

Весьма интересен опыт Германии, которая целенаправленное формирование образа страны сделала составной частью своей внешней политики. В этом процессе активное участие принимают как федеральные структуры, так и отдельные земли. Новый импульс он получил в 2006 г., когда по инициативе федерального президента начался новый комплекс публикаций мероприятий, в том числе в сфере культуры, внутри страны и за её пределами.

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## ПРИВЕТСТВЕННОЕ СЛОВО НА РОДОССКОМ ФОРУМЕ\*\*

Идея проведения круглого стола возникла в недрах Фонда Андрея Первозванного после выхода в свет в 2011 г. перевода на русский язык с немецкого знаменитой книги выдающегося русского византиниста Георгия Острогорского «История Византийского государства». Книга была выпущена издательством «Сибирская Благовонница», совместно с которым Фонд Андрей Первозванного (ФАП) и Центр национальной славы (ЦНС), инициаторы и организаторы Мирового общественного форума «Диалог цивилизаций» (МОФ «ДЦ»), провели в Москве в мае 2012 г. презентацию и круглый стол на тему книги.

В январе 2012 г. инициатива ФАП и ЦНС о проведении подобного круглого стола по теме византийского наследия в судьбах Европы на Родосском форуме была поддержана членами Международного координационного комитета (МКК) МОФ «ДЦ», в частности его председателем д-ром Вальтером Швидмером, членами МКК Джованни Кубелду и профессором Ад-

мирования<sup>6)</sup>», который он проводил с 2004 по 2008 гг. Его основные итоги содержалась в коллективной монографии: *Leitbilder for the Future of the European Union – Dissenting Promoters of Unity*. Gesa-Stefanie Winkler. Mathias Jorr. Lenka Anna Rovná (Hrsg.). Nomos Verlag. 2011. 420 p.

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\*\* Приветственное слово на открытии Круглого стола «Византийское наследие в судьбах Европы», Форум «Диалог цивилизаций», о. Родос, окт. 2012 г.

рианом Пабстом. Активную роль в продвижении византийской проблематики сыграл президент ФАП и ЦНС д-р Сергей Щерблыгин.

Выбор в пользу Византии сделан неслучайно. 2012 г. объявлен в России Годом истории и 1150-летия зарождения российской государственности, и наши Фонды по инициативе председателя попечительского совета и президента МОФ «ДЦ» д-ра Владимира Якушина совместно с историками Московского государственного университета и Санкт-Петербургского университета провели в сентябре 2012 г. международную конференцию. На ней историки уделили пристальное внимание теме Восточной Римской (Византийской) империи и её влиянию на развитие не только Русского государства, но и всех существовавших тогда европейских стран, которых объединяла общая христианская история, культура и традиции.

Мы как инициаторы круглого стола рассматриваем предложенную тему в качестве продолжения серии обсуждений, посвящённых наследию Византии. Хотели бы отметить вклад в его проведение со-организатора проекта д-ра Ал.А. Громыко и Института Европы РАН.

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## THE PAN-EUROPEAN COMMONWEALTH: THE HERITAGE OF BYZANTIUM AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE BEYOND THE EU

### Introduction

The Byzantine Empire is commonly associated with political absolutism, economic feudalism, and a State Church that simultaneously sacralised power and secularised religion. This, coupled with influence of Islam and oriental cultures, appears to explain how Europe's East has been backward and reactionary, lacking Western virtues such as the distinction of religion from political authority, constitutionalism, the rule of law, a vibrant market economy and civil society – a free space between the people and the ruler. That is why

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Byzantium is synonymous with decadence, repression, and the arcane arrangements of an opaque bureaucracy. As such, the Byzantine legacy is thought to be singularly responsible for Eastern authoritarianism and autocracy that contrasts sharply with Western freedom and democracy. In modern times, so this narrative goes, the East was caught in the constricting shackles of imperial and clerical domination, while the West became the harbinger of Enlightenment emancipation.<sup>17</sup>

This essay contends that Byzantium is to key to understanding the history of pan-Europe and to chart an alternative European project for the future. Far from being simply a decadent empire whose demise heralded the rise of progressive sovereign nation-states, I shall argue that the Byzantine Commonwealth preserved the heritage of Antiquity and represented an association of nations and peoples around a shared polity, culture, and faith. This legacy offers as yet unrealised resources to build a pan-European community that the post-Cold War project of liberal market democracy purported to provide but failed to deliver.

Section 1 links the neglect of the Byzantine legacy to the myth of secular Europe and contends that the rise to power of secularism was neither necessary nor normative but instead historically contingent and arbitrary. Section 2 seeks briefly to re-tell the history of Europe in a way that restores Byzantium to its rightful place, with a particular emphasis on some of the religious and political aspects of the Byzantine settlement and on ways in which it shaped the countries that emerged from the Eastern empire. Section 3 argues that Europe remains a vestigially Christian polity and that Byzantium is key to this unique heritage. Section 4 turns to the contemporary situation and suggests that the model of the commonwealth – a voluntary association of nations and peoples – offers a better future than either a centralised super-state under the guise of modern federalism or a loose network of sovereign states which merely trade with one another.

### 1. The Myth of Secular Europe

Perhaps the predominant reason for dismissing the Byzantine le-

gacy has to do with the secular account of European and world history that has dominated academic and public discourse in the last few decades or so. Indeed, secularism equates Byzantium with the oppressive, reactionary settlement of Late Antiquity and the Dark Ages which the progressive forces of secular modernity and the Enlightenment purportedly swept away. Since the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, social theorists of religion such as Durkheim, Comte or Weber claimed that the rise of modernity is synonymous with the decline of religion and the spread of secularism. From the 1960's onwards sociologists claimed that secular Europe would set the trend for the rest of the world – a pioneer of progress in the forward march of modernisation. Yet throughout the second half of the XX<sup>th</sup> and the early XXI<sup>th</sup> century the globe has witnessed a religious resurgence, which is really about a greater visibility and prominence of faith in politics rather than a re-turn – for religion had never gone away<sup>18</sup>. Since then, sociologists writing about religion in Europe have opted to talk about the «European exception», with the old continent sliding towards ever greater secularisation while faith is proving to be far more enduring elsewhere around the world<sup>19</sup>.

Today Europe may be in many ways the most secularised continent in the world in terms of religious practice, personal observance, and public political discourse<sup>20</sup>. But this is neither a necessary nor a normative nor even a long-standing process. To take these points in reverse order, the secularisation of European politics and culture is far more recent than commonly supposed and can be traced to the second half of the XX<sup>th</sup> century (except for state-sponsored atheism

<sup>18</sup> See Adrian Pabst, «The Paradox of Faith: Religion beyond secularization and desecularization», in Craig Calhoun and Georgi Derlugin (eds.), *The Deepening Crisis. Governance Challenges after Neoliberalism* (New York: New York University Press), P. 157-182.

<sup>19</sup> See, inter alia, Grace Davie, *Europe: the Exceptional Case. Parameters of Faith in the Modern World* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2002); Peter Berger, Grace Davie and Effie Fokas, *Religious America, Secular Europe? A Theme and Variations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> René Rémond, *Religion and Society in Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Hugh McLeod and Werner Ustorf (eds.), *The Decline of Christianity in Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Andrew M. Greeley, *Religion in Europe at the End of the Second Millennium: A Sociological Profile* (London: Transaction, 2003).

<sup>17</sup> For a compelling critique of this narrative, see Averil Cameron, *The Byzantines* (Oxford: Wiley, 2009), esp. P. 277-81.

in a number of regimes following the First World War). For example, in Western Europe – despite violent clashes between state and church in France up to separation in 1905 – the population remained predominantly Catholic until the late 1950's, when «French Christendom» (*chrétienté*) began to disappear from the regions and countryside, as depicted in the writings of George Bernanos. In Britain, the «de-christianisation» of the public sphere and social life did not take off until the late 1960's<sup>21</sup>. Scandinavia and the Mediterranean countries only became markedly more secular from the mid-1970's onward. After decades of atheist rule, the historic Byzantine lands of central/eastern Europe and Eurasia are now characterised by profound contrasts between a strong and sustained religious revival in countries such as Poland and Russia, on the one hand, and a growing tendency toward agnosticism and atheism in countries such as the Czech Republic, on the other hand<sup>22</sup>.

By contrast with popular practices, secular ideas promoted by certain elites have a much longer history but even so the rise to power of secularism (over against Christendom in both the Byzantine «Greek East» and the Roman «Latin West») was not inevitable or progressive. Indeed, there is no historical determinism according to which secularism will remain always hegemonic in Europe or that other parts of the world will necessarily follow the European «exceptional example». Rather, the logic of secularism is linked to a certain kind of historicism that views the peculiar history of religion and politics in Western Europe as an exemplification of a fated and all-determining evolution – an idea that is closely correlated with Auguste Comte's positivist trajectory from revelation to metaphysics to science<sup>23</sup>.

In reality, the emergence of secularism as the dominant modern mode was the gradual outcome of historical contingency, linked to

<sup>21</sup> See Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001); Callum Brown, *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Harlow, UK: Pearson, 2006).

<sup>22</sup> See Pipa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005), p. 47-90; Berger, Davie and Fokas, *Religious America, Secular Europe?* p. 23-122.

<sup>23</sup> Andrew Wernick, *Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity: The Post-theistic Program of French Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

the XIV<sup>th</sup> century passage to modernity, the XVI<sup>th</sup>- and XVII<sup>th</sup>-century Protestant Reformation and «wars of religion» as well as the triumph of liberalism that started in the XVIII century<sup>24</sup>. The theological and philosophical shifts, which helped bring about these modern conceptions of the secular and the sacred, coincided with profound political changes particularly linked to the history of Byzantium. Following the final demise of the Byzantine Empire in 1453, the nascent Protestant Reformation in the West accelerated the slow disintegration of pan-European political Christendom and the rise to power of sovereign nation-states.

However, this did not inaugurate a linear process of secularisation that has supposedly culminated in European «exceptionalism». On the contrary, certain strands of Renaissance Humanism and the Enlightenment provided a religious corrective to secular ideas and practices such as the early modern doctrine of the «divine right of kings»<sup>25</sup>. That doctrine was secular insofar as it departed from the patristic and medieval opposition to the sacralisation of secular power, as evinced by the writings of St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostome and St. Thomas Aquinas – as I will indicate in the following section.

For now, a few more points need to be made about the peculiar, non-normative nature of secularisation. The end of Byzantium coincided with the split of the Mediterranean by Islam and the rise emergence of new political powers. Broadly speaking, the ancient and medieval idea of real, embodied relations between persons and groups that compose the polity was progressively supplanted by the nominalist poles of the individual and the collective that have structured modern international relations since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia and the rise of the secular West: the dialectic between the sovereign ruler and the sovereign people is inextricably intertwined with the subsumption of virtually all mediating institutions of «civil society» to the power of the national state and the transnational market.

The primacy of the modern central state and the modern «glo-

<sup>24</sup> Pierre Manent, *Histoire intellectuelle du libéralisme* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1987), trans. An Intellectual History of Liberalism, tr. R. Balinski (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); André de Muralt, *L'unité de la philosophie politique: De Scot, Occam et Suarez au libéralisme contemporain* (Paris: Vrin, 2002).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. J. N. Figgis, *The Theory of the Divine Right of Kings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896).

bal) market coincided with the marginalisation of the three institutions that structured late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: the city, the empire and the Church<sup>26</sup> – as first embodied by Rome and later exemplified by the Byzantine capital of Constantinople. Indeed, statehood and the market mechanism increasingly undermined the autonomy of «free cities», the complex imperial links and the transnational ties of the Church – including the Byzantine commonwealth (to which I will return shortly), the supranational papacy in Rome, and all kinds of cross-border Christian networks that were variously more monastic or more lay (e.g. guilds or universities)<sup>27</sup>. Moreover, both the late medieval doctrine of the «divine right of kings» (linked to monarchic absolutism) and the modern notion of state sovereignty (associated with revolutionary republics such as the USA or France) are predicated not only on the supremacy of political over religious authority but also on the power of the sovereign to redefine the sacred<sup>28</sup>.

Indeed, European secularism is not limited to the functional differentiation of religious and political authority and/or the public settlement of the relationship between church and state that write faith out of international relations. By subordinating religion to secular categories, the secularist logic does not merely de-sacralise the public square. It reinvests it with quasi-sacred meaning by sacralising secularity – the king, the nation, the state, the market, the individual or the collective. As such, secularism does not so much mark the demise of faith or the exit from religion as it represents an alternative sacrality – a secular capture of the sacred.

The modern «revolution in sovereignty» has had far-reaching implications for religion in international relations. Instead of binding together believers in a universal community of shared beliefs and practices within and across national borders such as Byzantium,

<sup>26</sup> Pierre Manent, *Les métamorphoses de la cité : Essai sur la dynamique de l'Occident* (Paris: Flammarion, 2010).

<sup>27</sup> See Adrian Pabst, «Modern Sovereignty in Question: Theology, Capitalism and Democracy», *Modern Theology*, Vol. 26, no. 4 (October 2010), P. 570-602.

<sup>28</sup> John Neville Figgis, *The Theory of the Divine Right of Kings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896); Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How ideas shaped modern international relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

faith is increasingly tied either to individuals or to nations (or both at once). Apparently universal ideas and structures such as the global system of national states and transnational markets, which underpin modern international relations, can thus be traced genealogically to particular periods such as the Protestant Reformation or the religious wars in the «long sixteenth century» (ca. 1450-1650). Far from being isolated events or absolute breaks in history, they were part of an era spanning the early XIV<sup>th</sup> to the late XVII<sup>th</sup> century during which both ideas and practices already nascent during the Middle Ages achieved fuller maturity and developed into the modern model of international affairs<sup>29</sup>.

That is why, in the words of the English political and IR theorist Martin Wight, «[a]t Westphalia the states system does not come in to existence, it comes of age»<sup>30</sup>. Certain new ideas such as national sovereignty came to shape the way that international relations were conceived and instituted<sup>31</sup>. Likewise, new institutions and practices like the national state or inter-state warfare led to changes in conceptions of international affairs that still shape contemporary theory of global affairs<sup>32</sup>. Both the Christian faith and different associations of nations like Byzantium have either been reduced to historical anomalies or else been bracketed altogether out of the picture.

## 2. On Orthodox Theology and the Re-telling of Byzantine History

The dominant accounts of European and global history may well

<sup>29</sup> Brian Tierney, *Religion, Law, and the Growth of Constitutional Thought, 1150-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); J.H. Burns, «Introduction», in J.H. Burns (ed.), *Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), P. 1-8; Francis Oakley, *Natural Law, Laws of Nature, Natural Rights: Continuity and Discontinuity in the History of Ideas* (New York: Continuum, 2005).

<sup>30</sup> Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977), P. 152; cf. Ludwig Dehio, *The Precarious Balance. Four Centuries of the European Power Struggle*, tr. C. Fulman (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), esp. P. 23.

<sup>31</sup> See, inter alia, Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How ideas shaped modern international relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>32</sup> See, inter alia, Michael Howard, «War and the nation state», *Daedalus*, 108 (1979), P. 101-10; Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity, 1997).

be secular, but it is precisely this default position that skews the debate about the legacy of Byzantium. However, both the theology and the history of Byzantine are rather more complex than the contemporary caricatures suggest. Theologically, there is a clear distinction of state and church. Saint John Chrysostom, a V-century Greek theologian, was opposed to the sacralisation of power – a critique that underpins the distinction by Pope Gelasius I of the two swords. For Saint Chrysostom and Saint Augustine who both followed and developed the teaching of the Apostle Paul, secular rule is confined to the temporal saeculum (destined to pass into God's Kingdom) and falls inside the Church insofar as it concerns justice and the orientation of human existence to the supernatural Good in God. The distinctness of State and Church was preserved and enhanced by Pope Gelasius I who emphasised the difference between ecclesial auctoritas and secular dominium, with the former having absolute priority over the latter<sup>33</sup>. That is because – since eternity unfolds time, and the finite realm only is to the extent that it mirrors and reflects God's infinite being and goodness. So configured, politics and the law are secular (in the sense of belonging to the saeculum) without being divorced from religion – a unique legacy of Christendom to Europe and the world at large.

The defenders of Christian universality – from St. Paul via the Church Fathers and Doctors like St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas or St. Gregory of Palamas to modern and late modern Christian philosophers like Ralph Cudworth and Vladimir Solovoy – were united in their commitment to the idea of government as a divine gift and the subordination of all institutions to natural law under God and according to God's wisdom. In his exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, Chrysostom exhorts Christians not to reject the public political realm as profane but instead to judge secular rule in terms of its divine foundation and finality: «Don't raise objections about one or another abuse of government, but look at the appropriateness of the institution as such, and you will discern

the great wisdom of him who ordained it from the beginning»<sup>34</sup>. In short, the Orthodox tradition puts a particular focus on the limits of secular power in ways that seeks to avoid both the secularisation of religious authority and the sacralisation of political authority.

Moreover, Christianity can never be separated from the legacy of the Roman Empire. The New Testament itself and the Church Fathers viewed the empire as part of the providential working of God towards universal peace. From St. Paul onwards, the Christian tradition accentuated the limits of imperial authority, regarding its main role as upholding justice within the saeculum – the time destined to pass away into the Kingdom of God. It was not until William of Ockham's emphasis in the XIV<sup>th</sup> century on the autonomy of the king vis-à-vis the pope that the first notion of «secular government» emerged<sup>35</sup>.

Subsequently this evolved towards the idea of political rule indifferent to philosophical and religious points of view. Christendom maintained the idea that government had to conform to natural law under God and that justice was as much about the law as about love and grace – the dignity of the human person on which states cannot simply legislate but which they must promote through virtue practices. Indeed, 'secular' ruling only fell inside the Church to the degree that it itself approximated to a pastoral concern with the totality of human well-being and collective solidarity<sup>36</sup>. As I have already indicated, this tension is preserved in Pope Gelasius's formulation concerning the «two powers»: first, ecclesial auctoritas and, second, secular dominium. Both rule «this world», with the former having ultimate sway over the latter in all and every issue – since nothing concerning our «passing through this world» is irrelevant to our attaining «the things eternal»<sup>37</sup>. Once again this was lost in the late medieval and modern era when either some ecclesial or stata arrangements arrogated to themselves exclusive power – leading either to

<sup>34</sup> John Chrysostom. «Twenty-Fourth Homily on Romans», in From Irenaeus to Grotius, p. 95.

<sup>35</sup> Janet Coleman. «Ockham's right reason and the genesis of the political as "absolutist"», History of Political Thought, Vol. XX (1999), p. 35-64.

<sup>36</sup> John Milbank. Theology and Social Theory. Beyond secular reason, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006), p. 382-443.

<sup>37</sup> Gelasius I, «Letter to Emperor Anastasius», in From Irenaeus to Grotius, p. 179.

<sup>33</sup> Gelasius I. «Letter to Emperor Anastasius», in Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan (eds.), From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought, 100–1625 (Grand Rapids, MI, 1999), p. 177-79.

secular state power or a theocracy, both of which destroyed the delicate balance of religious and political authority and with it eliminated constitutionalism and «mixed government» that had been invented by Greco-Roman Antiquity and developed by Christendom.

At the same time Christianity had a critique of secular empire, past and present – especially the pagan glorification of agonistic struggle for power. By contrast, the Christian tradition promoted a sense of honour based on the four classical virtues infused by the three theological virtues – above all the love of the neighbour. Linked to the dignity of the person is the emphasis on personal rule: the rule of the king and priest for each and everyone. From the conversion of Constantine onwards, all political ruling became directed towards a new «pastoral» dimension which showed a new concern with all aspects of subjects' lives and involved the support for the foundation of institutions unknown to pagan Antiquity: the hospice, the orphanage, the almshouse, the places of sanctuary and refuge, diaconates for the systematic distribution of alms, etc., as pioneered in Italy in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup>

Following the Constantinian «turn» (that had really been prefigured by St. Paul), the emerging Christian empire eschewed Roman centralism in favour of a decentralised, relational linking of many dispersed local centres – exemplified by the various episcopal sees and bishoprics. To some extent a different imperial settlement then came about in both East and West, though admittedly in large part through force of circumstance. The representation of Jesus Christ on earth by both kings and priests was an expression of the pastoral outlook of secular power that marks the repeated re-enactment of Christ's rule over the whole world – hence the notion of cosmopolis that captures both the universality of the universe and the particularity of the city state, whether Roman in the «Latin West» or Constantinople in the «Byzantine East».

In fact, the mirroring of Christ by emperors and patriarchs was even more prominent in Byzantium where both Roman law and the centres of learning survived the repeated sack of Rome. The rule of the emperor through iconic images – of himself and of Christ and

His mother – was linked, as Marie-José Mondzain has shown to a radically new notion of «economic» authority that was inseparable from the emergence of «pastoral» ruling already mentioned.<sup>39</sup> Within the «general economy» of Antiquity, the «economic» in the narrower, special sense was confined to the area of household management or its more large-scale equivalent, such as the city state. The «economic» existed ultimately to sustain the possibility of a more elevated «political life» of negotiated friendship in debated agreement amongst adult males.

But as Mondzain points out, Christian theology now spoke of a «divine economy» that was at the very heart of «divine government» and no subordinate aspect. This «economy» was at once a proportionate distribution of goodness to the finite creation in various modes and degrees, and at the same time an «exceptional» extra-legal adaptation of the «theological» inner-divine Trinitarian life to the creation and especially the human creation, through processes of «provision» that ultimately included the «economy of salvation». Thus in theological terms – however unreal quixotic this may seem today – Byzantium was part of the earthly preparation for the Kingdom of God.

The delicate and imperfect balance of politics and religion is the mark of Christendom in both East and West. It helps explain why secular modernity inherited but never invented the tradition of constitutionalism and «mixed government» which ultimately underpin democracy and classical liberalism. In other words, secularism misses the point that despite the process of secularisation, Europe remains a vestigially Christian polity which initially developed from the fusion of biblical revelation with Greco-Roman philosophy.<sup>40</sup>

To understand Europe's distinctiveness, we need briefly to re-tell its history. Drawing in part on the work of Rémi Brague, Cardinal Angelo Scola has remarked that the origins of the distinctly European model go back to a long tradition which views Europe not as

<sup>39</sup> Marie-José Mondzain, *Image, Icône, Économie. Les sources byzantines de l'imaginaire contemporain* (Paris: Ed. Seuil, 1996), trans. Image, Icon, Economy: the Byzantine Origins of the Contemporary Imaginary, tr. Rico Frances (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).

<sup>40</sup> Hilaire Belloc, *Europe and the Faith* (London: Constable, 1924); Christopher Dawson, *The Making of Europe, 400-1000 A.D. An Introduction to the History of European Unity* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1932).

<sup>38</sup> Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes, 1125-1325* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

foundational but rather as the continuous unfolding of the Hellenistic fusion of Jerusalem with Athens and Rome.<sup>41</sup> In the «long Middle Ages» (c500–1300), Hellenised Christianity integrated and transferred other European traditions such as Germanic law, the Celtic, Slavic and other languages as well as the ties to the wider Middle East, North Africa and the entire Caucasus.

But already after the fall of imperial Rome in the late V<sup>th</sup> century, three different forces vied for the Roman legacy and shaped the continent's emerging civilisation: first, pagan tribes from Germanic, Turkic and Slavonic territories; second, Christendom and its ecclesial «body» of local parishes and transnational monasteries; third, Islam's creation of a caliphate from Arabia to the Iberian peninsula. Of these, as Rowan Williams writes, «the Christian Church is quite simply the most extensive and enduring, whether in the form of the Western Papacy or of the "Byzantine Commonwealth", the network of cultural and spiritual connections in Eastern Europe linked to the new Roman Empire centred on Constantinople».<sup>42</sup>

Here it is instructive to draw on the work of Dniriy Obolensky, in particular in his seminal book on Byzantine Commonwealth. Indeed, it is hard to overstate the importance of Christendom in European and world history. Christendom was never just a Roman invention that we largely owe to the Latin West. Following Obolensky's ground-breaking work, there is ample evidence to suggest that from late Antiquity to early modernity large parts of Eastern Europe from the Balkans and Romania via the territories on both sides of the Danube to the Ukraine, Russia and beyond lay within the orbit of Byzantium's religious, political and cultural influence. Taken together,

<sup>41</sup> Cardinal Angelo Scola. «The Christian contribution to the European Integration Process», lecture delivered in Cracow, 10 September 2010, available online at <http://english.angeloscola.it/2010/10/07/the-christian-contribution-to-the-european-integration-process/>; Rémi Brague, *L'Europe, la voie romaine*, revised ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1999); see also Sylvain Gougenheim, *Aristote au Mont Saint-Michel: Les racines grecques de l'Europe chrétienne* (Paris: Editions Seuil, 2008).

<sup>42</sup> Archbishop Rowan Williams, 'Religion culture diversity and tolerance – shaping the new Europe', address given in Brussels, 7 November 2005, at <http://www.archbishopofcanturbury.org/articles.php/1179/religion-culture-diversity-and-tolerance-shaping-the-new-europe-address-at-the-european-policy-centre>. See also Dniriy Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453* (London: Sphere Books, 1974).

these lands constituted a commonwealth of kingdoms and nations which over time built a shared civic tradition. Only the «Byzantine Commonwealth» and its lasting legacy can explain how the East was christianised and why it has since then formed an integral part of pan-Europe.<sup>43</sup> Without Eastern Christendom (and the defence of Western Christianity by Charlemagne and King Alfred the Great in the IX<sup>th</sup> century), Christian Europe would probably have succumbed to the invasion by Muslims in the South and the East and by pagan Vikings in the North-West.

Moreover, from the XI<sup>th</sup> to the XIV<sup>th</sup> century, the periodic religious and monastic revival in Byzantium provided a bulwark against the Mongols and gradually shifted the focus of the Russian Orthodox Church away from national power towards trans-national reconciliation of the Northern periphery with its centre in Constantinople. Coupled with a spiritual and artistic renaissance, this realignment favoured political unity among hitherto rival principalities. Thus, Vladimir Valdenberg makes the crucial point that Muscovy inherited from Byzantium the idea that imperial power is limited and subject to the superior religious power (that ought to be) protected by the Orthodox Church.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, this legacy is important for two reasons. First of all, it provided a transnational embedding of national power, in the sense that the rule of tsars was only really legitimate if it reflected in some way the universal, Orthodox sovereignty of the Emperor in Constantinople. Linked to this was the Romano-Byzantine system of law and shared liturgical and hymnographical practices (and common saints such as Cyrill and Methodius). Second, the Byzantine legacy bequeathed notions and practices of civic association that were variously more religious or more secular – either linked to monasticism (St. Sergius of Radonezh) or schools, universities, workshops, and guilds.

However, it is also true that the unification of Russian lands around Orthodox Byzantine Moscow introduced a growing split with the Roman Catholic Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania and did not

<sup>43</sup> Dniriy Obolensky, *Byzantium and the Slavs: collected studies* (London: Sphere Books, 1971); *idem*, *The Byzantine Inheritance of Eastern Europe* (London: Sphere Books, 1982).

<sup>44</sup> Vladimir Valdenberg, *Drevnerusskie učenija o predelach tsarskoj vlasti* (Petrograd, 1916, reprinted The Hague, 1966), esp. P. 1-27.

prevent the dissolution of the supra-national commonwealth into its constituent parts – empires, monarchies and national churches.<sup>45</sup> The schism was finally consummated in 1453 when the Byzantine Commonwealth centred on Constantinople was destroyed by the invasion of Turkish troops. Subsequently, pan-European Christendom gave way to national kingdoms and churches in the East and the growing tension between the papacy and the princes in the West.

This event and its aftermath shattered the remnants of the visible *Ecumene* and polity that bound together East and West around a shared – though contested – Christian legacy. The absence of a mediating ecclesial tradition undermined the remnants of Christendom from within and reinforced some of the worst tendencies of Eastern monarchy and West dualism. Thus, the Great Schism helped destroy the theological and political underpinning of Europe's Christian culture and its common intellectual basis. In this sense, it remains historically much more significant for Europe and the rest of the world than the discovery of the New World or the American, French and Russian Revolutions. Without the disintegration of Christendom, neither modernity nor secularisation would have emerged triumphant in the way they did.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, it was the collapse of Byzantium that coincided with the rise of imperial absolutism and periods of either caesaro-papism or hierarchy in Russia and other Orthodox lands – i.e. either the subordination of Church to State or the sacralisation of secular power. The tradition of absolutist rule was adopted by numerous Russian Tsars and Soviet leaders alike. In fact, at various points the modern Russian state has carried on the tradition of early Tsarism, with their focus on opaque power structures and the idea of the «Third Rome», a form of exceptionalism that fuelled both Tsarist and Soviet supremacism.<sup>47</sup> In short, the disastrous development of Russia in late Tsarist and Soviet times can be traced to the demise of Byzantium rather than the Byzantine Commonwealth itself.

<sup>45</sup> John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia. A Study of Byzantine-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

<sup>46</sup> Christopher Dawson, *The Dividing of Christendom* (London, 1967).

<sup>47</sup> Geoffrey Hosking, *Rulers and Victims. The Russians in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006). P. 3-35.

This excessively brief and by no means uncontroversial account of history matters for the present and the future, as it suggests an alternative tradition that endures and could yet shape the evolution of the historic Byzantine lands. The following two sections turn to the theological-religious and philosophical-political resources that are available to the countries that used to form the Byzantine Commonwealth.

### 3. Europe's Christian Polity

Based on a non-secular account of history and a proper understanding of the theologico-religious legacy of Byzantium, we can briefly chart an alternative vision to the dominant view that Europe's future is liberal-secular and that the European project is wedded to the primacy of nation-states. Europe – despite its many imperfections – is best described as a neo-medieval polity with a political system sui generis. Even today, remote indications of this include the peculiar functioning of the EU but also the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other structures that are associations of nations and peoples – rather than a centralised federal super-state or a loose network of countries that merely trade with one another.

Europe's polity is characterised by hybrid institutions, overlapping jurisdictions, polycentric authority and multi-level governance.<sup>48</sup> In this sense, it resembles a vestigially Roman-Byzantine polity that is less religious but more Christian than the USA.<sup>49</sup> In the previous section, I already suggested that Europe is not her own foundation (unlike America or China) but the continuous unfolding of the Hellenistic fusion of Jerusalem with Athens and Rome and also the integration and transformation of other European traditions such as Germanic law, the Celtic, Slavic and other languages.

Connected with this blending of diverse cultures within an overarching framework is the Judeo-Christian distinction of religious from political authority. Based on this distinction, a «free space» emerged between political rule and society wherein politics is not

<sup>48</sup> Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union*, 2nd rev. ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>49</sup> See Adrian Pabst, «The Western Paradox: Why the United States is more Religious but less Christian than Europe», in L. Leustean (ed.), *Representing Religion in the European Union: Does God Matter?* (London: Routledge, 2012). P. 168-184.



monopolised by the state but pertains to the public realm in which individuals and groups participate. Indeed, the Church – together with local communities and professional bodies like guilds or universities – tended to defend the freedom of society against political coercion. It thereby helped protect the autonomy of Jewish, Muslim and other religious minorities. In addition to complex debates about the relative balance of state and church or the «mix» of different sources of law (canon, common and civil), the presence of Jewish communities and Muslim-ruled lands on the Iberian peninsula ensured that «Christian Europe» was never a clerically dominated monolith but rather a realm of political argument within and across different faith traditions. Just like Christianity was never exclusively purely European, so too Europe is not an exclusively «Christian club».

Moreover, Christendom in East and West blended the principle of free association in Germanic common law with the Latin sense of equity and participation in the *civitas*. In this manner, European Christendom defended a more relational account (in terms of objective – not subjective – rights and reciprocal duties) that outflanked the dialectic of the individual and the collective that we owe to the American and the French Revolution. Ultimately, Europe's unique legacy of faith and reason provided the basis for European claims to an «organically» plural universalism. The mark of this variant of universalism is that it avoids both moral relativism and political absolutism by offering a free, shared social space for religious and non-religious practice – the «realm» of civil society that is more primary than either the central state or the «free» market. As the primary «corporation of corporations», the European polity rests on common civic culture and social bonds that are more fundamental than either formal constitutional-legal rights or economic-contractual ties.

In turn, this gives rise to the idea that the 'intermediary institutions' of civil society are more primary than either the centralised national state or the transnational «anarchic» market. Intermediary institutions include groups and bodies like professional associations, manufacturing and trading guilds, cooperatives, trade unions, voluntary organisations, universities and religious communities. As such, the European polity really is neo-medieval in this sense that it combines a strong sense of overlapping jurisdictions and multiple

membership with a contemporary focus on transnational networks as well as the institutions and actors of «global civil society».

Nor is this model limited to the sub-national level. Rather, modes of association and corporation apply to neighbourhoods, communities, cities, regions and states alike. The idea of Europe as a political union is inextricably intertwined with the notion that national states are more like «super-regions» within a wider polity – a subsidiary society of nations and peoples rather than a centralised super-state or a glorified «free-trade» area. Far from diminishing the importance of nations, such an account views nations as balancing the rightful claims of regions and the rightful claims of Europe as a whole.

This suggests that even nations can uphold and promote relations of mutual giving and reciprocal help. As such, Europe offers a vision of associative democracy and civil economy beyond the authoritarian central state that seeks to regulate the transnational, anarchical «free market»<sup>50</sup>. Such a vision is inspired by the twin Orthodox-Catholic Christian principles of subsidiarity and solidarity that underpin the entire project of European integration and enlargement. Ultimately, we owe such and similar principles to Europe's Christian heritage, in particular Catholic social teaching<sup>51</sup>.

With the advent of neo-liberalism that both the left and the right enthusiastically embraced, the European polity has failed to defend this legacy against the collusion of the central state and the free-market. However, twenty years after the collapse of state communism, the continuing crisis of «free-market» capitalism provides a unique opportunity to chart an alternative path that re-embeds the state and the market into the relations of civil society. Thus, the principles and practices of reciprocity, mutuality and solidarity that are embedded in institutions and practices do not just underscore Europe's Christian heritage but also offer an alternative future for the Union and the continent as a whole.

#### 4. A Pan-European Commonwealth

The continuous euro crisis is accelerating and intensifying the

<sup>50</sup> Paul Hirst and Veit-Michael Bader (eds.), *Associative Democracy: the Real Third Way* (London: Routledge, 2001); Luigi Bruni and Stefano Zamagni, *Civil Economy: Efficiency, Equity, Public Happiness* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007).

<sup>51</sup> Wolfham Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

emergence of a multi-speed EU and multi-polar Europe that can be traced to the post-1989 era and the 1992 Maastricht Treaty. Coupled with the failure to implement the 1990 Paris Charter and overcome the Cold War opposition between the West and Russia, the three-pillar system that was enshrined in the European treaty introduced a division into the newly established Union. Crucially, the EU did not build the right institutions to translate its political ambition into reality and transform the neo-functional logic at the heart of the integration process. Throughout the 1990's and 2000's, subsequent enlargement waves and treaty revisions failed to stop the rise of the European «market-state» by building a proper polity that reflects the EU's diverse societies and can embed the increasingly interdependent national economies.

However, one fundamental difference between the post-1989 era and the post-2009 years is that the ongoing turmoil in the eurozone has shifted the dynamic from the centripetal forces that unified the Union between 1957 and the early 1990's to the centrifugal forces that risk dividing it now in three ways: first, between the core and the peripheral countries within the euro area; second, between the euro members (and euro candidates such as Poland and the other «euro-plus countries») and the rest of the EU; third, between EU member-states, candidate/access countries and the «European non-West» (including Russia, Ukraine and the wider Europe that extends to the greater Caucasus, parts of the Middle East and North Africa).

On what basis can the entire European continent and neighbouring countries cooperate? As I have already hinted, what sets Europe apart from the other global «poles» is the autonomous space of civil society and the intermediary institutions that mediate between the individual, the state and the market. In an interesting report on «The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe» published in 2004, a reflection group composed of European statesmen and intellectuals put this point very well:

Europe itself is far more than a political construct. It is a complex — a «culture» — of institutions, ideas, expectations, habits and feelings, moods, memories and prospects that form a «glue» binding Europeans together — and all these are a foundation on which a political construct must rest. This complex — we can speak of it as European

civil society — is at the heart of political identity. It defines the conditions of successful European politics and the limits of state and political intervention<sup>52</sup>.

Contrary to common misconceptions, Europe is neither a federal super-state nor an intergovernmental structure. Instead, European nations pool their sovereignty and are more like «super-regions» within a pan-national polity that combines a political system sui generis with elements of a neo-medieval empire<sup>53</sup>. The German constitutional court, in a landmark ruling on the Lisbon Treaty in June 2009, emphasized that the Union is neither just an international organisation nor a federal super-state but rather a voluntary association of states — unlike the USA since the civil war.

The mark of the European polity is that it limits both state and market power in favour of communities and groups. This associational model combines vertical, more hierarchical elements with horizontal, more egalitarian aspects, with overlapping jurisdictions and a complex web of intermediary institutions wherein sovereignty is dispersed and diffused. By contrast, the US is a commercial republic where civil society is equated with proprietary relations and market-based exchange<sup>54</sup>. In other parts of the world, civil society is subordinated to the administrative and symbolic order of central state power. Thus, Europe's greatest «gift» to its people and the rest of the world is to offer a narrative that accentuates the autonomy of associations vis-à-vis both state and market and re-embeds both politics and economics within the civic and social bonds of civil society.

Amid the current crisis of legitimacy, this suggests that all European structures need a better model of shared sovereignty and reciprocal power by building a subsidiary polis that connects supranational institutions much more closely to regions, localities, communities and neighbourhood. In turn, this requires a much greater sense of a common demos with a mutual ethos and telos. In line with its own best traditions, Europe could do worse than to renew and extend

<sup>52</sup> Reflection Group, «The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe», Vienna/Brussels October 2004, available online at [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/michalski\\_281004\\_final\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/michalski_281004_final_report_en.pdf), P. 9.

<sup>53</sup> See, supra, note 30.

<sup>54</sup> See Adrian Pabst, «Athens, Rome and Jerusalem — A reply to Luciano Pellicani», Telos no. 162 (Spring 2013), forthcoming.

its political project around the following principles and practices. First of all, a commonwealth of nations and peoples rather than a market-state of «big government» and «big business». Second, the pursuit of the common good in which all can share – beyond the maximisation of individual utility or collective happiness (or both at once). Third, a series of political transformations that not only acknowledge the recent failures and the current crisis but also reconfigure the key institutions in accordance with Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman notions of constitution rule and «mixed government».

Externally, a commonwealth that reflects the mediating universalism of the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman tradition would contrast with the exceptionalism of old empires and new colonial powers such as the USA, China and (to a lesser extent) some newly emerging markets such as neo-Ottoman Turkey or Indonesia. However imperfectly, Europe remains so far the only serious attempt to build the first transnational political community whose members come together to form a voluntary association of nations that pool some of their sovereign power for the common good of their people and others across the globe. Europe has a terrible colonial history, but it has also given rise to a set of institutions and practices that have transformed tribalism and nationalism at home and abroad.

Indeed, Europe has shaped global history not through sheer size or military might but rather thanks to its inventiveness and the creation of force multipliers, as Christopher Coker has argued<sup>55</sup>. European inventiveness today is mirrored in the international order that reflects Europe's Christian heritage. For example, European Protestant theologians and Catholic figures played a decisive role in creating the League of Nations after 1919 and the United Nations in 1946. Christian Democrats from Italy, Germany, the Benelux countries and even France led the way in setting up the project for European integration and enlargement in the late 1940's and 1950's. They were inspired by Christian social teaching which, since the groundbreaking encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), has always viewed the supremacy of the national state and the transnational market over

<sup>55</sup> Christopher Coker. «Rebooting the West: The US, Europe and the Future of the Western Alliance», Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI), Whitehall Paper 72, 6 Nov 2009.

the intermediary space of civil society and economy (ultimately upheld by the Church) as contrary to the Christian faith<sup>56</sup>.

In contemporary parlance, the Christian origin and outlook of the post-1919 world order is based on the idea of «networking» and «mainstreaming» Christian ideas and thus multiplying the power of European's vestigially Christian polity. The invention of international organisations and supranational bodies reflects the Christian commitment to create a cosmopolis – a cosmic city that upholds universal, global principles embodied in particular, national or regional practices. Arguably, Christianity in both East and West – whose global spread outstrips that of Islam and other world religions<sup>57</sup> – is the force multiplier of Europe. Without embracing its shared Roman-Byzantine Christian heritage, the future of Europe is seen uncertain and bleak.

### Conclusion

Byzantium is key to Europe's shared cultural identity that Christianity helped forge. But the increasingly secular outlook of modern politics has hollowed out the universal values derived from the Christian synthesis of ancient and biblical virtues on which both vibrant democracies and market economies depend. At the same time, Europe remains a vestigially Christian polity that has the potential to be a commonwealth of nations and peoples, which is held together by cultural customs, social ties and indeed religious practices.

Europe's shared Roman-Byzantine heritage is a source of both social solidarity and religious pluralism that offers key resources to shape the future of the European polity. The whole of Europe – including the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the emerging Eurasian Economic Union – is no federal super-state in the making nor simply a glorified free-trade area but rather a neo-medieval empire, which pools national sovereignty and views states more like «super-regions» in a wider subsidiary association of nations and peoples. In such a polity with overlapping jurisdictions and multiple levels of membership, states are key because they balance the rightful claims of localities and regions with the rightful claims of

<sup>56</sup> Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union*.

<sup>57</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: the coming of global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Europe as a whole.

Instead of harking back to bureaucratic statism or market liberalism, the 27 EU member-states and their partner countries in the wider European space such as Russia, Ukraine and Turkey should all retrieve the older and more genuinely European tradition of subsidiary federalism or federal subsidiarity – a distribution of competencies between the Community institutions and the member-states in accordance with the principles of a federal rather than a unitary political system, coupled with a radical programme of decentralisation to the most appropriate level (including regions, localities, communes and neighbourhoods) and a greater sense that European nations are indeed like «super-regions» within a wider transnational polity – like the Byzantine commonwealth to which Europe in both East and West owes so much.

*Ю.И. Рубинский\**

## МИФЫ И РЕАЛИИ «ВИЗАНТИЙСКОГО ПРИЗВАНИЯ» РОССИИ

Тема «Мифы о Византии» выглядит, казалось бы, весьма далёкой от забот и тревог современности. В самом деле, Византийская империя пала под ударами турок-сельджуков ещё в 1453 г. Изучение её богатейшего культурного наследия стало предметами самостоятельной отрасли исторической науки. Однако эта проблематика неожиданно оказалась обращённой не только в прошлое, но и в настоящее, а отчасти даже в будущее.

Речь идёт, разумеется, не о Византии как таковой, а прежде всего о России, многие культурные, религиозные и политические традиции которой имеют византийское происхождение.

Христианство в его греко-православном варианте пришло в Киевскую Русь в 988 г. из Константинополя. После падения последнего в 1453 г. великий князь Московский Иван III женился на племяннице последнего византийского императора Софии (Зое) Палеолог, позаместовав древний герб Византии – двугла-

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вого орла, смотрящего на восток и на запад. Преемники Ивана III – Василий III и Иван IV приняли титул «царя», т.е. «цезаря», равного по статусу императору Священной римской империи германской нации в Вене.

Идеологическим обоснованием борьбы московских самодержцев за выравнивание их правового статуса с западноевропейскими монархами стала известная формула монаха Филофея о православной Москве как «Третьем Риме»: «Два Рима пали, третий стоит, а четвёртому не бывать!».

Объясняя суть этой формулы в эпоху, когда она родилась, историк русского православия Дмитрий Стремоухов видит в ней не мессианский лозунг, а стремление создать противовес вселенскому прозелитизму римско-католической церкви, опорой которой служил грозный геополитический сосед и соперник Москвы – польско-литовская Речь Посполита. Поэтому формула «Москва – Третий Рим» имела, по мнению Стремоухова, не наступательный, а оборонительный, если не изоляционистский характер.

В то же время в Западной Европе притязания Москвы на политическое равенство и религиозную автономию были восприняты как неоправданно завышенные. Западноевропейские элиты видели в Московии отсталое, полуварварское государство, едва лишь столетием ранее освободившееся от азиатской Золотой Орды.

Брак Софьи Палеолог, жившей в изгнании в Риме, был во многом плодом усилий дипломатии Ватикана, рассчитывавшего извлечь из него двойную выгоду – склонить православную церковь к подчинению папе и приобрести военного союзника в борьбе против угрозы со стороны турок, не раз подходивших к стенам Вены. Однако обе эти цели оказались недостижимыми: Москва предпочла сохранить независимость – как геополитическую, так и религиозную, принимая решения с учётом сугубо национальных интересов.

К той далёкой эпохе и восходят истоки «византийских» стереотипов в оценке Западом особенностей российской государственности. Среди таких стереотипов фигурируют сакрализация носителя верховной власти – императора (базилевса), окружённого квази-религиозным ритуалом, «символия» светской и ду-