

Orthodoxy in the Age of Dechristianization: Challenges and Perspectives

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Abstract: In this paper I engage with the socio-political implications on Orthodoxy present in the age of dechristianization, which implicitly endorse a concept of Neoliberalism's New World Order. Analyzing the nature of neoliberal era and its relation to global fascism, I find that Orthodoxy today must be engaged with historical and social affairs. Striving to impose legal-constitutional relations between Orthodox churches and states according to a putative Western model are surely undemocratic, and the equation of religious and national affiliation has caused politicization of religion, inner secularization and, thus, emersion of a Christianity deprived of one's own cultural heritage and the rise of new ethno-religious movements. Hence, political nationalism ignited many terrorist wars oriented to enhance local identities and artificial nation-states of their own, supported on transnational scale by the Catholic Corporatist model. Based on the study of the Ukrainian and Kosovo-Serbia crises, I offer some insights that might assist researchers while facing some challenges to modern Orthodox theology.

Keywords: *Orthodoxy, dechristianization, globalism, political nationalism, Serbia, Ukraine*

Religion, Orthodox Christianity, democratization and atheism

Generally speaking, religion can be defined as a uniquely human phenomenon, which is realized both on a personal level and at the community level. The nature of the new religiosity is still explicit, and religious revival manifests itself in different parts of the world, reflecting local historical, social and cultural specificities, as well as a values vacuum, especially visible in ex communistic countries. Cognition of religion as culturally and socially relevant phenomenon gave birth to abundant anthropological, sociological, politicological and other research fields, oriented towards various aspects of religiosity. Orthodox Christianity has emerged from global diffusion, so, the Orthodox Christian world, sometimes called "Eastern" Orthodoxy (to distinguish it from the Western, or Latin Christian, tradition to which both Roman Catholicism and most forms of Protestantism belong), reflects, in effect, the first major division between East and West in Christian history. This Great Schism, based not only on theological controversies of a doctrinal nature, but also on political, economic, cultural and religious peculiarities, formally occurred with an exchange of condemnations between Pope Leo IX in Rome and Patriarch Michael Cerularius in Constantinople during 1053–1054, though the East–West Schism had begun well before the eleventh century. Actually, due to the antagonistic theological

and institutional entities whose territorial-ecclesiastical jurisdictions more or less corresponded to the eastern (mostly Greek-speaking) and western (mostly Latin-speaking) halves of the old Roman Empire, which had been divided administratively into eastern and western segments as early as 284 C.E., the formal separation of the Eastern or Nestorian churches had occurred by the middle of the fifth century, and it was followed by the formal break with the non-Chalcedonian (Oriental Orthodox) churches a little more than a century later [2, pp. 558-563].

The Orthodox Church was constructed quite differently from the Roman Catholic one. The Eastern Orthodox community is not a single ecclesiastical institution but actually a communion of independent churches that are united through common theological beliefs and practices. So, there are three of the key theological distinctions between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church: Church leadership structure, views on the Holy Spirit's position in the trinity, and doctrine concerning the afterlife. In that sense, Roman Catholicism has a pope, who is the head of the entire church, while in Orthodoxy there is no equivalent pope figure. In Orthodoxy, the Archbishop of Constantinople acts as the "first among equals", or more as a spiritual leader. The real theological supreme of Orthodoxy is represented by the Synod of Bishops, or council of Bishops, who are naturally equal to each other, vote together and decides on church policy and doctrine. So, unlike the Western Church, the Eastern Church rejects the opposition between papacy and empire, and Byzantine "dome" has persisted as an ideal, resurrected after the fall of Constantinople in the "caesaropapism" of Holy Russia, and countries under Muslim rule, like the former Ottoman lands of Southeastern Europe. Both the theology of Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy rely on the concept of Christian trinity, but the Orthodox Church believes that the Holy Spirit only proceeds from the Father, whereas the Catholic tradition, believes that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. In another words, Orthodox theology uses the Trinitarian concept to illustrate a higher position for the Father within the trinity. In that way, the Eastern Orthodox Church – literally, "orthodoxies" – distinguishes itself as the bearer and embodiment of the correct beliefs and practices, so that Eastern Orthodoxy is a very sacramental tradition that considers itself a vital and unbroken, and although "inwardly changeless", integrates new forms by complementing the old ones without actually discarding them. Therefore, Orthodox theology is linked directly to creation theology, since the communion

of humanity with God is possible only if human persons use their free will responsibly, and acting as ‘co-creators’ deliberately participate in the creation’s fulfillment. Finally, the third major theological difference between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church refers to the fact that both traditions believe in a permanent state in heaven, but while the Roman Catholic Church formally believes in an intermediate state between death and heaven, or purgatory cleansing, the Orthodox faith rejects that idea.

With about 300 million members worldwide, the Orthodox Church is the third-largest Christian communion that consists of roughly 15% of all Christians. Orthodox Christians, and their descendants, prevail in Southeastern Europe and in the eastern Mediterranean, as well as in Russia, Ukraine, and the Baltic states. More precisely, about hundred million or more Orthodox Christians inhabit the countries that once formed the Soviet Union, while their next-largest group is in Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia-Montenegro, and Cyprus, even though, in other parts of Europe also exist significant Orthodox minorities. Due to the emigration from the Orthodox “heartland” – mainly the former Byzantine, Ottoman, and Russian imperial lands, as well as parts of northeast and west-central Africa – significant Orthodox communities also exist in Africa, Australia, Canada, and the United States, as well as in some countries of western Europe and East Asia, while Oriental Orthodox Christians lodge in Armenia, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Ethiopia Somalia and Egypt, with two million in India as well.

Despite the tendency to characterize Orthodoxy’s relationship to democracy as antiliberal or antimodern, there is no doubt that in both theoretical and practical aspects Orthodox Christianity and democracy are actually compatible. In fact, anthropologically, modern democracy presumes that every individual must confront God by himself, and sociologically, that the church must be separated from the state. Until the end of the Cold War, democracy was largely unknown to Orthodox populations outside Greece or the Orthodox diasporas of North America, Australia, and Western Europe. So, the collapse of communism across Eastern Europe and the USSR was a defining moment in the Orthodox encounter with democracy. Although the concept of democracy implicitly represents a problem for any religious tradition committed to a set of binding moral principles, religion acts as a tool for democratization of various societies. Bearing in mind that the Orthodox Church affirms equally responsibility and freedom, as well as the Trinitarian notion of unity in diversity, it can be concluded that its

premises are in line with universal human rights, and essentially with the concept of pluralism. In accordance with local historical, social and cultural specificities, as well as a values vacuum, especially notable in ex communistic countries, religious revival manifests itself differently in different parts of the globe. The Orthodoxy's conception of freedom and equality, as well as the emphasis on values like diversity and dynamism, clearly denotes its affinity to basic democratic principles, like the tendency to peacefully resolve conflicts and reject boundaries and demarcations that can generate social division and fragmentation born of power differentials. Nevertheless, while analyzing the Orthodoxy's approach to engagement in democratization, one should always be aware of that pluralism and democracy have been realities imposed on Orthodoxy from the outside, to be rather accommodated and accepted ad hoc than intrinsically motivated [1, p. 80].

Even though at the beginning of the third millennium has emerged the real consensus on compatibility of the Orthodox tradition and democratization process, the postmodernism has generated a dichotomy of relativistic views on whether God is sovereign or not, and whether if He even exists at all. In this context, the contemporary's Serbian revitalization of religion has occurred after the decades-long governance of atheism as a state ideology, and that process actually disrupted spontaneously the process of secularization, so the comeback of religion can be regarded as a process of de-atheization rather than de-secularization, for it had its strongpoint in negating the values of atheistic ideology.

At different points in history, expression of Orthodoxy has been stamped by its historical setting. So, during the communist era, most citizens expressed their alienation from religion. Nowadays, in contrast, the percentage of the so-called unaffiliated is very small. After the fall of the atheist regimes in the early 1990s, interest in religious beliefs rose sharply, and the authority of the traditional social structures increased as well as the engagement with historical and social affairs. In other words, the rise of believers was intrinsically connected with political conflicts. This opening of Eastern Orthodoxy to the modern challenges has occurred due mainly, but not exclusively, to historical reasons and Western theologies. As a result, elements of political thought are incorporated into the liturgical/Eucharistic nature of Church, elaborating a theology of life and ethos relevant for the needs of today's world and interpretation of religion in post-communistic Balkan countries in which it appears to be one of the key

characteristics of identity. This nationalization of Orthodoxy, initiated in nineteenth-century South-eastern Europe and was tardily applied to the post-1989 post-Soviet constellation. The example of a modern synthesis between Orthodoxy and nationality is also clearly visible in several contemporary ecclesiastical disputes (in Estonia, Ukraine, or Moldova). Finally, we must mention that sociology of religion generally relies on theoretical paradigms derived from a small and selective group of Western nations, while ignoring non-Western regions [5, pp. 159–160].

News World Order and dechristianization of Ortodoxy

Orthodox societies, where the majority of the population are affiliated with Orthodox Christianity, is not a consolidated space. Some of these countries, such as Greece, Cyprus, Romania, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Ukraine and Georgia, are already part of the Western political alliance to varying degrees. The year 2012 was a landmark year for the involvement of modern Orthodox theology in political and social affairs and necessary paradigm's shift in 21st century Orthodox theology [7, p. 337–351]. Thus, it is not a surprise that the nowadays large section of Orthodox Christians view their religious identity as national and vice versa. Due to the fact that neoliberalism has become one of the most pervasive and dangerous ideologies not only by its unparalleled influence on the global economy, but also in its power to redefine the very nature of politics and society, today some ninety percent of Orthodox people live in totalitarian, atheistic and militantly anti-Christian states that strive to reframe and rephrase Orthodox theology in terms of both harmony and distinction from the Christian West.

New World Order (NWO) conceives an idea of sinister development that rely on two distinct but eventually converged concepts – millenarian Christianity and political pseudoscholarship. The current globalization movement encourages denominationalism which leads to division of one religion into separate groups, sects, or schools of thought, and the eventual collapse of Orthodox Christianity. Under neoliberalism, everything is either for sale or is rendered defunct within the corporate drive for efficiency. Further, the global neoliberal world order promotes gender ideology (marriage between heterosexual couples) that leads to converting children to homosexuality and directly opposes the Orthodox teaching on marriage and family. In that way, Orthodoxy is confronted with a powerful and hostile hegemonic culture, creating a society with many temptations to accommodate. In addition, in accordance to the doctrine of Eastern Papism, the

contemporary Orthodox output starts originating fresh ecclesiological thinking which can be qualified as the inter-Christian. Under the pressure of Western scholasticism and the contemporary neoliberal hegemony democratic debate has been replaced by a managerialist concept of ‘good governance’ based on the maintenance of abusive power structures.

In addition, the post-secular multiple modernities of Europeanization demand not only a confrontation with those modernities that are generated by different religious traditions, but also a confrontation with the religious secular identity of Western Europe itself. Specifically, the secularization paradigm is derived from the broader modernization paradigm that primarily relay upon the image of the isolated individual and exclusion of the cultural dimension of religion. Hence, this confrontation inevitably leads to a re-definition of Western modernity and understanding of human rights as a crucial topic for the Western self-understanding. As Roman Catholicism is the only one of the three major branches of Christianity with a central authority exercising global jurisdiction, the Church of Rome prevails as the first truly global institution. With this said, one must understand the American tendency towards the consolidation of overlapping, ethnically based churches (currently qualified as Greek, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, Serbian, and so on) into a single Orthodox Church. However, this democratic pluralism can be the catalyst for the divisive potential of market ideology when applied to questions of faith. By reducing Orthodoxy to a producer-consumer model, nationally specific conceptions of pluralism, as well as an effort to uphold democracy in the face of competitive challenges and power dynamics aggravated by globalization, begin to encourage transnational economic investment by Orthodox-diaspora groups, which consequently leads to tighter faith-based cohesion and renegotiation of ties among Orthodox churches on the American scene and their respective mother churches abroad.

Neoliberal politicians willingly hand over public lands to transnational corporations so the state nowadays makes a grim alignment with corporate capital under the flag of corporate global fascism. The prevailing neoliberal economic doctrine promotes wage slavery, media driven culture of panic and the everyday reality of uncertainty, as well as the investment in surveillance and the increasing militarization of public space. As neoliberal policies dominate politics and social life, right-wing intellectuals, religious fanatics, and politicians legitimate tax reduction for wealthy individuals and corporations and the existence of poverty; the revival of the nuclear energy industry; war as a means

to resolve thorny international relations issues and erosion of social security; the perception of the “other” as either a threat or an ally. At the same time, neoliberalism nourishes a growing authoritarianism perpetuated by a religious fundamentalism and xenophobic patriotism encouraging intolerance and hate, as it punishes critical thought, especially if clashes with the reactionary religious and political agenda pushed by the American administration as a new world’s fascist militia today. The fascist element is clearly incorporated within the history of US racism and led today by oligarchical interests for whom the public good is in fact detrimental. Thus, contemporary politicians and movement leaders employ fascist propaganda, such as those in the hydrocarbon business, as well as a social, political, and religious movement with roots in the Confederacy. Moreover, under increased pressure of mass media there is a strong tendency to assimilate to the ruling culture and modern ideologies like new atheism. New atheists assert that religion is not needed for moral behavior, and is in many cases itself deeply immoral, emphasizing the ethical value of human life without religion. New atheists are also more likely to support progressive, liberal values and, as a sub-section of atheism in general, the predominance of new atheism remains, to a large extent, an Anglo-American phenomenon, and, primarily, a U.S. one.

Consequently, these processes of dehumanization and dechristianization have created a culture of fear and rising tide of ethno-nationalism, creating suspicion and anger in communities where none had existed before. Policy of changing national identity is noticeable in the Orthodox, who were denationalized and then included into an existing nations, or in a newly invented nation (like Croats, Ukrainians...) Likewise, through the Union existed a possibility of preserving the Byzantine (Orthodox) rites, but later the Uniats were also denationalized and out of them new nations were created or, more often, they were lost in some nations whose religion was Roman Catholicism. As the New World Order aspires to impose the global identity of contemporary man, the relationship between political, social and cultural changes and identity praxes of population of Serbia and Russia must be deeply rooted in the nation’s history. The principles of secularization and the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals unfolded a serious dilemmas within modern Slavic states. These problems are essentially related to ideological and spiritual foundations of contemporary Orthodoxy and nature of the global neoliberal world order where one of the main question reflects the puzzle in which the contemporary man

escapes into religion due to his inner compulsions triggered by modernity and new atheism, or the religion acts as one of the key characteristics of his identity?

Namely, in today's Serbian and Russian society the identity of citizens and their cultural, social and political transformation has been intensified to the level of religious alienation. Built on the bases of an exclusive and intolerant ethnonationalism, the concept of national identity and state sovereignty have become dissolved and, as a consequence, ideas about personal and collective identity have inevitably begun to change. More tangibly, popular sense of powerlessness and religious alienation have weakened nationalistic identities enabling the growth of regional and separatist movements and artificial ethnic identities oriented towards creating new nation-states. By means of social engineering the break-up of previously constructed federations in the Balkans and Eastern Europe, engendered at least 20 new nations.

The cooperation between the Serbian Orthodox Church and Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church has been especially intense since the Middle Ages [6, p. 7–9]. Within the framework of the Eastern Question, in the period from the 15th to the 18th century, arrival of books, icons and certain financial aid were the only form of Russian presence in the Balkans, so the prevailing perception of Russia among the Serbs amounted to a basically religious idea of Moscow as the Third Rome. Namely, intensive Serbian-Russian relations in modern times started developing as early as towards the end of the 17th century, when the Serbs, led by Patriarch Arsenije III Crnojevic, asked Russian Tzar Peter I The Great, accepted by the Serbs as a “great Orthodox emperor”, to help them liberate themselves from the Ottoman occupation, and when Russia, guided by the common interest - the liberation of the oppressed Christian-Orthodox peoples of the Balkans (including the Serbs) and the expulsion of the Turks - decided to embark on a more active policy in the Balkans. During the 18th century, the Serbs most often addressed Russia with a request to help them in their battle for liberation from the Turkish sway by military, political, educational, cultural, spiritual or financial means. After the Viennese War and migrations under Patriarch Arsenije III, the Serbs lived in two states – Austria and Turkey – so they also needed Russia's help to protect them from the Habsburg Monarchy's attempts to convert them to Catholicism. Due to the feeling of political, cultural and spiritual affinity, in 1724 and 1747 occurred mass migrations of Serbs from the Habsburg Empire to the eastern Ukrainian steppes and other areas of the southern Russia. So, fighting with the Habsburgs for political influence in the

Balkan Peninsula, Russia imposed itself as the patron of Orthodox Balkan nations by concluding the peace treaty in Kuchuk-Kainarji in 1774. At that time Russia for the first time asked and Porta acknowledged the exclusive right of Russia on „protection of Orthodox peoples under the reign of Porta“ which gave the Russian Empire the ability to interfere in the internal affairs of Porta during the course of the entire next century. Thus, almost throughout the 19th century Russia had a role of Serbia’s protector and leader of awakened Slavism, but the Russian patronage finished in 1878, when, after the Treaty of San Stefano and later the Berlin Congress (at which Serbia obtained independence) Russia directed its political aspirations in the Balkans to Bulgaria, leaving Serbia to the Austrian sphere of influence.

However, in 1903, with the return of the Karadjordjevic dynasty to the Serbian throne, the cultural and political closeness between Serbia and Russia was restored. So, despite some setbacks, taken as a whole, in the entire modern history and the process of resolving the Eastern Question Russian patronage of the newly created Orthodox peoples’ and Slavic states in the Balkans was advancing until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, and especially the October Revolution in 1917 when the Romanov dynasty (the patron of Serbia until then) was brought down, followed by the revolutionary transformation of the Russian Empire itself into the new Communist creation – the USSR. Until the fall of Empire in 1917 Russia functioned not only as an absolute monarchy but also as some form of “Orthodox Theocracy” where the Orthodox Church occupied exceptionally high place not only among, the wider social circles but also among the members of Russian ruling elites. After the Revolution and the Civil War 1917–1921 Russia disappeared politically, and the state conducted a new, totally different policy in the Balkans. Lead by the desire to implement some “world revolution”, Komintern – international organization located in Moscow, wanted to destroy all ties made previously between Russia and Orthodox peoples of the Balkan Peninsula. Yugoslavia did not have diplomatic relations with the USSR until 1940. Later, due to the Hitlers’ coming into power and strengthening Stalin’s authorities in the USSR, Komintern insisted on the need for the federalization of Yugoslavia as a state.

The breakout of the Second World War was followed by the intensification of Soviet – Yugoslav relations, but in a completely different international context. The triumph of the USSR enabled the expansion of the Soviet Empire onto Eastern Europe and the victory of Communists in the civil war in

Yugoslavia, initiated a new turning-point in mutual relations, built in the framework of the Communist ideology. However, in 1948, due to the conflict between Tito and Stalin, once again happened a new radical turning-point in mutual relations, and the former allies, Yugoslavia and the USSR became opponents. During the 20th century, USSR and Yugoslavia underwent a traumatic common experience of the “fall of Communism”, and in 1985-1991, both federations, the Soviet and the Yugoslav one, disintegrated. After the disintegration of both federations, the USSR and the FRY were stigmatized as hegemonic states, while depriving themselves of significant parts of their own people. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the disappearance of the USSR, generated emerging monopolar world order with the dominance of the USA and NATO and Yugoslav crisis, which ended with NATO aggression on FRY. During the bombing of Serbia in 1999, Serbian political leadership turned to Russia expecting the confrontation between Russia and the West, but Russia was not in a position to help resolve the Yugoslav crisis fairly. With the political changes in Serbia of 5 October 2000, Russian-Serbian relations cooled down, but since President Vladimir Putin came to power, Russia has gradually regain the international and military power, so relations between Serbia (FRY until 2006, i.e., Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Srpska, and Russia have become again stable and multilayered.

In the context of geopolitical interests of both states, the issue of Kosovo and Metohija, i.e., the territorial integrity of Serbia, is regarded as one of the important factors of the Russian side for several reasons. Firstly, it represents a principled position on the immutability of state borders determined under international law; secondly, the survival and the territorial integrity of Serbia must be preserved in the light of the transport of Russian energy; and finally, despite the introduction of sanctions regarding the ongoing Ukrainian crisis by a number of Western countries, Serbia does not participate in it. In this sense, as traditionally close and friendly, the Serbian factor, and the importance of the Balkans and Russian-Serbian relations is evident. Namely, the Russian politician, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, predicted Russia’s military action in Ukraine, due to the analysis of the precedents in the former Yugoslavia that actually served as an experiment and a precedent in the post-Soviet space where Russia had first-rate strategic interests. Since Moscow’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its subsequent stand-off with the West, Zhirinovsky made fiery anti-American, anti-liberal and anti-Kyiv public speeches, and even mentioned February 22 — the

day President Vladimir Putin recognized Ukraine's two breakaway regions as independent before he ordered troops into the pro-Western country two days later. Within that context, by evoking the decision of the UN International Court of Justice on Kosovo, the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, noted that if in exercising the right to self-determination, the territory of a state had not been obliged to apply for permission to declare its sovereignty to the country's central authorities, then the republics of Donbass should have the same right to declare their sovereignty, "since with recognition of Kosovo independence, the precedent was set".

Although it is evident that the macroeconomic course of the Western nations, and above all of the United States, has become the root of most of the current problems, Washington categorically refuses to accept collective Western responsibility, and the US persistently tries to shape the world according to its own, "uniquely true" standards. Furthermore, by clearly ignoring diplomacy and basic principles of free trade, competition and the inviolability of private property, President Joe Biden and top officials in NATO's leading countries are imposing sanctions and making aggressive statements against Russia and its allies, trying to intimidate them by spreading fake news and propaganda, as well as with the possibility of using nuclear power. However, for Russia the main goal remains to completely demilitarize and "denazify" Ukraine and liberate not only Donbass from the occupying forces of the oppressive Kiev regime, but also the entire left bank of Ukraine, as well as its Black Sea regions. To be able to defeat the West and take its Slavic partner out of the sphere of influence of the US and NATO, cities that have industrial and defense enterprises like Dnepr, Zaporozhye, Mariupol, Odessa, Ochakov, Nikolaev, Kherson, and others, must be put under Moscow's control.

The US desire for a neocolonial reallocation of the global economy, and its attempts to standardize everything by enslaving other nations economically, politically, and culturally, in order to preserve Western dominance, are substantially opposed to the core concepts of Orthodoxy, like free will, love, solidarity, harmony, social equity, and so on... In the Eastern Orthodox Church (EOC) we are guided, not controlled, we are influenced, not told., we are illumined and, transformed by our faith and not extinguished by fear and despair.

Instead of conclusion

At the beginning of the third millennium, religion plays a very significant role in the life of contemporary man, and there is a consensus that the Orthodox

tradition is compatible with the concept of democracy. Although modern Orthodox theology generates genuinely new insights on the apostolic faith, confronted with a wide spectrum of new problematics, modern Orthodox theologians generally have adopted the canonical realm conditioned by traditional theology, almost never transcending its bounds. In that sense, it is obvious that Orthodox religion must undergo a process of modernization based not only on its redefinition inside the societies where it is traditionally represented, but also on the redefinition of its position in the larger European religious pluralist landscape.

Unquestionably, religious convictions have considerable consequences on creating new or preserving old systems of value; whether regarding collective or individual identity. If theology and faith are not expressed in good works, then they can be regarded as meaningless because theology without action (praxis) is the theology of irresponsibility. In other words, the modern Orthodoxy must be responsive to evolving cultural, linguistic, political and socioeconomic realities, or better said, it must be conditioned by context, receivable within context, but not diluted by the same. Reflections on social Trinitarianism ought to enter deeply into the practical realm, aiming to reality, freedom of thought and effectiveness.

In various lands, Orthodox Christians are now enduring life in conflict zones and under semi-authoritarian regimes. This situation evokes a practical response from Orthodox churches and believers. Therefore, although sometimes just implicitly, poverty, injustice and evil, must be the central issues in the modern Orthodox reflections. Otherwise, the absence of insurgency threatens the integrity of our life in Christ. It is a task of Orthodox theology to be responsive to context and history, and moved by a great moral awakening. So, in this paper, I wanted to take up the central issues that have arisen from the question of how the intrinsic Orthodox theological affinity for free will and equality combined with Western scholastic influences could articulate the spiritual message of Jesus Christ, by sympathetically interpreting what is true in all great historic forms of doctrine, and translating this truth into a language that would rule the moral reason of the men who live within the context of neoliberal agenda?

The present-day problems of neoliberalism's global ideology refers to rearrangement of the normal structures of the ideal of society as a kind of universal market, and of human beings as profit-and-loss calculators, and not bearers of grace, or of inalienable rights and duties. As a way of reordering social

reality, and of rethinking our status as individuals, neoliberalism has come to regulate all we practice and believe, turning the principle of competition in the only legitimate organizing principle for all human life. Within such a society, men and women need only to follow their own self-interest and joust to discriminate who and what is valuable. In so doing, it puts any value that cannot be expressed as a price, as nothing more than opinion, preference, or superstition. But the application of such a relativistic approach to every aspect of our lives negates what is most distinctive about us. That is, our freedom and preferences, or ability to simply decide who and what we are. Bearing on mind the very nature of such politics, I also addressed the question of the future prospects of the Orthodoxy, and more specifically, of today's sounding process of dechristianization.

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