned to my cell after the morning prayers, in order to rest. As I was falling asleep, it seemed to me that I was in the holy Caves church, at the place of Nicholas Svyatosha. With tears, I began to pray to the Most Holy Theotokos that I might see the good builder of this church — St Theodosy. Countless brethren gathered in the church and one of the brethren approached me and said, 'Do you wish to see our holy father Theodosy?'

" 'Yes! I do desire it,' I replied. 'If it is possible, show him to me.' Then he took me by the arm, led me into the sanctuary and there showed me St Theodosy. When I saw him, I fell at his feet with joy. But the holy father raised me and blessed me, saying, 'It is good that you have come, brother and son Nifont! From now on you will be inseparably with us.' The Saint held a scroll in his hand which he gave me. I unrolled it and read on it: 'Behold, I and the children which God gave me...' (Hb.2:13). Coming to myself, I understood that this was from God."

SAINT NIFONT

Saint Nifont lay ill for thirteen more days and then he peacefully reposed in the Lord, on the eighth day of April, on Saturday of Bright Week. His sacred relics were placed in the Cave of St Theodosy and in spirit he stands before the throne of the Master, Christ, and intercedes for us, the children given to him by God, the undivided Trinity, to Whom be all glory, honour and adoration, now and ever and unto the endless ages.

Amen!



29

SAINT PIMEN

The Ill

(7 AUGUST)

As we prepare to relate the life of Saint Pimen, let us note that, in it, we will hear of his great sufferings and see an example of uncomplaining endurance of illness. We will learn how to endure courageously, with thanksgiving, physical illnesses, and we will see how God's strength is accomplished in illness.

Saint Pimen was born into this world ill, and he grew up ill. This physical illness did not cause him to become spiritually ill, and it helped to preserve him from illness of the soul. He was pure of all vice and, from his mother's womb, he knew no obscene sin. Many times, he begged his parents to give him over to a monastery so that he could receive tonsure into the angelic image, but his parents loved him dearly and did not want to part with their son.

Once, the blessed-one became very ill. It appeared as if he was already near death and everyone despaired of his life. Compelled by this misfortune, the parents brought their son to the Caves Monastery and asked the holy fathers to pray that the Lord would heal him. Despite their fervent prayers, the fathers could not help him, for his own prayers overcame theirs. He did not ask God for health, but to the contrary, prayed for the continuation of the illness, knowing that if he became well, his parents would take him away from the monastery, and prevent him from accomplishing his desire.

One night, while his parents and servants were asleep, radiant angels came to him, some in the form of beautiful youths, others in the image of an abbot and monks, carrying in their hands candles, a Gospel, a hair shirt, mantle, cowl and everything necessary for tonsure. They said to him:

"Do you wish us to tonsure you?"

The blessed-one replied with joy, "Yes! I do wish it! God has sent you, my lords. I pray you to fulfil the desire of my heart."

SAINT PIMEN

Then they began to put questions to him, doing everything in order as it is written in the Order of the Service for Monastic Tonsure. Thus they tonsured him into the great angelic image, clothed him in mantle and cowl, and named him Pimen. As is customary, they gave him a burning candle, and said, "For forty days and nights, let this candle not be extinguished." Moreover, they foretold that his suffering would be permanent, and that he would receive health only as a sign of the day of his repose. Having completed all this, they kissed him, took the cut of hair from his tonsure in a cloth, and went with it to the church, where they deposited it on the coffin of St Theodosy.

The brethren who were in nearby caves heard the sound of chanting voices, and they awakened the others, assuming that the ill-one had reposed, and that the abbot and some of the brethren were chanting the appropriate hymns. They all came together to the cell where St Pimen was lying.

When they arrived, the brethren found that everyone but St Pimen was still sleeping. The room was filled with fragrance, and the ill Saint was awake, vigilant and rejoicing. He was vested in monastic clothing. The brothers asked in amazement, "Who tonsured you? How is it that we heard such chanting, and yet your parents and servants are still sleeping?"

The ill Saint responded, "The abbot came with some brethren, tonsured me and named me Pimen. They did the chanting that you heard, and they gave me this candle, and said that it must burn for forty days and nights. They took my hair in a cloth and set out with it to the church."

When they heard this, the brothers immediately set out for the church to investigate. They found the church locked. Waking the sacristans, they inquired if anyone had entered the church since complines, and they were assured that no-one had. As the ecclesiarch kept the keys, they awakened him, and he unlocked the church door. Entering, the monks were amazed to find the cloth with St Pimen's hair lying on the coffin of St Theodosy. The abbot made a diligent search and questioned everyone to find out who could have tonsured St Pimen. He found no-one and the brethren came to understand that this had been done by God's providence, through the Lord's holy angels.

The abbot and brethren deliberated whether they could consider the blessed-one's tonsure as regular. Since, however, they had the testimony of the tonsured hair found on St Theodosy's coffin, and also the unextinguished candle which burned for forty days, the abbot and brothers acknowledged the validity of the tonsure and said to Pimen:

"It is sufficient, Father Pimen, that you have received the monastic image and name from God Himself. But tell us, what were your tonsurers like? Did they omit anything from the Order of Service?"

Saint Pimen replied, "Why do you tempt me, Father? You your-

self came with the brethren and served the service over me from these very books. Moreover, you also told me that I will live my whole life in illness, and will receive my health only just before my departure. And now I ask you to pray for me, holy father, that the Lord will grant me patience."

In accordance with the prophecy of those who had tonsured him, St Pimen lay for many years in a heavy and very abominable illness, so that the monk assigned to care for him could not tolerate his presence, and repeatedly left him without food or water for two or three days at a time. He endured all this joyfully, and thanked God for everything.

On one occasion another ill person was brought to the monastery and tonsured. He was placed in the same cell as Fr Pimen, so that the two could be served together. Often, however, this service was neglected and both the ill monks were left without care. They suffered from thirst, and at length, St Pimen said to his fellow sufferer, "Brother, since those who are supposed to care for us abhor us, would you fulfil this service if the Lord would raise you?"

The sick monk promised that if he was healed, he would serve the ill fervently until his death.

The Saint said to him, "The Lord removes your illness from you. Now that you have your health, fulfil your promise. As for those who are neglectful of such service, the Lord will bring down an illness upon them in order to correct them and give them salvation."

The ill monk immediately arose, completely well, and began to serve St Pimen. The monks who had neglected this service did indeed become ill. The monk who had been healed served zealously at first, but after some time, he wearied in this service and became revolted by St Pimen's horrible illness. As a result, he too often left the blessed-one without bread or water. Soon, however, he was struck by a burning illness and lost all strength. He could not get up, and had to lie on his bed enduring a terrible thirst. He began to cry out, "Save me, for the Lord's sake, I am dying of thirst."

The fathers heard these cries and came to his aid. When they saw how ill the monk was, someone informed St Pimen, "The father who was serving you is dying,"

The Saint responded, "'For, as a man sows, so shall he reap.' Since he left me without food and drink, he received this himself, for he lied to God and despised my weakness. But the Lord has taught us not to return evil for evil, so go and say to him, 'Pimen is calling you; arise and go.'"

When the ill-one heard these words, he suddenly felt healthy, rose up and went to the Saint. The blessed-one admonished him, saying, "O man of little faith! Now you are healthy. See that you do not sin again. Do you not know that the ill and the one who serves them will have an equal reward, for the patience of the poor will not perish unto the ages. For, those

SAINT PIMEN

who here receive grief and anguish, will have joy and rejoicing there, where there is no illness, nor grief, nor sighing, but eternal life. I indure all this, brother, for the sake of that promise. God Who healed you of your illness, can also raise me from this bed and heal my illness. But I myself do not desire this, for, as the Lord said, 'He who endures till the end will be saved.' It is better for me that I decay completely in this life, since in the future one, the flesh will be without corruption..."

Instructed by such admonitions of the Saint, the monk was deeply moved, and from that time, he constantly served St Pimen. The valiant sufferer and worthy imitator of Saint Job, sent up thanksgivings to God, and lay under his sufferings for twenty years.

At last, the time came for the Saint's repose. On that day, Saint Pimen rose up healthy, as was foretold by the ones who tonsured him.

Just before the Divine Liturgy, the Saint went round to all the monks who were ill and said, "My friends and brethren! Arise and accompany me." And immediately their illnesses disappeared, they rose up and followed their benefactor. He went to the church, partook of the Divine Mysteries and after this, he took his funeral cot, carried it to the cave in which he wished to be buried and showed the place to the brothers. He fell silent for a while and then, turning to the brethren, he solemnly said, "Now, brethren, here come those who tonsured me, in order to take me with them." Following these words, he lay down on the bed and reposed in the Lord. The brethren buried him with great honour, giving glory to the Lord, Who is wondrous in His Saints. To Him be glory, honour and dominion, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

Amen!

ON THINGS DONE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP IN THE LORD.

[A compilation of the direct, theological teachings of the Fathers of the Orthodox Church concerning those things which are done on behalf of the faithful who have fallen asleep in the Lord.]

ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM
(IN DAMASCENE, P.G.,
96:33A)

"And this is the reason for the prayers, psalms and glorification of God [at funerals]: so that you not weep and lament, but rather give thanks to God Who has taken him [the reposed one]."

ST EPIPHANIOS OF CYPRUS
(in AGAINST HERESIES, VOL. 1,
BOOK 3, §74)

" Q: Then he says, 'For what reason do you commemorate the names of the dead after their death'?..."

"ANSWER 513B: As regards the commemorating of the names of the reposed, what could be more useful, more proper and wonderful? For, this causes those present to believe that the departed live and are not in a state of non-existence, but rather, they exist and live with the Master; and it causes that the holy kerygma be proclaimed, there being hope for the brethren who are prayed for, who are, as it were, in a distant land... And indeed, the prayer made in their behalf brings profit — though in truth it does not do away with the whole of their offences — because we often in this world do wrong involuntarily and voluntarily, and this act clearly indicates that which is more perfect..." (The entire text is found in P.G., 42:508A).

[Continued].

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH ON THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

SAINT ATHANASIOS THE GREAT (298-373).

"Whence it is quite fitting that the Lord suffered this death. For thus being lifted up He cleared the air of the malignity both of the devil and of demons of all kinds..."
(THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD OF GOD, para. 25).

SAINT ANDREW OF CRETE

"....If God is light, which indeed He is, and there is no darkness in Him whatsoever, and 'In Him we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17:28), and to Him we are taken, and the souls of all of us 'are in His hand' according to the prophet (Ws.3:1)..."
(HOMILY ON HUMAN LIFE AND THOSE FALLEN ASLEEP).

SAINT PHOTIOS THE GREAT

"Death is nothing else but protracted sleep."
(THE AMPHILOKHIA, Ques. 167).

SAINT DENNIS THE AREOPAGITE

"The sleep of the holy [i.e., the faithful] is in comfort and unshaken hopes, as it attains the goal of the Divine contests." (2Tm.4:6-8).

SAINT CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

"For they who have once enjoyed the honour of adoption shall abide in the presence of God, at no time thrust forth from the court of the first-born, but rather passing a long and lasting season therein... For the boast of the Church will never cease nor ever fail, for the souls of the righteous depart from things of earth and are safely moored at the city that is above, the heavenly Jerusalem, the Church of the first-born, which is our Mother, according to the voice of Paul."
(COMMENTARY ON JOHN'S GOSPEL, 8:35. Emph. the editor's)

SAINT SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN

"...after your departure [repose] you can have no activity whereby you might gain purification."
(FIFTH ETHICAL HOMILY, Line 125).

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH ON THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

"Blessed are they who have even now kindled the light in their hearts and have preserved it from being extinguished, for in their departure from life they being radiant shall meet with the Bridegroom and shall enter with Him into the bridal-chamber bearing their lamps. Blessed are they who have not been of the opinion that men do not receive from here, already, the assurance of their salvation, but only after their departure, because these people have struggled now to receive this assurance."

(TENTH ETHICAL HOMILY, Lines 805-813).

"For if the Lord is the Light of the world and He said to His apostles that He would be together with us until the consummation (Mt.28:20), how is it that being [already] with us He shall come? In no wise. For we are not children of darkness and children of the night, such that the Light could come upon us, but we are children of light and children of the day of the Lord. Wherefore both while living we are in the Lord and dying we are in Him and with Him we shall live, as Paul says" (cf. Rm.14:8; Ths.5:10).

(TENTH ETHICAL HOMILY, Lines 681-687).

SAINT ISAAC OF NINEVEH (THE SYRIAN)

"The true Sabbath, the Sabbath that is not a similitude, is the tomb, which reveals and manifests perfect repose from the tribulations of the passions and the husbandry which opposes rest. All humanity shall keep there the Sabbath, both in soul and body."

(HOMILY 74).

SAINT IRENAE OF LYONS

"The souls go away to the invisible place ordained for them by God, and there they dwell until the resurrection, awaiting the resurrection. Thereupon they shall receive back their bodies and be resurrected in their entirety, that is bodily, even as the Lord rose, and thus they shall go before the countenance of the Lord."

(BOOK 5, Para. 31).

PROSTRATION PRAYER AT PENTECOST

"The dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord, nor do those in hades have freedom of speech to offer up confession..."

BURIAL SERVICE FOR REPOSED PRESBYTERS

"Why do you mourn for me so strongly, O people? Why do you

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH ON THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

make so vain a clamour? proclaims the one who has been called forth. Death is a rest for all people. Therefore, let us hearken to the voice of Job when he says: 'Death is rest unto man.' Grant rest, therefore, with Thy Saints, unto him whom You have taken."

(VERSE IN THE BEATITUDES, ON BLESSED ARE THEY WHO ARE PERSECUTED)

SAINT ANASTASSIOS OF SINAI

"Regarding those things which are passed over in silence in the Divine Scriptures, it is manifest that they must not be sought out. The Holy Spirit revealed unto us those things which it is to our profit to learn, and again as for those things which are not profitable, He kept them hidden. But since man is an argumentative and inquisitive creature, whatever we have been able to learn from the Holy Fathers, as it were somewhat dimly, this also shall I attempt to make clear to you.

"Let it be known unto all, then, that it is for this cause that man is said to be [fashioned] according to the image and likeness of God, because many of those [attributes] which exist by nature in the Divine Nature and are known obscurely in a certain image and figure, are found also by Grace — not by nature — in our soul. That is to say, we confess and believe that God's Nature is by nature incomprehensible, nameless, invisible, immortal, beyond touch and incorruptible. For this cause also the soul, insomuch as it is according to the image of God is — not by nature, but by Grace — incomprehensible for us men according to its essence, and also invisible, inexplicable, beyond touch, incorruptible and immortal; and it is also creative by Grace. For man gives birth to man by the Grace of God, and he creates...since he is made according to the image of God. Wherefore, even as no man from ages past has been able to say what and of what kind is the nature of God, likewise neither can any of us say or understand what is the essence of man's soul, or what is the essence of the soul which is made according to the image of God. For even as God reveals to us His own powers and operations by means of the material creation which is visible to us — I mean heaven and the stars, the sun and moon... — though He Himself is invisible, so also our invisible soul which is according to His image reveals its own operations by means of its visible body, which is like a sort of world. It has the brain which is above the so-called roof of the mouth [οὐρανῶσκος, i.e., little heaven or heavenly vault] after the likeness of God Who is above Heaven, and it possesses the ruling mind which guides and governs the body like a sort of small world. Wherefore, should the brain ever receive some grievous wound or a man be smitten on the head, straightway the mind suffers and the man is no longer able to discern or remember as before.

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH ON THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

"And again, the soul operates the rational faculty...the faculty of desire...the faculty of joy and mirth...the faculty of breathing...; that of reproduction...; that of ardour...; that of perception through the eyes; that of speech through the tongue, since when it is severed, a man is no longer able to speak. Accordingly, when the soul is separated from the entire body, it is no longer able to operate, because it operates through the members of the body. The soul can neither speak, nor remember, nor discern, nor desire, nor think, nor be roused, nor see, but it exists in a certain reflective state within itself, remaining immortal [by Grace], until it again receives its own incorrupt body; and henceforth, the functions which it accomplishes therein shall be incorrupt... As to the fact that the soul is bereft of the reasoning faculty when it is separated from the body, listen to what the Psalmist says concerning those that have died: 'In that day all his thoughts shall perish' (Ps.145:4). And again he says, 'They shall remember no-one.' And, 'For in death there is none that is mindful of Thee, O God' (Ps.6:4) ..."

But concerning the Saints, he says:

"But as for the souls which have acquired the Holy Spirit and have become as it were one body and organism with Him, it seems to me that through His illumination they rejoice even after death, and noetically glorify God the Word and intercede for others, as we learn from the Scriptures. Further, it is fitting that we should know that all the visions that occur in churches or at the shrines of the Saints are accomplished by angels at God's command. Since how is it possible, the resurrection of the body not having taken place and the bones and bodies of the Saint being yet scattered about, that they should be seen as men already intact, and oftentimes seen as armed men on horseback? But if you are minded to contradict, tell me how Peter, or Paul, or another apostle or martyr can oftentimes appear in many places at the same time? For not even an angel can be found in the same instant in different places or lands; this is a property of the uncircumscribable God alone..." (ANSWER 89).

(Continued).

FOREWORD

In a recent article in *The Eastern Churches Review*, Rev Canon George Every presented what he considered to be a strong case for an Orthodox acceptance of the principle, if not the actual doctrine, of purgatory. In his arguments, in an article titled, "Toll Gates on The Air Ways," Canon Every ignores the entire body of Orthodox patristic theological teachings on the relationship of the soul and the body, the nature of repentance, and the state of the soul after one's repose. Instead, he fixes his conclusions upon a Monophysite homily, certain grotesque apocryphal tales relating to the dormition of the Virgin, a rather lavish over-expansion of the metaphor used in certain parables by one or two of the Church Fathers, and the dubious tale of Theodora's ascent through the gates of the astral planes (toll-houses).

Canon Every does present something of a balanced assessment of the subject of purgatory, but as a dedicated Ecumenist, and in true Anglican fashion, he is committed to that strange sort of theological apocatastasis in which abject heretics can be called "fathers of the Church" and complete falsehood can be reconciled with truth by means of a mere artistic dialectic manipulation — some slight corrections of the truth and a few minor adjustments of the falsehood. Canon Every is a very able scholar and had he wished to do so, he could certainly have surveyed the Orthodox patristic writings on the subject of the soul after death and the nature of Divine Judgment, and come to a sound conclusion concerning the Orthodox view of purgatory.

But, of course, he is not trying to arrive at a correct understanding of the Orthodox teaching; he is trying to justify a pre-contrived conclusion which enhances the shady practices of Ecumenical dialogue.

One can, however, hardly blame Canon Every for his *initial* confusion on the subject, considering the amount of confusion which has been engendered by similar practices among Orthodox writers and theologians, under the influence of Western Scholasticism.

To add to the confusion created by our own Latinized scholastics and heterodox theologians such as Canon Every, over the Orthodox patristic teachings about the soul after death, there is, at present, a considerable vogue of academic and occult speculation on the nature of the state of the soul after it departs the body. Most of these speculations are inspired by a nearly desperate desire of a post-Christian society to find some sort of proof that life continues after bodily death. As this society is post-Christian, it wants a proof that will exempt it from having to answer for the course and quality of life it chooses, of its own free will, to follow in this present ex-

istence.

Death is the enemy of mankind, and a source of the utmost confusion and dread to a humanity deprived of true Christian hope. The idea that death is a final end of all human existence is also a source of avarice, self-centredness, the worship and exaltation of the passions and the desire to feed the sensual pleasures to the utmost in this life. This is precisely why the Apostle says that, "Through fear of death, man was all his lifetime held in bondage by him who had the power of death, namely Satan," and "The sting of death is sin" (Hb.2:14-15; 1Cor.15:56).

Mankind in general has always known that human existence does not cease with physical death, and those philosophies which have advocated the contrary have usually appeared in times of considerable material well-being and carnal self-centredness. Such philosophers, advocating that death is a final end to all existence, usually have a vested interest in advocating this: it frees their own conscience from the moral constraint of the possibility of having to answer later for the avarice, coarse materialism and selfish passions of this life. Developing a philosophy which denies all chance of judgment of the person is a way of conquering and defeating one's own conscience. It is, thus, a psychopathic pursuit.

Given then, that we accept the continuance of human existence after the repose of the person, there are a number of questions which arise in our minds: what is the nature of this continued existence, can we know about it from tangible, scientific or experiential evidence, or from faith only; what bearing do our conduct, spiritual directions in this life and faith have upon our state in that continued existence; what happens to the soul during the period it is separated from the body; what is meant by judgment and when does it take place?

In this talk, we will present the Orthodox Christian understanding of these matters. Obviously, there are contrary views. Views which either do not accept the authority of the Scripture, Church Fathers and Sacred Tradition or which consider that there is some sort of stream of cosmic or gnostic consciousness which has equal or superior authority with them and which can create new theologies about which they did not know.

Within the Christian world, there are, generally speaking, two conceptions of the relationship between the body and the soul, and the state of the soul after the repose of the body. The first of these is the Orthodox Christian view, and it quite naturally conforms to the Hebraic understanding, as presented in the Old Testament and completed by the New Testament. After all, the Orthodox Church regards itself as the New Israel, the continuation of the Old Testament Church in its fulfilled and completed state, in the "New Testament". Many of the later Christian religions maintain at least some aspects of these understandings.

The other view, held in one degree or another, especially by many of the various Western Christian religions, is essentially Origenistic — more correctly, Platonism as developed by the early Christian heretic Origen and later neo-Platonist philosophers.

As an example, in the first, the Orthodox understanding, at death, the soul is held to be assigned to a state of repose by an act of the Will of God, and enter into a condition of inactivity, a sort of sleep in which it does not function, hear or see, but only knows its destiny as if in a dream in which it contemplates its future condition, either in joy, spiritual comfort and expectation, or in sorrow and fear. Thus, it awaits the resurrection of its other half, its body, in a sort of hesychastic state of noetic contemplation. The Origenistic view holds that the soul is liberated from a physical prison at death,¹ and thus functions even better than before death. It enters into a new freedom, exalts in the discovery that it can see, reason and discover new things even though it no longer has the bodily senses. This Origenistic view includes a whole range of teachings about purgatories, experiences of exaltation, unspeakable horrors of souls pursued and tormented by demons, wanderings, hauntings, of souls hovering over their bodies, of transmigrations and even of returns to the body shortly after death.

The difference between these two views is, as you see, quite great.

Because of this, it seems appropriate to present, even if only in general terms, the Orthodox teaching on these matters.

ONE: THE SOURCE AND NATURE OF DEATH

In general, in the West, the concept of death and the soul after death is coloured by the Hellenic ideas of Western Scholasticism, and is founded on apocryphal and non-Christian sources. This is especially well evidenced by such teachings as Original Sin, which includes the notion of death as a formal punishment, Purgatory, the natural immortality of the soul, and other similar ideas, not least of which is a certain hedonism in the Western moral ideal, which sets as an object, a type of post-life epicureanism.

The contemporary Greek theologian, Fr John Romanides remarks: "It would be highly illogical to try to interpret Pauline thought with the presupposition (1) that death is normal or (2) that at most, it is the outcome of a juridical decision of God to punish the whole human race for one sin, (3) that happiness is the ultimate destiny of man, and (4) that the soul is immaterial, naturally immortal and as directly created by God at conception, normal and pure of defects."²

Man was created for communion with God. He found his complete fulfilment in a life of communion, praise and giving glory to the Creator, living in a unison of love with God, by love drawing nearer to Him toward sharing in His immortality, in His Deity.³ Man was not created for death; death was not a part of his nature, and it is by no means "natural." Man was created to live, through unity with the Creator.⁴

Why, then, does God warn Adam and Eve that if they turn from Him in disobedience and learn the conflict between good and evil, they will "surely die;" for this is just what He means by, "For on the day you eat of it, you shall surely die."⁵ This was no threat of punishment, for death is by no means a contrived punishment, rather it was a simple statement of reality.⁶ Immortality is a property of God alone.⁷ Man cannot possess it.⁸ He can only share in it by Grace.⁹ We said that man was created for communion with God, and thus, he was created for life.¹⁰ Evil, which causes death, was not in his nature.¹¹ By disobedience, man turned away from God and thus from life and the Source of Life,¹² and so death became his destiny,¹³ for his nature became corrupted¹⁴ and he was no longer in direct communion with life.

By accepting sin into his nature, man fell, not from the high state of perfection ascribed to him by Augustine,¹⁵ but from a state of harmonious existence in which he was growing and maturing toward perfection in God. The fall resulted in a change in man's nature. It now became disharmonious, full of internal conflict¹⁶ and dissonance. Death is in itself the arch-manifestation of this disharmony and dissonance.¹⁷ Death is an automatic result of separation from God, and sin is the cause of this separation. Death and sin are interacting and co-supportive, for "Death is the wages of sin," while "Sin is the sting of death."¹⁸ In order for one to be conquered, the other must be overcome. Thus, the "Sinless One," Jesus Christ alone was

able to conquer death and liberate man from its bondage, making the struggle for "perfection"¹⁹ once more possible. For, sin sets up a complete internal disharmony, and death completely shatters the natural organism, the *psychophysical* organism that is man. The soul does not depart the body into a world of light, discovery, purification or experience of any type. Rather, the soul tears itself away from the body unwillingly, with anguish over the apparent destruction of its organism by the unnatural division of its components. It is not the body which holds man in bondage, but death itself and "him who has the power of death."²⁰

Death is the "last enemy" of both God and man.²¹ It is the direct result of man's separation from God, and man is separated from God by sin. Satan increases and perpetuates this separation, and thus he has the power of death in his hands. To be in the hands of death means to be out of the hands of God.²² How great this enemy is, the Saviour Himself reveals to us. He wished us to know how great a gulf He was bridging for us, and yet how completely, how absolutely He was willing to suffer for us, and so on the Cross, He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"²³ This means that the Human Christ truly tasted death — He placed Himself, as a man, in the hands of death: and to be in the hands of death is to be separated from God. Thus, the human body of Christ tasted death for us. Christ as God, of course, entered the realm of death and truly conquered it. He returned from death, removed His human nature and body from the hands of death and restored it once more to the hands of God.²⁴ Thus, the dominion of death and, consequently, the effective power of Satan, has been shattered. (All that is left to him is the power of deceit and delusion).²⁵ There is now one resurrected Body, the Body of Christ — that fully human body which is united fully with God. In it, the power of death is shattered once and for all. One participates in that victory over death by uniting oneself with that one resurrected Body in which the victory is complete and certain: by uniting oneself to the Body of Christ. For this reason, in the Divine Liturgy, we partake of that one Resurrected Body and unite ourselves to it. For this reason, too, the Orthodox Dogma of the Church is, for us, central and vital to our lives and salvation. The Church is the Body of Christ, as the Apostle clearly says.²⁶ We unite ourselves to that Body of Christ, the Church, in the re-birth of Baptism, which in itself is a living symbol of the victory over death, and within the Church, we receive the very Body and Blood of the risen and ascended Saviour, and in faith unite ourselves to Him, and participate in the liberation from the fear of death with which Satan has held mankind in bondage all his lifetime.²⁷ Being truly liberated from that bondage, one can take up where Adam and Eve left off, in the struggle to mature in perfection: only now, it is a very great struggle indeed. Thus, salvation consists in the union of the faithful with the life of God in

the Body of Christ (the Holy Church), where the evil-one is being progressively and really destroyed in the life of co-suffering love.²⁸ This union is effected by baptism (the Grace of regeneration) and fulfilled in the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, and in the mutual, cooperative struggle of Orthodox Christians against the power and influence of the evil-one. This is precisely why the last words of the Lord's Prayer are, "deliver us from the evil-one," and not "deliver us from evil."

THE ACT OF DEATH

The "act of death" is a great mystery, and we do not wish to go too far in trying to explain or define it, but we will make a few observations.²⁹

Death is the unnatural dissolution of the psychophysical organism of man. It occurs by means of the corruption of the vital functions of the physical aspect of man — whether a long process of corruption, as when a person dies of old age; an accelerated corruption, as when one dies of disease or illness; or an instantaneous one, as with an accident.

The soul, the "psyche" aspect of man, cannot function on its own, but only by means of the body. Thus, when the body's functions break down and cease, God, in His mercy calls the soul forth and preserves it in existence. The soul is the life-force of the body, and so the body dies at the moment the soul is called forth from it. The body does not die until the soul departs from it. This is why persons whose heart beat has ceased and whose brains no longer give off even the slightest signs of life, have been found, nevertheless, to be still alive — such as the dreadful incident last year in the United States, when doctors, having applied the "Harvard Method for Determining Death," opened a man's skull and began to extract his brain, supposing him to be dead: he was still alive, and the doctors hurriedly tried to undo their deed.

The soul does not depart from the body easily. Death is unnatural; it is common to the fallen nature of man, and not to his true nature. Thus, the soul tears itself away from the body with regret, not as from a separate object or a container, but as from its own self, from a part of its own being.

1. By contrast, the Fathers, who always spoke of the sanctity of the body, referred to our being delivered from the power of the "flesh", meaning the carnal lusts built up in our person, and from the prison of the passions which dwell parasitically in the flesh. Origen developed such a confused, Platonic view that he ended up even denying the literal resurrection of our bodies.
2. Fr John Romanides, *THE ANCESTRAL SIN*, Athens, 1971.
3. 1Tm.6:16; 2Tm.1:10; 1Cor.17:50-54; cf St Anastassios of Sinai, "... the soul...is not by nature, but by Grace...immortal" (Ans.89:2).
4. Wis.2:23-24; 1:13f.
5. Gn.2:7.
6. see St Gregory Palamas, *PHYS. CHAP. V.150*, c11157 P.G. Augustine of Hippo, in his blasphemous commentary on Genesis, interprets this verse and had God saying, "On the day you eat of it, I will kill you."
7. St Ambrose of Milan, *THE CHRISTIAN FAITH*, 3:19-21, for example.
8. *ibid*; Jb.10:12.
9. St Ambrose of Milan, *ibid*; St Hilary of Poitiers, *THE TRINITY*, 9:4, 38, for example.
10. Wis.3:23.
11. St John Damascene, *EXPOSITION OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH*, 12:4-5; St Ambrose of Milan, *BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION*; c47 and c120 of 2nd Carthage; St Gregory of Sinai, *ON COMMANDMENTS AND DOGMAS*, 4:11 (*Philokalia*).
12. St Hilary, *ibid*, 9:4-5; 38-39, etc.
13. Deut. 30:15, 19-20; Wis.2:24; Rm.5:12, etc.
14. St Gregory of Sinai, *ibid*; 1Cor.15:24.
15. 1Cor.15:26.
16. Rm.7:10-25.
17. This is why the Orthodox Russians, at funeral services, purposely ring the bells in a disharmonious peal.
18. Rm.2:23; 1Cor.15:56.
19. 2Cor.7:1. Because of the New Adam, we can take up where the old Adam left off.

FOOTNOTES: THE BODY, THE SOUL AND DEATH

20. Hb.2:14.

21. 1Cor.15:26.

22. The early Christians understood this principle very well. During the time of the great persecutions, when anyone identified as a Christian could be killed at random on the street, the Christians would never absent themselves from the Divine Liturgy on account of fear of being killed. To do so would have been considered a confession that one had again become a slave to the evil-one.

23. Mt.27:46; Mk.15:34.

24. Which is why the apostles say that God raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:24, 34; 3:15, 26; etc.).

25. see, for example, THE LIFE OF ST ANTONY, by St Athanasios the Great, where this ideas is repeated two or three times.

26. Col.1:18, 24.

27. Hb.2:14-17; 1Cor.10:16-17, etc.

28. Eph.6:12; 2:2; 6:13, etc.

29. On the subject of the "act of death," we are not setting forth theological statements or doctrines, but only observations.



VLADIKA

EXTRACTS FROM THE LIFE AND WORKS OF BLESSED
ANTONY OF THE DIASPORA, METROPOLITAN OF KIEV
AND PRESIDENT OF THE SYNOD OF THE RUSSIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE RUSSIA.

The late Archbishop Nikon of Washington, D.C., recalled the following words of Metropolitan Antony. Vladika Nikon says, Once, in 1929, we requested of Vladika Antony that he express his thoughts about the future Russia and on the tasks of the Russian emigration.

In reply to this request, Vladika wrote the following:

I have been approached with a request to say "a short word with an exposition on the tasks of the Russian emigration."

I do not consider it possible to conceal my convictions, and so I shall reply briefly and clearly.

"I am not a prophet or the son of a prophet..." All the less, then, can I foretell anything about the future Russia, but I know that Russia can exist only with the preservation of uncorrupted Orthodoxy, the tsar's monarchy and the people's patriotism.

In 1902, on the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple, while still bishop of Ufa, I preached that Russia was quickly moving toward disaster, as its authorities were growing cold toward the Orthodox Church and toward the tsar's dynasty... On 20 February, 1905, in St Isaak's cathedral in Petrograd, I said another word, which made a great stir all over Russia. I said that Rus' would not continue in existence for another twenty-five years if it did not preserve the tsar's monarchy and if it grew cool toward the holy faith and the Church. In no-way did I present this thought as some sort of inspiration from above, but offered it as a logical deduction from observations of life...

I am also asked about the tasks of the Russian emigration. This reminds me of the question which the Jews directed to Christ, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus replied to them: This is the work of God, that you believe on Him Whom He has sent" (Jn.6:29).

If the Russian emigration, instead of spending itself on fruitless arguments about the future organization of the life of the state, when the state itself does not even exist, will give over its mind and its soul to the organization of its internal spiritual life, will learn how it must believe and pray, and will elevate that which our contemporaries have so insanely destroyed; then it (the Russian emigration) will see before it clearly, the perspective of the future normal life of our people and they will be shown in themselves the most urgent

tasks of the personal and common activity of the emigration: that it might blend into one unanimous Orthodox brotherhood, about which we pray in all the litanies, "for all our brotherhood in Christ."

Of course, there is little hope that a majority of our corrupt and habitually-lying society will follow such advice, but if it will not follow it, then it must...simply turn into a band of vagabonds, being tossed from one conqueror to another...

This is the sad end that is being prepared for our Rus' by the contemporary insanity of its sons... Events are not, however, always defined by usual pragmatism. The mighty action of Providence and the triumph of good and light is possible. Nevertheless, only God's prophets can foresee what depends only on God, but I have already told you that "I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet."

(WORKS, Vol. 9, p.21).

THE SANCTITY OF
THE EPIKLESIS PRAYER



Abba Gregory, a former member of the Imperial Body Guards, told us the following:

In the Khozevite Monastery, there was a brother who knew the prayers of the epiklesis from memory. Once, he was sent to get the prosphora loaves for the Liturgy. On the way back to the monastery, the brother light-mindedly performed a mock epiklesis over these loaves. Later, the deacons placed these same prosphoras on the proskomedia table for the Liturgy.

The consecration was celebrated by Abba John, called "The Khozevite" (later bishop of Caesaria of Palestine). He did not, however, see the Holy Spirit consecrating them, as he always had. The elder became greatly grieved, thinking that he must have offended the Holy Spirit by some sin, so that It had departed from him. He went into the diakonikon and prostrated himself, shedding a stream of tears.

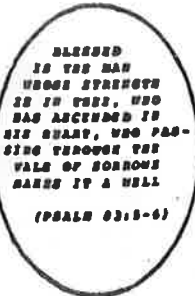
An angel of the Lord appeared to him, comforting the elder that the prosphora had already been consecrated, and that this was a revelation about the sin of the brother who had said the mock epiklesis over them along the road.

From that time, the elder established the rule that no-one who was not ordained should learn the words of the holy epiklesis.

"...by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust... diligently add virtue to your faith, and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge add temperance, and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness" (2 Peter 2:4-6).



THE VISION
OF
BROTHER THEOPHANY



Yriakos, an elder who was great in the eyes of God, lived in the Kalamon Lavra, near the sacred Jordan. Once, a brother named Theophany came from Tantura, Cilicia and asked the elder how to struggle with thoughts of fornication. The elder began to instruct him in chastity and purity.

The brother received great benefit from these instructions and he exclaimed, "My father, if I was not a Nestorian, I would remain with you for life!"

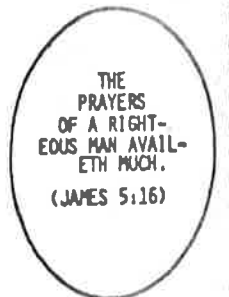
Upon hearing the name of Nestorius, the elder was grieved over the ruin of the brother and he began to explain to him why he should leave this heresy and unite himself with the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

"Father," exclaimed the brother, "you see all the religions say the same thing: 'If you do not enter into communion with us, you will not be saved.' An unfortunate person like me does not know how to act. Pray to the Lord that He clearly show me which faith is the true one."

The elder was very rejoiced at hearing these words. "Remain here in my cell," the elder said. "I trust in God that through His mercy, he will reveal the truth to you."

The abba left brother Theophany in his cave while he went out to pray on the shore of the Dead Sea. On the second day, at about the ninth hour, the brother had a vision. A terrifying figure appeared to him and said,

"Assuming that you have really heard Him and been taught by Him, as all truth is in Jesus. Strip yourselves of your former nature which characterized your previous manner of life and becomes corrupt through lusts and desires which spring from delusions; and be constantly in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new nature created in God's image, in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4:22).



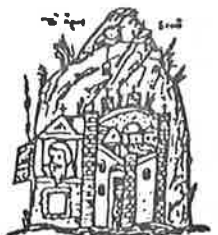
THE
PRAYERS
OF A RIGHT-
EOUS MAN AVAIL-
ETH MUCH.
(JAMES 5:16)



"Go and find out the truth!"

The figure led Theophany to a dark place, filled with stench and bathed in flames. There in the flames, the figure pointed out Nestorius, Theodore, Eutikhios and Appollinarius, Evagrius and Didymos, Dioskoros and Severius, and others. The one who had appeared to brother Theophany said, "Here is the place prepared for heretics, and for those who teach falsely about the Most Holy Theotokos, and for those who follow their teachings. If you like this place, remain with your teaching. If not, then turn to the Holy Orthodox Church. I tell you that even if a person is adorned with virtues, if he continues in heresy, he will end up in this same place."

After this, the vision ended. When the elder returned, the brother told him everything that he had seen, and in a short time, he was united to the Holy Church. He lived in Kalamon with the elder for several years, and then reposed in peace.



"...by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust... diligently add virtue to your faith, and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge add temperance, and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness" (2 Peter 2:4-6).

A PRESBYTER
OF MARDARD

In Cilicia, there is a city called Egius. The settlement of Mardard is about 10,000 paces from it. The church of that settlement is named for Saint John the Baptizer. One priest of this church was a great and virtuous elder.

Once, however, the people of the settlement came to the Bishop of Egius requesting, "Remove this old man, for he is difficult. On the Lord's Day he celebrates the Liturgy at the ninth hour, and he does not follow the rubric."

The bishop summonsed the elder and asked him, "Why do you act this way? Do you not know the rubrics?"

"Truly, master, I have done this," replied the elder. "And you are correct. But I do not know what else to do. On the Lord's Day, I am at the holy table from the time of the Midnight Hour, but I do not begin the Liturgy until I perceive the Holy Spirit descending upon the holy table. When I see the descent of the Holy Spirit, I quickly begin the Liturgy."

The bishop was amazed by the virtue of the elder. He explained the matter to the delegation from Mardard, and they went away glorifying God.

"Assuming that you have really heard Him and been taught by Him, as all truth is in Jesus. Strip yourselves of your former nature which characterized your previous manner of life and becomes corrupt through lusts and desires which spring from delusions; and be constantly in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new nature created in God's image, in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4:22).



BLESSED
IS THE MAN
WHOSE STRENGTH
IS IN THEE, WHO
HAS ASCENDED IN
HIS HEART, WHO PAS-
SING THROUGH THE
VALLEY OF SORROWS
MAKES IT A WELL
(PSALM 83:5-6)



THE
PRAYERS
OF A RIGHT-
EOUS MAN AVAIL-
ETH MUCH.
(JAMES 5:16)





THE SILVER PRINCE

by COUNT A.K. TOLSTOY

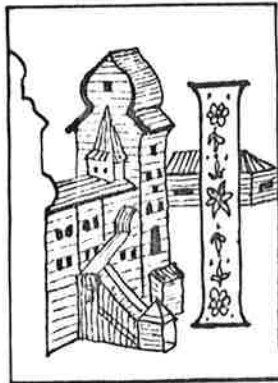
translated by
PRINCE N.S. GALITZINE





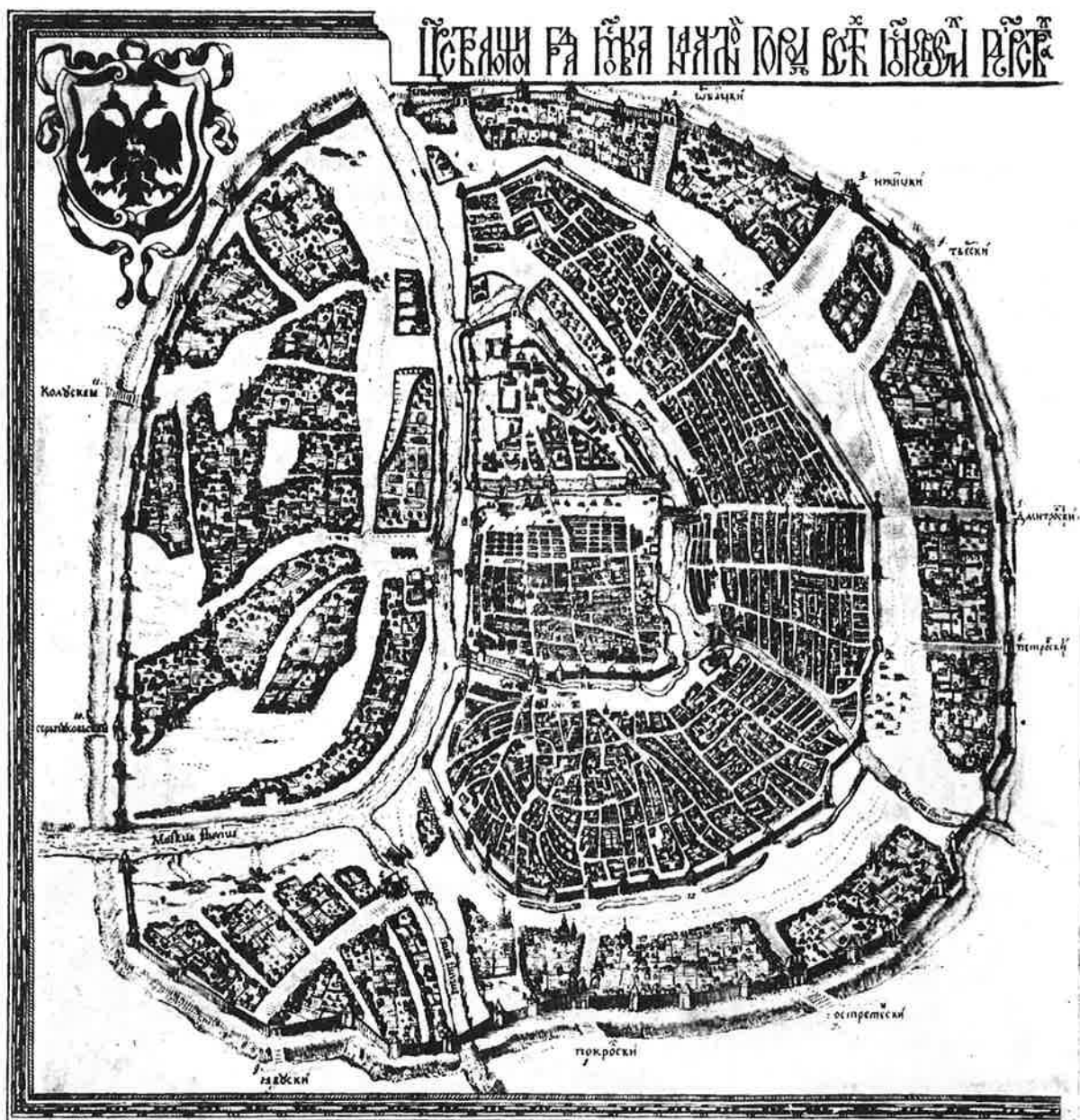
FOUR

THE OLD BOYARIN AND HIS YOUNG WIFE



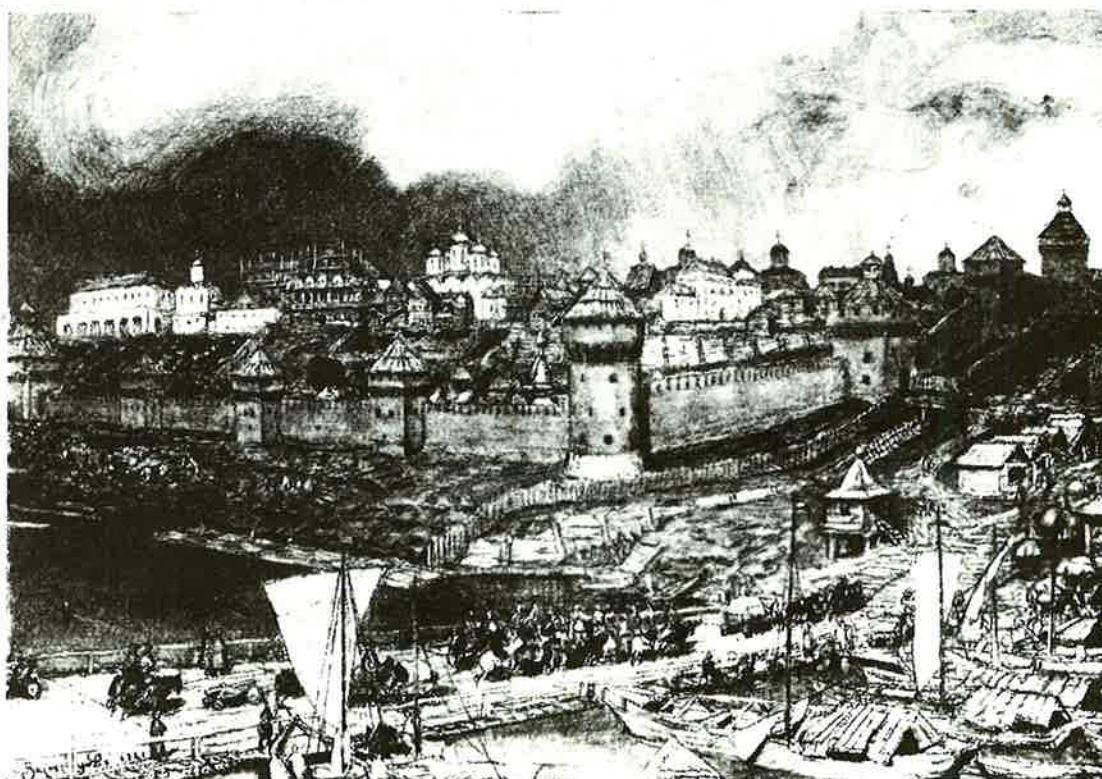
IF THE reader could be transported some three hundred years back in time, and could look down on Moscow from a high bell-tower, he would find little resemblance to the present scene. The banks of the River Moscow, and of the Yauza and Neglina, were then covered with a mass of wooden houses, with shingle or straw roofs, mostly blackened with age. The walls of the Kremlin, of the Chinese quarter, and of the other fortifications, which had arisen in the course of the previous two centuries, stood out sharply in their red and white colouring against the dark roofs. A multitude of churches and bell-towers raised their golden cupolas to the sky. Thick groves of trees and large green and yellow patches of wheatfields were visible between the houses. The bridges over the River Moscow, so shakily constructed that they seemed almost alive, would quiver violently and become half-submerged in water, when carts or riders crossed them. Dozens of mill-wheels, one beside the other, churned in the waters of the Yauza and Neglina. These groves and mills in the very midst of Moscow gave the city a most picturesque appearance. It was particularly pleasant to see the monasteries, which, with their white enclosures and motley groups of gold and multi-coloured cupolas, seemed like separate towns within the city.

Proudly rising above all this tangle of churches, houses, groves and monasteries, were the churches of the Kremlin, and the Cathedral of the Protection of the Theotokos, which Ivan had founded some years before to commemorate the capture of Kazan, and which is now more commonly known as "St Basil the Blessed". Great was the joy of the Muscovites when the forest surrounding this church was at last cut down, and the cathedral stood out in all its dazzling splendour, shining with gold and many colours, and amazing the eye of the beholder with its diverse ornamentation. Long afterwards, the people still wondered at the architect's skill, and continued to thank God and praise the Tsar, who had thus enabled Christians to see



a sight such as man had never before beheld. The other Moscow churches were splendid in their own ways, for the Muscovites spared neither money nor labour on the magnificence of God's temples. Rich colours and gilding, and huge, life-sized ikons were visible everywhere on the outer walls of the churches. The Christians loved to decorate God's temples, but because of this they did not trouble much about the outsides of their own houses; their dwellings were constructed firmly and simply, using rough beams of pine or oak, but unsheathed even by planks, according to the ancient Russian saying: "A home's fame not in its corners lies, but in the baking of its pies."

Only the house of Boyarin Drujhina Andreyevich Morozov, on the bank of the River Moscow, was distinguished by a special kind of beauty. Its oak logs had been carefully selected for roundness and evenness; all the corners were dovetailed, and the house rose three stories high, not counting the attic. The roof that projected over the steep porch was supported by bulbous, ornate pillars, and flaunted its fine carving. The shutters were artistically decorated with designs of birds and flowers, and the windows let in God's light, not through murky skins made from cattle bladders, as was the case in the majority of Moscow houses, but through clean, transparent sheets of mica. The servants' quarters, store-rooms, drying-rooms, dove-cotes, and the Boyarin's summer house, stood in a spacious courtyard. Adjoining one side of the courtyard was a private church, built of stone, while on another side lay an extensive garden, surrounded by an oaken palisade; some beautifully-made swings stood high within the garden, and they



also were decorated with painted designs. In short, the house was built for glory. And there was good reason for it to be so built!

Despite his advanced years, Boyarin Drujhina Andreyevich, stout in the body, stern of temper, had recently married Moscow's foremost beauty. Everyone had wondered when he was accepted by Elyena Dmitryevna, daughter of the chamberlain Pleshcheyev-Otchin, who had been killed at the siege of Kazan. Not such a bridegroom had the Moscow match-makers destined for her. Elyena had been without father or mother at her coming-out, and due to the unclean morals of the Tsar's new favourites, the beauty of the girl had been a source more often of trouble than of joy to her.

In marrying Elyena, Morozov made himself her protector, and in Moscow everyone knew well enough that it would not be an easy matter to offend the one who Drujhina Andreyevich had decided to defend!

Before Elyena's marriage, many of the Tsar's favourites had tried to attract her attention; none more so than Prince Afanasy Ivanovich Vyazemsky. He sent her expensive presents, he stood beside her in church, he galloped past her gate on a frantic horse, he fought with fisticuffs in single combat on the ramparts, but no success crowned Afanasy Ivanovich's efforts. The match-makers brought him back his presents, and on meeting him, Elyena always turned away. Whether she turned away because Afanasy Ivanovich did not please her, or because her maiden's heart already had another sweetheart, the fact was that however much Prince Vyazemsky drove himself, he only encountered rebuffs. At last, Afanasy Ivanovich became enraged and went to plead with Tsar Ivan Vasilyevich to redeem his failure. The Tsar promised that he himself would send a match-maker. Learning of this, Elyena burst into tears. She went to church with her old nurse, dropped to her knees and, weeping, made repeated prostrations to the ground before the ikon of the Theotokos.

At that time there were no people in the church, but when Elyena rose to her feet and looked around, she saw standing behind her Boyarin Morozov in a green velvet coat with his brocaded cloak unbuttoned.

"Why are you weeping, Elyena Dmitryevna?" he asked.

Elyena was overjoyed when she recognized the Boyarin. He had formerly been a friend of her parents, and even now he used to visit her, and he loved her as if she were his own child. Elyena seemed to respect him like a father, and confided to him all her thoughts; all her thoughts but one, however, and that one thought she concealed from him — she kept it to herself for her own future sorrow and for doom to the Boyarin!

And now, in answer to Morozov's question, she did not tell him of that cherished thought, but merely said that she was weeping because the Tsar's match-maker would arrive to force Vyazemsky upon her.

"Come now, Elyena Dmitryevna," said the Boyarin, "is Vyazemsky really so unloved by you? Think carefully. I know that until now he has not been your heart's desire, but then, I think you have no-one in your thoughts as yet, and until that time a maiden's heart is but like wax; it can mould itself to love!"

"Never!" cried Elyena. "Never will I love him! I would sooner go to my grave!"

Morozov looked at her with sympathy. After a moment's silence he spoke

to her. "Elyena Dmitryevna, there is one means to save you. Listen to me. I am old and grey, but I love you like my own daughter. Consider, Elyena, would you be willing to marry me, old man that I am?"

"Yes, yes, I am willing!" exclaimed Elyena joyfully, and threw herself down at Morozov's feet.

These unexpected words touched the Boyarin, and he was gladdened by Elyena's joy, but the old man did not guess that this was nothing but the intense relief of a drowning person clutching hold of a thorny bush.

Gently he helped Elyena to arise, and kissed her on her brow.

"My child," he said, "kiss the Cross to me then, that you will not dishonour my grey hairs! Swear to this here, before the Saviour!"

"I swear to it, I swear to it!" whispered Elyena.

The Boyarin ordered that a priest be called, and soon the ceremony of betrothal was performed; then the Tsar's match-makers appeared before Elyena she was already Drujhina Andreyevich Morozov's bride.

It was not for love that Elyena had married Morozov; but having kissed the Cross upon her faithfulness and loyalty to him, she intended to hold to her oath, and not to sin against her lord either by word or thought.

And why should she not have loved Drujhina Andreyevich? It is true, the Boyarin was not young; but the Lord God had blessed him with health and strength, and military glory, and a firm will, and villages and hamlets, and spacious lands beyond the River Moscow, and stores full of brocade and gold and fine furs. Only one thing the Lord omitted to Drujhina Andreyevich: he did not bless him with the Tsar's goodwill. As soon as Ivan Vasilyevich found out that his match-makers had arrived too late, he fumed against Morozov, and decided then and there to punish the Boyarin: he ordered him to attend his table, and sat him not only lower than Vyazemsky, but lower than Godounov — Boris Fyodorovich — who had no honours as yet, and no precedence whatsoever.

The Boyarin could not tolerate such an indignity; he got up from the table. "It is not fitting for a Morozov to be seated lower than a Godounov!" he said. Then the Tsar became even more wrathful, and ordered Morozov to go, cap in hand, to Godounov. Thus censured, Morozov called on Boris Fyodorovich in order to admit his fault, but instead cursed him harshly and called him a pup.

Hearing this, the Tsar worked himself up into a great fury and ordered Morozov to remove himself from his sight, and to let his grey hair grow long until such time as the imperial disfavour was removed from him. And the Boyarin retired from the court, and thenceforward walked in ordinary dress, with beard uncombed and grey hair falling over his craggy brow. It was sad for the Boyarin not to see his sovereign's countenance, but he would not dishonour his ancestry, he would not sit lower than Godounov!

Morozov's household lived in plenty. The servants feared and loved their master. Everyone who visited him was received with cordiality. His kindness was praised by his own people and strangers alike; all were greeted with words of welcome, presented with rich clothes and given wise counsel. No one was treated with more kindness or showered with more gifts than his young wife, Elyena Dmitryevna. And she returned affection for affection,

and every morning and every night, she remained for a long time on her knees in front of her ikons, praying for her husband's health.

Was Elyena Dmitryevna in the wrong when, during Drujhina Andreyevich's kind speeches, and in the middle of her fervent prayers at the ikons, there would suddenly appear in her imagination a young knight, flying on his horse, with mace uplifted, and in front of him the Lithuanian regiments fleeing in disorder?

Was Elyena Dmitryevna in the wrong if the figure of this knight pursued her everywhere, at home, in church, day and night, saying to her reproachfully: "Elyena! You failed to keep your word! You did not wait for my return! You deceived me!..."

In the year one thousand five hundred and sixty-five, on the twenty-fourth day of June, the feast of John the Baptist, all the bells of Moscow had begun ringing since the early morning, and pealed unceasingly. The churches were all full, and after the service, the people poured into the streets. Young and old, rich and poor, everyone carried either green branches, flowers or small be-ribboned birch trees. Everything was colourful, lively and gay. Nevertheless, toward mid-day, the streets began to empty. The people gradually dispersed, and soon it was not possible to meet a single person in Moscow. The Christian people were resting in their bedrooms, and nobody was left to anger God by walking in the streets, for God commanded that both men and beasts should rest during the noon-day hour, and it was sinful to obstruct God's will, unless some urgent task had to be done.

Thus, everyone slept, and Moscow seemed a deserted town. Only on Balchug Street, in a recently built tavern, there were shouts and quarreling and singing. In that place, armed men, most of them young and dressed in fine clothes, were feasting and drinking, despite the time of day. They sprawled in the house, and in the yard and in the street outside. All were drunk; one of them, lying on the ground, was spilling wine from a goblet onto his clothes; another was trying in a croaking voice to join the singing of his friends, but he uttered merely dull and inarticulate sounds. Saddled horses stood at the gates, and to each saddle were tied a broom and a dog's head.

During that time, two riders entered the street. One of them wore a crimson coat with golden tassels and a brocaded hat, from under which his thick, fair hair curled down. He turned to his companion.

"Miheyich," he said, "do you see those drunkards there?"

"I see them, Boyarin, devil take them! Look how they've soused themselves, the toss-pots!"

"And do you see what they carry on their saddles?"

"Brooms and snouts, just like that other outlaw! It looks as if they're really people of the Tsar, if they can make themselves so free in Moscow! What have we done, Boyarin? We've cooked ourselves a pretty mess of porridge, so it seems!"

Serebryany frowned.

"Go and ask them where Boyarin Morozov lives."

"Hey, good people, honourable sirs!" shouted Miheyich, riding up to a group. "Where does Boyarin Drujhina Andreyevich Morozov live?"

"What's it to you where that dog lives?"

"My Boyarin, Prince Serebryany, has a dispatch for Morozov from the Warrior Prince Pronsky, commander of a great regiment."

"Hand over your dispatch!"

"Here, here, what's wrong with you,...you...! What do you think you're asking? Are you out of your mind? How can I give you the Prince's dispatch?"

"Hand over that dispatch, you old barn-own! Hand it over! We'll see what Morozov has cooked up! Perhaps it's treason! Or something else to ruin the Tsar!"

"You rogue!" shouted Miheyich, forgetting the caution with which he had begun to speak. "Do you think my master would have anything to do with traitors?"

"Oho, you're cursing too! Off from that horse with him, lads! Let's tie him up!"

At this point, Serebryany himself galloped up to the oprichniki.

"Get back, all of you!" he shouted, so threateningly that they fell back.

"If any one of you lays a finger on this man," went on the Prince, "I'll cleave his head, and the rest of you will answer to the Tsar!"

The oprichniki were momentarily confused, but some of their companions came running from the neighbouring streets, and surrounded the Prince. Insolent words poured from their mouths; many of them bared their swords, and Nikita Romanovich would have come to no good, if at that moment a voice, singing a psalm, had not been heard approaching, at which the oprichniki halted, as if spellbound. Everyone turned in the direction from which the voice sounded. A man, some forty years of age, came walking down the street, dressed only in a linen shirt. Iron crosses and chains jangled on his breast, and in his hands he carried a prayer-rope made of wooden beads. His pale face expressed an extraordinary gentleness; a smile played on his lips, which were surrounded by a sparse beard and moustache, but his eyes looked out in a dim and uncertain sort of way.

As soon as he noticed Serebryany, he interrupted his singing, approached him hurriedly and looked straight into his face.

"You! You!" he said, as if amazed. "Why are you here, amongst them?"

And not waiting for an answer, he resumed his singing: "Blessed be the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly!"

The oprichniki moved aside with an appearance of respect, but, paying no attention to them, he again began to look into Serebryany's eyes.

"Nikitka, Nikitka!" he said, shaking his head; "what are you doing here?"

Serebryany had never seen this man before and wondered when he called him by his name.

"Do you know me then?" he asked.

The saintly fool smiled.

"You are a brother to me!" he replied. "I recognized you at once. You are as blessed as I am. And you do not possess any more brains than I do, to have come here. I can see right through your heart. It's clean, clean — there's only naked truth inside there; we're both of us righteous fools."

And they," he went on, pointing at the armed crowd, "they are no kin of ours! Fie upon them!"

"Vasya," an oprichniki said, "is there anything you want? Do you need some money?"

"No, no, no!" replied the fool. "I want nought from you! Vasya will take nothing from you, but give Nikitka here what he requests!"

"Man of God," said Serebryany, "I was asking where Boyarin Morozov lives."

"Drujhinka, eh? He's one of us! He's a righteous one! But what a stiff neck his head is on! Oh, how unbending it is! Soon it will bend though, it will bend, and then it will never lift again!"

"Where does he live?" repeated Serebryany kindly.

"I won't say!" replied the fool, as if in anger. "I won't say. Let others tell you. I don't want to send you on an evil way!"

And he hurried off, resuming the singing of his interrupted psalm.

Not having guessed the meaning of his words, and wasting no time on guessing, Serebryany turned again to the oprichniki.

"Well," he said, "will you tell me at last where I can find Morozov's house?"

"Go straight on," one of them answered roughly. "Then, turn left, and that is where the old raven's nest will be."

The oprichniki, who had been subdued by the appearance of the holy man, began to resume their insolent manner, and the further the Prince rode away, the more insulting they became.

"Hey!" one of them shouted, "give Morozov our greetings, and tell him to get ready for the gallows; he's lived too long already!"

"And keep a rope for yourself as well!" shouted another, as a parting shot.

But the Prince paid no attention to their insults.

"What did the holy man want to tell me?" he thought, as he rode with head downcast. "Why did he refuse to show me where Morozov's house was? Why did he say that he would not send me on an evil way?"

As they rode on, Miheyich and the Prince met many more oprichniki. Some were already drunk, others were only on their way to the tavern. All of them looked around them insolently and boldly, and some even made such coarse remarks about the riders that it was easy to see they were used to freedom from restraint.