

8.7. Soloviev: cosmology Philosophy Second Year 1991/192
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Content and study notes: see p. 66.

Preface. -

The second year of philosophy is mainly history of philosophical thought.-- We have chosen Platon and Platonism because Platon's ideas have influenced and continue to influence both the East (understand: the Near East) and the West to a very high degree. Didn't Whitehead say that all of Western philosophy is "a series of footnotes on Platon"?

This also justifies the choice of Vladimir Soloviev (1853/1900). This thinker can safely count as a "Platonist in full XIXth century". But what lends even more strength to our choice is the fact that, after the collapse of the Communist interval, traditional Russian man is coming back to the fore.

Well, Soloviev is the one who tried to make that traditional Russian man survive through the "Apocalypse" (end-time history) of Postmodern living and thinking.

We do say "post" modern. Why? Because Soloviev lived through the crisis of Modern, Western thought and life like no other and literally 'survived' this crisis,-- thanks to his re-founding of Christian Platonism which has always been dominant in the Near East.

Part I.-- Episodes from Soloviev's life. (01/07)

One only understands what he says, regarding cosmology (i.e., universe description), if in the background of it one knows his life as a Russian "intellectual" (one does not understand this term in its Western sense).

1.-- The crisis of faith.

Bibl. st.: Fr. Muckermann, S.J., *Wladimir Solowjew (Zur Begegnung zwischen Ruzsland und dem Abendland)*, (Vladimir Soloviev (On the encounter between Ruzsland and the Occident)), Olten (CH), 1945.

O.c., 15/16 The author recounts the following.-- In the house of Sergius Mikhailovich Soloviev, the well-known historian, in Moscow, the atmosphere is one of anxiety. The second son, Vladimir (born 16.01.1853), barely fourteen, breaks with family traditions.

Everything that reminds one of church and religion, he has emphatically and with great passion even removed from his study. He no longer participates in pious customs, such as they were in the parental home.

But all night he is engrossed in the works of German materialists such as *Ludwig Feuerbach* (1804/1872; known among other things for his demythologizing *Das Wesen des Christentums*, (The essence of Christianity), or French freethinkers such as *Ernest Renan* (1823/1842; known for his *Vie de Jésus* (Life of Jesus), 1863), a completely Rationalist work).

Such writers brought “inspired confusion” to the Russian youth of the time.

But Vladimir still retained elemental reverence for his parents in the course of his crisis of faith. Later he himself will reveal how grievous his youthful - immature attitude came across.-- One learns this already in these words: “My father loved Orthodoxy (note: the Russian-Eastern Church as well as science and the Russian homeland) with all his soul.”

What to do? Sergius Mikhailovllsh Soloviev realized the exceptional giftedness of his son, who - similar to G.W. Leibniz (1646/1716; Cartesian Rationalist) - almost a “child” was already fully occupied with the most difficult questions of philosophy.

For Sergius, it was no secret that his son’s behavior differed substantially from that of his comrades at the grammar school: they were less interested in the intellectual side of the new philosophy and more in the practical libertinism (= free-spiritedness) that went with it.

His son was, morally speaking, a truly “pure” man, a young God-seeker who sought first and foremost for truth,--not for the excesses of total freedom.

The result was: father Soloviev bestowed confidence, let go. He did talk on occasion about a grandfather who was an Orthodox priest,-- told him -- excellent connoisseur of Russian history -- about the religious essence of his people. But beyond that, this paternal interference did not go. It did not become “exercising compulsion.” But one thing was pressed on his heart: that these were weighty questions of life.

By the way: this was understood by Vladimir. His insides were already beginning to experience a great emptiness over time.

2.-- Survival.

O.c.,18f . -- One began to be more at ease with it: one saw that the rapidly maturing son would not hold out with a Feuerbach nor with Positivism (*A. Comte* (1798/ 1857; *Cours de philosophie positive* (Positive philosophy course), (1830/1842)), which gradually came into vogue,-- a school of thought which, at that stage of its development, was hostile to any philosophizing that went beyond mere “positive facts.”

It was noted that Vladimir ended up with B. de Spinoza (1632/1677; Jewish pantheistic Rationalist): the latter reintroduced him to the world of the spirit and of the religious, as well as to the mysticism of “the Absolute,” which surpassed the realm of the urges as far as possible.

But Spinoza instilled in him ideals that Spinoza himself could no longer handle.-- He was nineteen at the time: for him, the crisis of his early youth was over. From a general nihilism (*note: questioning* the higher values, God included) he had returned to the great traditions of his people. (...).

Also: the study of Mathematics and the Natural Sciences, which he had begun with such a result, was abandoned in favor of a philosophy concerned with the great questions of life.

3.-- *The crisis of western philosophy*

O.c., 21f.. -- We are 24.09.1874, in S.-Petersburg. When Soloviev made his first public appearance that day before the official committee -- in the presence of many hundreds of academics -- the astonishment and enthusiasm was general,-- not merely for the reason of the degree of reading of a doctoral student who was only twenty-one, but mainly for the reason of the quiet assurance, the maturity,-- yes, the “magic” that emanated from him. The young thinker spoke of “the crisis of Western philosophy.”

1.1. He discussed the long road that began with subjectivism (*note:* the philosophy that places the “thinking self”(= the subject) at the center) and idealism (*note:* not the Platonic theory of ideas, but the Western way of thinking that places concepts at the center),-- specifically: from R. Descartes (1596/1650; founder of subjective-idealist philosophy) to G.Fr. W.Hegel (1770/1831; German Absolute Idealist).

1.2. He brought up the development of empiricism (note : Rationalist school of thought that places experience and experimentation at its center),-- from *Francis Bacon of Verulam* (1561/1626; known for his *Novum organum scientiarum* (1620” to John Stuart Mill (1806/1873; Empiricist Rationalist).--.

Note: Soloviev herewith brilliantly outlines the two main tenets of Modern Enlightened Rationalism.

2. He made clear how both currents -- compelled by its presuppositions -- led to Positivism,-- to the questioning of what was traditionally (especially in Russia) called “community life,” -- to revolution and pessimism.

Everyone realized that in the person of this young thinker Russia could greet its first philosopher of high standing.

4.-- *The resistance of axidentalists and slavophiles.*-- o.c., 23/26.--

Soon Soloviev would find (...) that the purity of the idea, once it enters the waters of interests, is broken only with great difficulty (...).

Philosophy and Christianity were the ideals of his young, spirited soul. But they had fallen into complete disrepute: the great majority of the Russian intelligentsia (**op.:** the intellectual and artistic vanguard) - they were, after all, his audience - were wholly under the spell of Positivism or Skepticism (**op.:** philosophy that rejects all that goes beyond the immediately given “phenomena”).

1. For years Soloviev will have to fight to maintain that life demands of us more than the constant accumulation and classification of scientific data,--that in other words, there is a main question imposing itself on everyone, namely, the question of the ultimate meaning of life, the main problem of philosophy.

2. Again and again he will have to emphasize: Christianity as it prevailed in Russia in his day was corrupted, a caricature, narrow-minded. It was not Christianity as it ought to be.

Note:- Note, in passing, how S. Kierkegaard (1813/1855; father of Existentialism), in Denmark, came to analogous determinations in Lutheran circles.

a. *The oksidentalists* (...) could not handle Soloviev’s criticism of what for these “worshippers” of the West (**note:** hence their name) was absolutely certain.

b. *The Slavophil’s* (**note:** the name says it all: who advocated Slavophil’s as a cultural ideal) (...), at least the extremists among them, regarded as suspect any insight that did not originate on Russian soil.

Universalism” (*note*: “in Christ all peoples and cultures are one” was the ideal both of F. Dostoevsky (1821/1881; novelist) and Soloviev) was, in the eyes of the extremist Slavophil’s, “the betrayal of one’s own nation” (...).

5.-- *The brutal shutdown.*

In 1875 - Soloviev is twenty-two, he gives his first lessons on “the defense of metaphysics.”

But the young lecturer would not have the good fortune to crown his career as a professor. In 1881 - the year his good friend Dostoevsky died - his fanatical opponents succeeded in definitively eliminating the twenty-eight-year-old professor whose influence among the youth and even in all of Russia was growing amazingly fast.

Tsar Alexander II is assassinated. At that critical moment, Soloviev ventured to ask the new tsar to be a true Christian paragon for his people and ... instead of executing the tsar’s murderers, to devise a punishment that prepared their moral improvement and their complete conversion. Such a thing was never forgiven Soloviev: he was banned from speaking for life.

6.-- *The magic of Soloviev’s aura.*

Prof Szylkarski who is a connoisseur of Soloviev, says what follows.

A magic emanated from the person of the thinker who died early.-- His whole life seemed one great celebration. At every moment of his life he was open to the unlimited possibilities of this - for him - ‘wonderful’ - world, yet from God’s point of view.

Everyday life, wherever Soloviev showed himself, proceeded as follows. Biting dogs came to lie at his feet. Pigeons came fluttering - wherever he stayed - at the window.

His friends argued to bring him in with them. For, with him, came a kind of “light - and - warmth” over all the householders. Children began learning their lessons with glee. Service personnel forgot that the fate that awaited him was unworthy. Married people poured forgiveness on each other, -- were happy with their children.

At every house where he was a guest, beggars clung: he always gave them what he had with him: money bracket, handkerchief, neckerchief, shoes (...).--

Very particularly, his deep affection went to all the failures. Almost meekly he was in their presence, for he possessed the ability to empathize with their plight.

He was indefatigable when it came to sparing poor and evil people the embarrassment of their way of being. Something in which he was unusually resourceful. - So much for Szylkarski. Cfr o.c., 203.

7.-- Soloviev, the mystic.

It is clear to those who know Soloviev's philosophy a little: he is carried by a mystical experience. And that of the unity (= cohesion) of the universe, in particular of all that lives.

Muckermann, o.c., 175/183 (*Hagia Sophia*) dwells on that aspect of his being. - O.c., 177, he gives a sample of this. It is about an experience in which Soloviev has the impression that divine wisdom - sophiology (wisdom theory) thoroughly dominates him - showed itself to him.

That "divine Wisdom" is, with him, first of all the Second Person of the Trinity, God the Son, whom St. John, in his gospel, calls "logos," world or universe wisdom. The "face" he experienced was a turning point in his life.

He tried to represent it in a text "*Three Encounters*". In one of them, Soloviev is on his way in the vicinity of Cairo (Egypt). He is in the desert and, at some point, becomes tired and restless at the same time. At that moment he hears a voice: "Friend, slumber!". In the dream, a pleasant fragrance surrounds heaven and earth. Suddenly thou didst show thyself to me in the purple of heaven, with eyes twinkling like azure,--as the virgin ray of light of the great day of creation.--what is, what was, what shall be in the womb of the future: a single, unmoving gaze encompassed all.-- Beneath me flowers and oceans, the distant forest and the snow-white peaks of mountains become one. I saw all and everything one: a single form, woven with feminine beauty-gloss. The infinity ran on endlessly.

For me, in me: only You! So it was for one moment. -- The face faded away. The sun rose on the face horizon. The desert was silent. But my soul prayed in the wondrous play of eternal bells.

Thou shining star! Deceive me not! I have seen thee whole and entire in the vast desert.-- These flowers in my soul never wither, however far the wave of life throws me. Though caught in this make-believe world, yet I have experienced the happiness of seeing (under the rough shell of matter) the eternal purple and the fire glow of the deity (...)".

Note: -- Soloviev was not without influence from a certain vague mysticism: what is, was, will be, on the one hand, and “deity” (rather vaguely, at least in the description just given), on the other, merge somewhere ... into what is called “a mystical experience.

If one may, here, cite at least one work on the subject: *Bruno Borchert, Mysticism (History and Challenge)*, Haarlem, Gottmer, 1989, 9, says: “To know by experience that everything is in some way connected,--that everything is in origin one” is “mysticism. Now reread Soloviev’s poem, and ye will see that Borchert’s definition (or rather approximate characterization) is present in it.

Which proves that “mysticism” belongs much more to the order of (psychological) experience than to (ontological) reality experience.

Note: -- Of course Soloviev’s authentic Christianity is much more and different than that “mysticism. For further explanation see e.g. J. Sutton, *The Religious Philosophy of Vladimir Soloviev (Towards a Reassessment)*, Library of Philosophy and Religion, 1988;

Tomas Spidlik, *Les grands mystiques Russes*, (The great Russian mystics), Paris, Nouvelle Cité, 1979 (a very rich book that perfectly situates Soloviev in the centuries-long tradition of magic and mysticism).

Julius Tyciak, *Morgenländische Mystik (Charakter und Wege)*, (Oriental Mysticism (Character and Ways)), Düsseldorf, Patmos, 1944 (O.m. 108/125 (*Liturgischer Geist und Russian Religionsphilosophie*) (Liturgical Spirit and Russian Philosophy of Religion), (an extraordinarily fascinating book with an immediate Russian’ and ‘Eastern’ feel)

J. Tyciak, *Die Liturgie als Quelle Ostlicher Frömmigkeit*, (The Liturgy as a Source of Eastern Piety), Freiburg i.Br., 1937 (work that brilliantly captures the spirit of Eastern liturgies, including the Russian one: figures like a Dostoevsky or certainly even more so a Soloviev draw their inspiration from the liturgies of the Greek-Eastern churches).

Part II.-- Soloviev’s Christian “realism” (07/16).

We now know the man a little better. Now his philosophical-theological streak. We do say “philosophical-theological.” Why? Because, unlike us Western Christians, the realm of philosophy and that of Christian theology have never been separate (though distinct). It is still as it was in the days of the Greek-Eastern Fathers of the Church (33/800): even the sciences and philosophy are interpreted from the perspective of the Biblical-Christian faith with its knowledge and ideas.

Not that professional science and philosophy have no independent existence whatsoever. Far from it! That will be well demonstrated later. But the split existence, as the radical autonomy within our Western Enlightened Rationalism has begotten, even among “believers,” is unknown to Eastern theologians and philosophers.

Before we discuss Soloviev’s ideas in more detail) we will go a little deeper into the concept of “Christian realism.”

We are not going to lose ourselves in mere theoretical “reflections! No, we are going to take a singular text from the gospels and from there further determine the correct position of Soloviev.

1.-- *The story concerning the ‘haimo.roöusa’.*

We give first, in translation, the three gospel texts.

(1) *Mark 5: 25/34.*

A woman suffered from hemorrhage,--for twelve years. Because of a lot of doctors she had already endured a lot. She had spent all her possessions on it, -- without result. On the contrary, her condition was getting worse.

She learns through stories what Jesus was about -- she approaches Jesus with the crowd and touches his garment from behind. After all, she said to herself, “If I only touch his garment for a moment, I will be saved.”

Immediately the bleeding stopped : she ascertained in her body that she was cured of her malady.-- On the stroke Jesus knew to Himself that out of Him had flowed a power (‘dunamis’). Whereupon He turns in the midst of the crowd and says, “Who has touched my garment?” His disciples thereupon say, “Surely thou seest the multitude advancing all around, and thou askest, “Who hath touched me?”

Jesus looks around to see the woman who did it. The woman gets frightened; she trembles,-- in the realization of what had happened to her. She comes to the front, throws herself before Jesus and tells the whole truth (“pasan tèn alètheian”).

To which Jesus replied, “Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be healed of your affliction”.

(2) *Matthew 9:20/22.*

Look a woman who was suffering from hemorrhage -- for twelve years, comes down (to Jesus) in his back and touches the edge of his cloak. For she said within herself : “If I but touch his cloak, I shall be saved”. Whereupon Jesus turns around and sees them. He says: “Do not be afraid, daughter. Your faith has saved you”.

The woman was actually saved “apo tèr horas ekeinès,” from that point on.

(3) Luke 8:43/48.

A woman who had been suffering from hemorrhaging for twelve years and could not be healed by anyone approached Jesus in the back and touched the hem of His garment. On the stroke, the flowing of blood stopped.

To which Jesus : “Who is the one who touched me?”. All denied. Peter said, “Master, it is the crowd that is pressing in and pressing on you.”

Jesus: “Someone did touch me. For I have felt that a power (dunamis’) has flowed from me”.

Seeing that it had been discovered, the woman approached trembling, threw herself against Jesus, and told in the presence of all the people why she had touched him and how she had been healed on the stroke.” -- Jesus said, “My daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace”.

2.-- The further exposure of the story.

A tremendous amount has been written, since the beginning of the church, about the correct interpretation.-- Limiting ourselves to one work: Xav.Léon-Dufour, réd., *Les miracles de Jésus selon le Nouveau Testament*, (The miracles of Jesus according to the New Testament), Paris, Seuil, 1977.

2.1.-- The three synoptics.

O.c., 318/320.

a. Mark.

Faith is central to him. It revolves around the “certainty” of the haimoroöusa, hemoroïssa, that Jesus was able to save her - in spite of a heavy obstacle.

i. As a haimoroöusa, she was, in the context of the culture of the time, easily “unclean”: the blood that is lost possibly contains some sinister life force (“dunamis” and as such was to be “avoided” (taboo). Even more so: she herself should not approach or touch anyone in that state (taboo).

Note:-- What the work does not mention is that still today all people who are a little sensitive - say in Dutch: “clairvoyant” - still “feel” this double “avoidance” (= taboo), - without therefore already having to be written off as “non-normal”; far from it.

ii. Yet she approaches Jesus and does not touch his body, but only the hem of his garment (so as not to let him needlessly share in her “uncleanness”).

b. Matthew.

The story leaves a lot out. The “pleading” faith receives the healing in gift from the life force of the supremely powerful Jesus,

who even, in other cases, heals at a distance, without approach or touch. That's how "power-bearing" he is.

c. Luke.

Luke, as a physician, leaves out the painful impression that the medicine of the day exposed in its radical impotence.-

What the claimants don't mention is that even today countless people are voicing the very same complaint about the same impotence of our 'rational' (not to say 'Rationalist') medicine: they go from one doctor to another, including specialists, without any result. Until then, to their great surprise, some are cured by ...a 'healer'.

In Luke, the emphasis is on the secret stealing away of her healing, as well as on the admiration and wonderment following the story told in the audience by the healed person herself.

2.2.-- Healing or incantation?

O.c., 64.-- **a.** The aspect of "medical diagnosis and/or treatment" is apparently not unknown.

b. Yet a question arises here: *Luke 4:39* e.g. says that Jesus "threatens" the fever of Peter's mother-in-law, -- just as he "threatens" the rising storm (*Mark 1:43*). Which seems to indicate that behind the phenomena of "fever" and "rising storm" is the same "power" that can give way to threat.

Note.-- Let us read another book on the subject: *La Bible de Jérusalem*, Paris, Cerf, 1978, 1426, n. c.

a.1. In anticipation of the Day of Judgment, the demons enjoy a dose of freedom in working out their mischief on earth (*Acts 9:5*). They do this accordingly and preferably in the form of making people possessed (*Matt. 12:43/45*).

a.2. This possession is often accompanied by sickness. For sickness - as a result of "sin" (*Matt. 9:2*) - is another sign of Satan's grip (*Lu. 13:16*).

Consequence.-- The incantations of the gospel sometimes take place in the pure form (*Matt 8:28/ 3 4 ; 15: 21/28; Mark 1:23/28; Lu 8:2*), but they often take place in the form of healings (*Matt 9:32/34; 12: 22/24; 17;14/18; Lu 13:10; 13:17*).

b.1. In virtue of his control of the demons causes Jesus to build off "the kingdom of Satan" (*Matt. 12:28; Lu. 4:6; 10:17/19; Jn. 12:31*). At the same time, he introduces "the kingdom of God," the Messianic kingdom. The "Holy Spirit" is the distinctive promise of this (*Isaiah 11 :2; Joel 3:1/2*).

b.2. Though men do not come to grasp this (*Matt. 1 2:24/32*) the demons know it all the better (*Math. 8:29; Mark. 1:24; 3:11; Luke 4:41; Acts 16:17; 19:15*). --

c. The power to conjure is what Jesus passes on to his disciples,-- along with the ability to heal miraculously that goes along with it (*Matt. 4:24; 8:3; 8:16; Lu. 13:32*).

Note.-- Even now it can be regularly observed that truly possessed people have much more thorough insights than “ordinary” people (also and even especially in the religious field).

2.3.-- Different method, same result.

O.c., 18, n. 25.-- *Marie Cardinal, Les mots pour le dire*, Paris, Grasset, 1975, 41/44, says: she consults a psychoanalyst; as soon as she hears his first words, her bleeding suddenly stops (she suffered from it for “long years”).

To which the book responds, “It is nevertheless clear that both for her and for us this is not a ‘miracle’.”

Note -- This - together with other ‘proofs’ of such healing processes (also accomplished by e.g. ordinary healers when it also concerned haemorrhages) - shows that the method of Jesus is not the only one that achieves ‘results’. The fact that the authors of the book do not call this a ‘miracle’ is due to their narrow definition of ‘miracle’: they stick strictly to Biblical ‘miraculous’ interventions, brought about by Jesus, among others. The rest, however miraculous, are not ‘real’ miracles.

2.4.-- Automatic or not?

O.c., 235s... -- The question arises, “Is the healing of the haimoroöusa automatic?”.

One means of answering that question with a denial is the following: Jesus knew “mysteriously” (the author admits this) the silent pleading faith of the woman, who was behind him.

If this is correct, then it follows that Jesus asks the question of who touched him (in doing so, he pretended not to know), “pro forma” (= for the sake of appearances). Which has not been proven anywhere. On the contrary, the impression is clear that Jesus, as a human being, did not know precisely who had touched him.

This is also evident from the fact that he “senses” the event in his body,--not directly.

The author adds that Jesus was neither a “folk conjurer” nor a “magician (sorcerer).

Note - He certainly was not, according to the evangelists. However, this does not prevent his method - infrastructure (better) - from being precisely the same as that of the (scorned) folk healers or sorcerers, but purified and elevated on a higher - supernatural - plane (which in Antique Greek is called ‘catharsis’).

Once the necessary and sufficient conditions have been brought about by Jesus, the Messiah, -- once the person or persons to be gifted e.g. or their area (Jesus stills the storm e.g.) show the necessary and sufficient conditions, his 'dunamis' his divine life-force, comes through and salvation follows 'automatically': what can be said against this? What is ungodly about the fact that Jesus controls nature and the extrinsic nature (= paranormal phenomena) to such an extent that, once he did the necessary, the effect follows 'automatically'?

3.-- Practical fideism.

O.c., 258s ... -- The evangelists give a "wide" place to faith. Yes, faith is the necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the success of the salvation process. It is up to the person concerned, his family, neighbors, friends, etc., that, thanks to their faith in Jesus' miraculous power, they "provoke" his free act of salvation. It is man's share in his divine salvation.

Note.-- Anyone who knows even a little bit about the healing process of the healers notes the emphasis that they too -- except for a watered-down "magician(s)" here and there -- place on faith in what they are (going to be) doing or did.

More than that, what honest doctor, within the framework of established 'rational' medicine, will dare to deny that the 'share' of faith in his action is sometimes so great as to be the decisive factor? Think of the placebo effect. Not to mention the suggestive power of the fame of a new drug (after five years, a new drug works less as a matter of course) or that of a 'famous' doctor who draws crowds.

Conclusion: on the rational, on the paranormal and ... on the supernatural level, faith is one of the necessary conditions, in very many cases.-- Jesus is thus not an exception: he confirms the rule.

We speak of "fideism."

By this we mean, for example, the fact that both professional scholars and preachers, etc., emphasize faith but often do not say a single word about the 'dunamis', the active and activating life force. This is despite the fact that the texts themselves explicitly mention this very important factor.

'Fides' (Greek: 'pistis'), faith, is in 'fideism': overemphasis, to the exclusive, of the role of faith.

Note.-- Among some current Christians, one goes so far as to create an oppositional pair: "faith/religion," where "religion" then includes just about everything "pagan" and "magical-mystical. In which the term "power (belief)" - dynamism understood as power or life force belief - plays a role.

Note -- It is quite clear, if one puts oneself in the mindset of the days of Jesus, that the woman believes (the part 'fideism') and in his 'dunamis' (the part 'dynamism') and in his exceptional, perhaps divine or at least Messianic personality (the part Messianic faith, resp. faith in God). One should not, in the name of (exaggerated) 'faith', want to see only one factor, where there are at least three.

4.-- Synergy.

This term comes from the Greek 'sun.ergeia', literally, "the joining together of more than one force".

O.c., 22s. -- "There is 'synergy' of man and God" (O.c.,23). -- The more God acts, the more intensely a creature -- in this case, the incarnate Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus as man and therefore as creature -- can act and can even found something new.

Note.-- This is reminiscent of the Pauline expression "kainè ktisis" (Lat.: nova creatura). In particular: Jesus

a. starts from what is - e.g. a woman suffering from hemorrhage -;

b. he purges out and

c. at the same time elevates it to a higher (here: supernatural) plane. Whereby something peculiar happens: what has been given, as it were, weakens into nothingness ("dies") - the element of "purification" - and rises totally new out of God's almighty life force (dunamis) as something new ("a new creation") out of his "nothingness" or "death" - the element of "resurrection" or re-creation -.

This, in the image of Jesus who could only come to "glorification" through his death. In its Greco-Eastern form: the unity of his crucifixion and his resurrection.

More concretely, the woman-with-bleeding has "died" to her natural and extra-natural form of being and thanks to Jesus' dunamis (divine life force) - through the touch - has been "resurrected" i.e. her bleeding ends (becomes "nothing") and her blood system, one with that of Jesus, is recreated into "a new something.

Note: *The* opposition pair “death (nothing)/life (reality)” already belongs to the Pre-Biblical religions.

a. As an ‘anankè’, incomprehensible necessity weighs ‘death’ - that which is doomed as soon as it begins to live - in all its forms - diseases, accidents, dying,-- possessions etc. - on all that lives from nature (and its eventual extra-natural (= paranormal) impact).

This aspect of destiny is brilliantly outlined in A. Rivier, *Etudes de littérature grecque*, (Studies in Greek literature), Geneva, Droz, 1975 (including *Remarques sur le ‘nécessaire’ et la nécessité’ chez Eschyle* (Remarks on the 'necessary' and 'necessity' in Aeschylus), (o.c., 163/194)).

b. As a process “death/resurrection,” the same necessity is wonderfully elucidated by W. B. Kristensen, *Collected Contributions to Knowledge of Ancient Religions*, Amsterdam, 1947 (esp. o.c., 231/290 (*Circle and Totality*)).

In other words: Jesus connects with what was already clear to him, i.e. mankind subjected to the incomprehensible necessity of death-and-life-that-becomes-dead again. He intervenes, if the necessary and sufficient conditions are fulfilled (e.g. faith), from super-nature (which endlessly surpasses nature with its extra-natural powers).

As a result, magic and mysticism, which are merely the extra-natural trappings of nature subjected to necessity, decay into obsolete myths.

Even supernatural faith - true Biblical-Christian “faith,” in its distinctiveness from natural and extra-natural faith - is a new creation, i.e., a pure gift from God.

Conclusion: this is the correct interpretation of the “catharsis” (cleansing or even “liberation”) that Christianity introduces into the person and work of Jesus.

5.-- Trinitarian life.

O.c., 366.-- According to a metaphor of the Greek Fathers of the Church (33/800), the “dunamis,” the divine and God-given life force or “power,” is comparable to the primordial spring, from which the Father is “the mysterious springing forth,”-- the Son the “collecting bowl” and the Holy Spirit “the efflux that flows into creation. Life, the exclusive prerogative of the Trinity, thus transforms both the cosmos and humanity therein. Into “something new”.

The miracles of Jesus (and his disciples) are the “striking signs” of this.

Final sum.-- Realism.

Now where is the “realism: i.e., the belief in reality? Do we stay with Xav. Léon - Dufour’s book.

According to the evangelists, Jesus performed acts that, in the eyes of his contemporaries, were ‘extraordinary’ (‘extraordinaires’): healings, incantations, amazing effects.” (O.c.,11).

Seen through the eyes of a present-day historian (scientific historian) - o.c., 109/144 (*Le historien en quête de l’ événement*) – (The historian in search of the event), the question is, “What value do the evangelical writings have?” The answer reads: Jesus was “a miracle worker” in the eyes of the eyewitnesses. This is the overall value judgment.

Regarding individual “pericopes” (pieces of gospel text), the term “probably” still seems the most tenable. Indeed: it is possible that the storytellers confused some facts with each other, e.g., or represented them one-sidedly. Which then arrived in the gospel texts.

Conclusion: realism has a minimal basis.

The textuological methods.

The work distinguishes three groups.

a.1.-- The dogmatic method.

The method of the Church Fathers,--especially St.-Augustine of Tagaste (354/430),- -who already in, his time observes that the signs -- miracles -- in the Church have disappeared.

In summary, the creative power of God includes an ordinary “miracle power” -- thus the fact that the sun, insofar as created by God, rises and falls daily -- and an extraordinary miracle power,-- that of the gospel signs.

Note.-- Not the text but the facts are the focus.

a.2.-- The “critical” method.

Again: not the text but the facts interest the ‘critic’. The Enlightenment-Rationalist, in the form of natural sciences and humanities, observes that the ‘miraculous’ facts, e.g., go against the laws established by the natural sciences. Thus, among others, B. de Spinoza (Soloviev Cosmology. 03).-- To which X. Léon - Dufour: not from without, God intervenes in the natural laws, but from within.

b.-- The “literary” (understand: literatological) method.

Here the text as text is central. That is to say: the terms in which are spoken and written, -- the stories with their characteristics, in which miracles are written, interest the textualist. Thus he pays attention to the Old Testament platitudes already at work.

c.-- *The hermeneutic method.*

Again, the text is seemingly central. In fact, life is central: the reader(s) of the miracle stories reads from life. So e.g., “What can I do with these stories in my life situation, here and now?” Thus more concretely:

a. the literatologist says that a “dunamis” (life force), at work in “erga” (works, i.e., acts of Christ, including his miracles), in fact comprises “semeia,” signs (message-bearing entities), for the fact that the Father, through the Son, Jesus, with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, establishes “the kingdom of God.

b. The hermeneutic asks the question: “Does this message still apply today, to me, here and now?”. Or again: today there is a growing interest in New Age (the New Age), in which magics and mysticism of all kinds are once again being discussed,--also in “developed” circles.

If the comparison with the Roman-Hellenistic “miracles” (we think of Apollonios of Tuana (end of the first century A.D.; Greek Neo-pythagorean miracle-worker, in whom the late antique paganism saw the counterpart of Christ)) or with the Jewish “exorcists” tells us that also the Pagans and the Jews knew their miracles, why not also the New-Agers (at least the “gifted” ones)? As an eventual New-Ager, can I do anything with the gospel stories? E.d.m .

Decision.-- With regard to the realism concerning miracles of the gospels, the practical unbelief of the (purely science-minded) critic is fatal to realism. And dogmatic method is a support for it. And hermeneutics(in) makes realism a question of life.

Interpretationism.

“The event itself (namely, of the miracle) is indispensable. But it is only that without which there is no interpretation. The event itself cannot be grasped by itself (“ne peut être étreint en lui-même”), as if it had a meaning by itself.” (o.c., 356).

Granted that the proposers of the work do not pass on this statement unless with reservations! But meaning sounds implausible in itself if the facts themselves have no meaning, then the totality of meaning comes from the interpreter. How does this ‘interpretationist’ thesis differ from a pure subjectivism, in which the autonomous subject puts itself first as the source of all meaning?

Part III.-- Soloviev's philosophical "realism". (17/23).

The realistic interpretation which we have just outlined applies to Scripture with regard to the miracles of Christ, in the narrower and also in the broader sense (the 'broader' sense concerns, for example, the 'miraculous' transformation of Jesus on the mountain, where he showed his 'aura' (radiance),--aura, which made his new life force visible and tangible).

Now we turn our attention to what lies within and behind "Christian" realism, namely Platonic realism.

1. -- *The pure nominalist.*

For the pure nominalist, the terms of the miracle stories - 'dunamis', saving life force, at work in the 'erga', the (miraculous) works of Jesus, which, in turn, are valid or intended at least as 'sèmeia', signs, i.e. message- or information-containing references to the fact that the Father (the primordial source), via the Son (Jesus), with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, calls (back) the doomed cosmos to 'eternal' life, mere 'sounds' (in Middle Ages Latin: 'voces') or 'names' (hence the term 'nomina', giving 'nominalism').

What the (semantic and pragmatic) meaning might be remains to be rigorously investigated.

If, moreover, such a nominalist is also a scientifically-minded person (especially in the spirit of Enlightened Rationalism), then his judgment reads as follows: "The stories about so-called 'miracles' contain far too many unmodern elements which cannot be verified by today's professional sciences - take, for example, that unverifiable concept of 'dunamis' (life force) - for them to be taken seriously now, at the end of the XXth century.

Perhaps such 'names' or 'sounds' may one day be translatable into purely scientific terms -- e.g., the term 'possession', which may stand for "psychiatric malady" --. The only thing that is 'certain' is all that current ethnology, -- physics and chemistry, biology, psychology, sociology, culturology teaches us. The rest is 'air'.

2.-- *The symbolfideist nominalist.*

'Fideism' is one-sided emphasis on the act of faith as an act of meaning 'Symbol' (= is all that is metaphor or metonymy: e.g. 'life force' stands for the 'will to live' or something like that which is understandable to every modern human being.

Similarly, we translate all other terms not only of the miracle stories but of all evangelical texts into terms of our current Modern or even Postmodern “religious experiences.”

Note.-- Reminiscent of Modernism, late XIXth and early XXth centuries: the Modernists also read the sacred texts from the “religious or faith experience” of the time.

Appl. model. -- Do we take the term “faith

a. This word - *pistis, fides, faith* - had a well-defined meaning among the writers and contemporaries (the latter at least in large numbers), as evidenced by the above abridged study on the miracles of Jesus, namely, that of a supernaturally arising assent to God’s offer of salvation in Jesus.

b. The same sound ‘faith’ in our language reflects trust in “a higher power” e.g. or even in Yahweh (Judaism) or Trinity (Christianity) or still Allah (Islam), as we secularized people can still imitate it.

Or do we take the Jesus figure.

a. For the evangelists, he was apparently the “*kurios*” (Lat.: *dominus*, the lord),-- incarnate Second Person of the Trinity.

b. The term ‘*kurios*’, lord, is something from a distant past, when there were e.g. Antique princes. For us, Jesus is first and foremost an extremely influential and even remarkable ‘man’. Whether he was or is ‘god’ (and at the same time the Second Person of the Trinity) is not at all clear to us, even on reading the biblical texts. We therefore leave it open.

Conclusion. - Counts only our present “religious experience”. It provides the reality ground when reading the Bible. If you will: the Biblical terms are ‘models’ which provide us with information - indirectly, admittedly - about our ‘original’, our experience of faith. In other words: the gospels offer us the ‘signifiers’ (= models) in which we, very removed in time and space, see our own religion reflected.

Final.-- Admittedly, this too is ‘nominalism’. For us too, ‘believers’ of the present type, the Biblical words are ‘sounds’ (‘*nomina*’), which have no meaning of their own except from our present form of religion. We ourselves autonomously put the meaning in them.

That’s ‘hermeneutics’, -- nominalistically interpreted. But we differ from the ‘pure’ nominalists in that we do not take subject-scientific experience as ‘original’, but a kind of ‘faith’.

3.-- *The Realist.*

Here the books of the New Testament - as, for that matter, those of the Old Testament - are works “die zeigen wie es eigentlich gewesen ist” (that show how it actually was), (Leopold von Ranke (1795/1886; German historian)).

For the realist, “the gospels show how it actually was.” This involves two things:

a. the facts cited - so e.g. the miracles - are, in principle, really happened facts and not invented “stories” (“myths”);

b. the eyewitnesses (the evangelists included) interpret the really happened facts, fundamentally, correctly.

This does not mean that no historicity problems can arise. -- For example, it is freely admitted that some details -- take in the individual stories of a miracle -- are open to critical comment. But the essence is considered to be both really happened and correctly interpreted.

More to the point, the really happened and correctly deduced essence is, fundamentally, correctly represented in the texts.

Final sum.-- This threefold ‘realism’ is summed up in van Ranke’s famous formula: “zeigen wie es gewesen ist” (that show how it actually was).

In other words: the “names” cover **1.** really happened facts, **2.** correctly pointed out by the contemporaries, **3.** correctly represented by the evangelists.

Especially when one treats evangelical texts with precisely the same standards as profane texts from the same period. What does happen more often than not out of some nominalist bias is that one applies much stricter standards when it comes to sacred texts.

With the inevitable result: those texts are threefold below their level:

1. the facts are not real (or not proven or provable);
2. they have not been correctly interpreted (e.g., they are in fact “myths”);
3. they are not correctly represented.

The testing problem.

The realist admits that he too is not the immediate eyewitness to the facts. But there is the following.--

a. No doubt there are also present day miracles (healings, incantations e.g.).

b. They show a clear analogy to the gospel miracles (even though there is sometimes great difference).

The reasoning is: if today such phenomena can still be ascertained, indeed seriously verified, then the evangelical phenomena of an analogous nature become indirectly accessible.

Claiming that there is “not at all” any real value judgment about sheet does not hold up.

What the evangelists tell - in their contemporary way, which is certainly not the style of the current or even ancient historians (we think of Thukudides of Athens (-465/-395: author of The Peloponnesian War, a work that is exceptionally precise) - is a theophany, i.e. the fact that God - the Triune God of course - reveals himself in and around the person of Jesus. Not least in his miracles.

4.-- *The Eastern Russian Realist.*

Let a fine connoisseur speak: “Theophany or epiphany means the gracious revelation of God as the primal source (‘Urquelle’) of deification and as the beginning of a new creation in the ‘doxa’ (Lat.: gloria, glory) of the Lord.

The epiphanic aspect is at work in the entire history of salvation, but comes to its most thorough realization in the incarnation and in the redemption of the kurios (Lord, Jesus as a glorified man of God) and this up to the parousia (*note*: divine epiphany, especially at the end of time) which is the consummation of theophany. (J. Tyciak, *Heilige Theophanie (Kultgedanken des Morgenlandes)*, (Holy Theophany (cult thoughts of the Orient)), Trier, Paulinus, 1959, 7).

Note -- For those familiar with the Eastern Russian religion and particularly Christianity, any further explanation is unnecessary. Alas! In Western Europe one is far from understanding these terms correctly. This, under the influence of two cultural revolutions that are only very active in the West:

- a. the Middle Ages Scholasticism, which, though still alive to Platonic-ideative residues, nevertheless thinks substantially Aristotelian (and reestablishes its “rationalism”);
- b. the Modern Enlightenment with its Rationalism.

Both these cultural revolutions did have repercussions in Russia and the Byzantine-Eastern world, but never substantially penetrated the soul. This remained fundamentally Antique. And Platonizing.

The liturgical ideation.-- “When we want to know what the Eastern Church is, we ask of her liturgy.

In all its poignant allusions and images, words and actions, the Eastern Church sees a glorious theophany: God shows himself to man, enters him, sanctifies him, transforms him, makes him godlike.

What happens here on earth is a true image of the heavenly primal image (‘Urbild’; understand: paragon).

The liturgy on earth is an “icon” (“eine Ikon”; the Platonizing term for “image”) of the heavenly liturgy:

- a. glorification (*note*: here in the sense of ‘praise’) of the Most Holy, undivided (*note*: though three ‘persons’, yet one nature) Trinity by man;
- b. who has become an “image” (“Bild”) of the same Trinity.

When we enter an Eastern church, for example, the feeling arises: “Here we go to meet God; we meet God. (...)”. (J. Casper, *Weltverklärung im liturgischen Geiste der Ostkirche*, (World explanation in the liturgical spirit of the Eastern Church), Freiburg i. Br., Herder, 1939, 1).

Note -- Josef Casper is an outstanding expert on Eastern Byzantine culture.

Casper, o.c., 5, continues, “The Eastern Church is the repository of Christian realism (‘realismus’). She lives out of the mysteries (*note* here: signs which make God’s action present). (...) She is aware that since the day the Logos (*note* the Johannine word for Jesus as wisdom of the universe) took on ‘flesh’ (*note* poor humanity), he has noble human nature, the world is ‘glorified’. (*note*: here in the sense of “partaking of God’s glory, i.e. life force as power”) deified. (...).

The liturgy, now, is the invariably continuing “incarnation” (incarnation) -- *note* here in the metaphorical sense -- of the Son of God.-- This is the primal Christian realism (“der urchristliche Realismus”) of the Eastern Church: transformation of the world, deification of man.

Western rationalism, in the form of a “God-world” theology, is alien to her. This is where the most profound distinction is made between the more ethical and legalistic (*note*: “legalistic”, i.e., those who like to use the canonical code) thinking West and the Christian East. The aim of the Eastern Church,--its prayer and its celebration is the encounter with God (‘Gottbegegnung’).

Note-- The contrast here has certainly been somewhat enlarged by Casper in the face of reality. But it is also certain that - as far as the different ‘soul’ and ‘tendency’ are concerned - the church in the West is much more secular than the church in the East. With its consequences, of course, for the whole culture.

The worship of the gospel book.

One of the best means for a Westerner to grasp the difference with the Russians, regarding liturgy, for example, is the experience of the gospel book.

Here we see what one might call “a materializing symbolism”: invisible data such as the glorified Christ are as it were sacrally identified and made visible and tangible in material realities. A kind of metonymic thinking is at work here: thus the Gospel text is, as it were, the One whose word is written in it.

We leave Casper to speak, o.c., 163f..

At some point in the “divine liturgy” (i.e. what we call Mass celebration), the king’s door of the ikonostasis (the wall inside the church with icons) opens. For he who has promised the faithful heavenly glory, Christ as “kurios”, risen Lord, wants to make his entrance. (...).

Priest and deacon take “the holy book of the gospel” and carry it in deep reverence as if they were carrying the kurios, Christ himself, on their hands. (...) Christ, the Lord, immediately “appeared” mysteriously in the midst of his people (...). The priest, at a certain moment, kisses “the holy book of the gospels”: this kiss applies to Him, the Lord. (...) The deacon lifts up the gospel book and cries, “wisdom! stand up straight”. (...).

In this call, the Eastern Church thinks of Christ, the uncreated Sophia, wisdom.

a. in smallness that holy Wisdom, the primordial Logos of the Father, came into this world.

b. in glory she ascended, heavenly heights into,--to the throne of grace and power.-
- Thus the deacon (...) enters with the gospel book (...)”.

Note.-- Two features emerge:

1. a highly developed sense of and appetite for the sacred,

2. a need to “materialize” that “sacred” in tangible things like the gospel book.

This materialization of the sacred is typical of Russian-Eastern realism: that “realism” is “theoria,” “seeing” right through the material world, and at the same time making visible and tangible in material forms the invisible that shows itself thanks to that theoria.

Thus, the sacred is “real” twice:

1. first of all in itself, thanks to ‘theoria’, transparency (which is Platonic), and

2. afterward (or rather, at the same time) galvanized into tangible and visible things, thanks to a kind of identification of the invisible and the visible.

Note.-- Just as Platonic philosophy is not conceivable without “sophiology” (wisdom doctrine), so too is this liturgy.

The dramaturgical aspect.

The theophany or self-revelation of the Trinity in the salvific drama of Jesus is made visibly present, under the “forms” proper to the liturgy.

Not only e.g. the book of the Gospels contains such a presentation. Think of the processional “joyous entry” (= epiphany) of Jesus.-- *J. Tyciak, Holy Theophany*, 42, explains this aspect.

1. Altar servers in front,-- priest and deacon, holding the “holy gifts” in their hands: this is how the “procession” proceeds through the church.

2. Now see how the Eastern Christian views this. “The procession comes across as a great dramatic scene from the Apocalypse (*op.*: the book of revelation)”.

We saw that Platon’s dialogues are all dramas in which the passage of ideas in the course of a logical dialogue is literally “played out.

Something analogous is the Eastern Christian liturgy. “Not merely in the sense of a pure ‘play’ and ‘image’ (of the apocalyptic event), as if somewhere above, in the inaccessible world, the heavenly liturgy (...) were taking place, while we, down here, are completing a counterfeit!

Rather, the religious realism of the mystery world lives here,” says Tyciak. The mystery of worship (the ‘cultic mystery’) is not just a symbol (in the nominalist sense): it is the salvific act of Jesus himself made visible and tangible (‘material’) today. Just as the Oriental icon, for example, which depicts the transformation of Jesus in the form of a ‘mysterion’, material representation of a sacred event, makes what is represented - here the fact that Jesus shows his true radiance or ‘aura’ to his three doubting disciples before his passion - visibly and tangibly present. Just as the proclaimed word is a ‘mystery’: it is Jesus’ proclamation made visible and tangibly present in the person and language of the proclaimer.

Final sum.-- “Just as the seer - the apostle John - of the Apocalypse sees realities (and not merely allusions), so too the drama of worship is allusive (through its material portrayal) and ‘real’ (as the present day assertion of what is being invented) at the same time.” Thus, again, Tyciak.

Mystery.-- Odo Casel et al. have understood this aspect well here in the West: ‘mystery’ is making present through material things.

Part IV. -- Soloviev's earthboundness. (24/32).

'Chthonic' (after the Ancient Greek 'chthon', earth) or 'telluric' (after the Latin 'tellus', earth) religion. It is called.

'Cosmic' religion too. In other words, the cosmos is intensively involved in the sacred sphere (i.e., the sphere of all that is "consecrated" or "holy"). It is thereby that the sacred, respectively the divine is visibly and tangibly present or made present. In other words: again and again that realism.

To begin with, the sidereal world (the world as far as consisting of heavenly bodies). -- "Even nature, with the Russian writers, is taken up sensuously and as glorified (*op.*: partaking of Christ's resurrection glory).

The wisdom of the steppe, the impressive sky that sweeps over the earth, the silence of the breathing night, the diamond sparkle of the great lights in the firmament". ' (*J. Tyciak, Morgenländische Mystik, 41*).

Note:-- Religious science establishes this sidereal side of religion everywhere: M. Eliade, *Traité d'histoire des religions*, (Treatise on the history of religions,), Paris, 1953, 47/116 (*Le ciel: dieux ouraniens, rites et symboles célestes*) ; (The sky: Uranian gods, rites and celestial symbols) , 117/141 (*Le soleil et les cultes solaires*)' (The sun and solar cults), 142/167 (*La lune et la mystique lunaire*), (The moon and lunar mysticism), -- all these chapters by this eminent religious scientist testify to it.

The Earthmother.

Bibl. st.: C.J. Bleeker, *The Mother Goddess in Antiquity*, The Hague, 1960 (esp. o.c., 21/35 (Mother Earth);

G. De Schrijver, *Pachamama (Mother Earth and the struggle for democratic rights in Peru)*, in: *Streven* 54 (1986): 3 (Dec.), 223/236 (on the worship of Mother Earth in Peru and its repercussions on politics);

M. Stone, *Once god was embodied as a woman*, Katwijk, Servire, 1979.

T. Spidlik, *Les grands mystiques russes*, (The great Russian mystics), 339, says: "In the zagovory, rhythmic magical formulas, Christ is sometimes invoked at the same time as 'the moist earth'."

Note:-- Wherever biblical Christianity has implanted itself among the common man -- colonially or freely -- the pagan infrastructure has always continued to live on in one way or another.

Spidlik, o.c., 369/381 (*La terre et le peuple*), (The land and the people).gives us sketchy insight into this in terms of the country Soloviev lived in.

Spidlik begins by underlining how Pagan this earthly aspect is: “How often do the Fathers of the Church (33/800) emphasize the dignity of man by saying that man, in the image of God, is ‘the prince of the universe’ “.

Indeed: the Biblical theophany is essentially directed against the “unintelligible necessity” (Sol. Cosm. 14) so typical of the non-Biblical world and the characteristic “submissiveness” of all those who know nothing else.

Yet we listen to Spidlik where he characterizes Earth Mother worship. A kind of “earth-bound mysticism” among a great many Russians makes them venerate “the moist earth”: it is often invoked as a living person thanks to whom the people who inhabit it carry the characteristic of ‘divinity’ (*note:* in the Pagan sense of that word).” (O.c., 3 70).

Thus the ordinary Russian traditional peasant feels - not the prince of the universe but - “the lowly son of the earth.”

For him, the earth is a loving mother who loves her children.

a. She is, first of all, an inexhaustible source of strength and health: she brings forth the plants that cure human ailments and she herself, in time, cures all miscarriages.

b. In times of adversity she weeps with them over their fate; she suffers with those who suffer.

The pure womb of the earth.

A well-defined sense of “purity” to be cultivated - in conscience and also in hygiene - runs in tandem with earthboundness.

a. After death, the pure man finds eternal rest in the womb of the earth.

b. The unclean man, however, is refused by that purity-demanding womb of the earth: so the magician(s) who surrenders to Satan; so those who were outlawed by their parents; so finally the exiled from the church.

Note:-- This proves that this pagan rest does contain a morality and was also somewhat Christianized. Typical “folk religion”. The moist earth is “pure”, because “holy” and therefore “inviolable”!

Sin against the earth.

Those who live against God’s law - the Decalogue (Ten Commandments, for example) - “defile the earth.” Thus, among other things, by debauched curse words.

An old preacher’s book says that such lewd words first offend St. Mary, the Mother of God, then one’s own mother to whom one owes life, and finally “Mother Earth.”

This Earth Mother comes through in the conscience; even the most secret breaches of morality provoke the agony of remorse, because the Earth perceives all errors.

The confession of sins.

What has just been said explains that people “confess” their faults to the Earth Mother. Happening before church confession, people ask forgiveness = to the sun, the moon, the stars (**note:** sidereal nature), = to the dawn and the dark nights, = to rain and wind, = to the Earth Mother:

“I beg you, moist earth, who are my nourisher,-- I ask you, -- I, poor, not well-wise sinner/sinner, to forgive me for treading on you with my feet, beating you with my hands, looking at you with my eyes,-- for spitting on you.-- Forgive me, beloved mother, in the name of Christ the Redeemer and of His holy Mother, the Holy Mother of God, as well as of Saint Elias, the very wise prophet.”

Note:-- Again:

- a. the underlayer is cosmic Paganism;
- b. the upper echelon of such religion is Christocentric Bible belief.

Assessment:-- Spidlik notes that with *Dostoevsky* and *Ivanov*, among others, this cosmic religion comes through strongly.-- In the novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, for example, Dostoevsky describes how the young Aliosha kisses the earth “insulted by countless sins,” while promising to love it “to all eternity.”

Now, Dostoevsky, intimate friend of Soloviev, was a developed Christian. As Spidlik himself adds: a deeply Christian idea comes through in this Earth Mother religion.

In particular: sin is never a merely individual phenomenon, since, for the reason of the intimate cosmic coherence of all things (recall what we said about Soloviev’s mysticism, Sol. Kosm. 06v.), the whole creation is disadvantaged by it.

For us Westerners, with our sometimes very individualistic conscience, such a thing may come unexpectedly to oven. Nevertheless, it seems to us that Spidlik is right: for reasons of mysterious - some say “occult” - connections, even the very most individual sin damages the whole in which it inevitably situates itself.

Now again, this does not imply that the Archaic-Primitive praxis called “tellurism” is ... the right way for us “developed” people.

Plant Nature.

'Fusis', nature, also includes, apart from the Earth Mother, her plant wealth, as already mentioned a moment ago.

God's boundless life force or "dunamis" in Greek shows itself visibly and tangibly in the plants. Also: as *J. Casper, Weltverklärung*, (World Enlightenment), 102f., says, the Eastern Church, like the Roman liturgy, celebrates Pentecost as the completion of the Paschal drama. For the Father, the Ultimate Source, in cooperation with the 'kurios', the Glorified Jesus, sends the Holy Spirit with his gifts.

When this fact of salvation is commemorated - or rather liturgically presented - in the Eastern Church the homes are decorated with fresh greenery (the symbol of eternal life) and with flowers and herbs (the symbol of the never-fading garland of God-given grace).

Note: Pentecost is not without connection to a Jewish celebration: once in a curious theophany Yahweh - in fire, lightning and thunder (**note:** cosmic phenomena) - gave the law. It was precisely the time when the surroundings of Mount Sinai were full of green plants. The Jews, in remembrance of this, decorated the dwellings with green leaves, flowers and herbs (think of the Feast of Tabernacles).

Casper : the faithful carry the first gifts of early summer, during the Pentecost liturgy, in their hands to offer them "as first fruits" to God (by which is meant that the life force in the leaves, flowers, and herbs presents God's own life force, -- which is recognized in the offering of them).

Note: -- *A monk of the Eastern Church, The Jesus Prayer*, Nijmegen / Bruges, 1976, 24v., explains this brilliantly.

As may be known, a tradition in the East prays by pronouncing the name Jesus (= the Jesus Prayer). Among other things, it is pronounced over the things of nature -- stone, -- sea and land, -- tree, flower, fruit.

In doing so, the author says what follows.

A. We regard nature and the universe as the work of the Creator: "Yahweh created heaven and earth" (*Psalms 134:3*). More so, nature can be seen as "the visible sign of the invisible divine beauty: 'The heavens proclaim God's glory' (*Psalms 19:1*); 'Behold the lilies in the field' (*Matt. 6:28*).

B. This nature designation is only a beginning. The creative presence of God is in perpetual motion. With the result that the whole cosmos is also in motion,-- ceaselessly.

More than that, one of the great, indeed the greatest, changes is the incarnation of Christ: “The whole creation sighs and groans in travail” (*Rom. 8:22*), until it “shall be delivered from the bondage of mortality to partake of the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (*Rom. 8:21*).

In other words: all the inanimate world is co-incorporated in a movement toward Christ. Or rather: all things converge in the incarnation of Christ. In particular, the elements of nature and the products of the earth - stone and wood, water and oil, grain and wine - change their significance. They become symbols and bearers of grace.

Note:-- The Eastern monk goes even further: in a mysterious way -- he says -- all of creation utters the holy name “Jesus. In doing so, he refers to a phrase of Jesus, taken out of context and intended to be purely figurative: “I tell you, if they are silent, the stones will cry out.” Literally, the monk says, “It is the explication of this ‘name’ that the Christian must listen to in nature.” --

Note: We quote this short paragraph to demonstrate once again to what nature experience an Eastern Christian mysticism can arrive. After all, it is such a mysticism that also animated the very mystically inclined Soloviev.

Now we listen to the monk’s real philosophy of nature. By pronouncing the name “Jesus” on natural things - a stone or tree, a fruit or flower, the sea or a landscape or whatever - , the one who believes - notice how faith is central - , brings to light the secret of these things.

Note: What is more clearly stated in other texts is presupposed here:

a. there is first the natural (and possibly extra-natural) infrastructure of natural things: they are stone, tree, whatever;

b. Since the day that Jesus became man in the womb of Mary, the Mother of God, there has been a supernatural presence in the things of nature themselves: the divine Logos, wisdom of the universe, which Jesus is as the Second Person of the Trinity, is present and active in a way that surpasses our natural and extra-natural capacities,--in view of the Last Day of history, which will make clear what the process of deification that is underway, also in the material cosmos, really means and works.

Note: The question arises, “Does the monk in question correctly interpret the Pauline text - *Rom. 8:19/24?*”

Do we again rely on *La Bible de Jérusalem*, -1636, n. d.

The material world - it is said there - is destined for man. He therefore shares in the destiny of that human being.

a. *Genesis 3:17* tells us that the sin of mankind includes a curse. In that curse, i.e., subjection to the incomprehensible necessity that is the Fall, all of nature shares. This amounts to a “vanity” (i.e. a sham reality) - forcibly imposed on nature - that is both ethical and purely physical.

b. *Rom 8:21, 23*, tells us that even the material body of man is destined to a glorified, understand: deified, state, since the glorification of Jesus’ body.

Immediately the whole of material reality, man’s biotope, is up for deification: it will share (and this is already mysteriously, invisibly great, really) in the “freedom proper to the glorified (deified) state.”

Conclusion: The monk does interpret correctly.

If, with us, such statements cause wonder, the explanation is obvious: we, Westerners, are living through a two-fold cultural revolution that alienated us from the Biblical world: the rational Middle Ages Scholasticism and even more and more thoroughly the rationalism of enlightened minds.

What the traditional Russians and Easterners invariably reproach us for is that we “think in compartments”: here nature (with the outside nature on occasion), there the super-nature. They sometimes call this “the analytical mentality of the West.”

Bibl. note: That with plant nature and its sacred (Pagan or Christian) significance is indeed universal, shows us again *M.Eliade, Traité d’hist. d. religions*, 168/231 (*Les eaux et le symbolisme aquatique*), (Waters and aquatic symbolism), -- 232/284 (*La végétation (Symboles et rites de renouvellement)*), (Vegetation (Symbols and rites of renewal), -- 285/314 (*L’agriculteur et les cultes de fertilité*), (The farmer and the fertility cults).

Concerning the Biblical phytotherapy (healing through herbs):

M. de Waal, Medicinal herbs in the Bible, Amsterdam, Bark, s.d.;

Daan Smit, Plants from the Bible (Their Origin and Use Throughout the Centuries) (A Guide to Cultivation), Amsterdam, 1990 (with beautiful photographs).

Animal Nature.

Nature includes inorganic (lifeless), vegetable reality. It also includes animal life.-- This layer in the biological world is also involved in the universal deification process, since, in the virgin womb of Mary, God the Son became man.-- We listen again to our Eastern monk.

The Jesus Prayer, 25v..

“The world of living beings, too, must be transformed by us.” -- Behold the motto.-
- Now for the explanation.

a. We resemble Adam (and Eve): he once, in Paradise, gave the name to all animals.

Note: -- For us Westerners, that ‘name’ is usually a nominalistic case. For the monk, it is sacred-realist: the ‘name’ is the very essence of things insofar as it can be indicated in some human sound. All pre-modern cultures assume that such a denominated name ‘evokes’ to such an extent that the utterance - indeed, the mere inner mumbling - of it makes the thing indicated by it present itself.

“Then Yahweh - God formed out of clay all the animals on the land and all the birds in the sky and brought them to “man” to see what he would call them” (*Genesis 2:19*).

b. When we, Christians, pronounce the name “Jesus” over the animals, we give them back their “original dignity”--we forget them so easily, that original dignity. For they are living beings, created and kept alive by God in Jesus and for Jesus.-- Thus, literally, the somewhat confusing language of the monk who is not a born pro.

Note: -- The bottom line is this:

a. the creation also gave the animals, with the inanimate things and with the living plants, a divine life force, which is both natural and possibly extra-natural;

b. since the incarnation in the womb of Mary, the Mother of God, the essence of things, plants, animals, has been directly involved in the deification process started by Jesus. An ‘energy’ which is purely above nature and beyond nature -- the same, *mutatis mutandis*, as that which Jesus showed during the brief transformation on the mountain -
- works, if we need it, also in lifeless things, also in plants, also in animals.

This explains the, to us Westerners, surprising penchant of sacred thinking cultures to always see God, Trinity or Jesus in everything.

By way of explanation, the monk says, “When Jesus spent forty days in the desert, He “dwelt among the animals” (*Mark 1 :13*). We do not know what happened then, but we can be sure that there all living creatures came under His influence.

He Himself says of the sparrows that “none of them is forgotten by God” (*Luk. 12:6*).

Note: -- Savage regions, where e.g. only animals dwell, were considered in the cultures of the time, at least in religious and/or occult circles, to be particularly “demonic,” yes, Satanic.

By the way: this is precisely where Satan comes to charm Jesus. Also: some Bible texts, especially apocalyptic (i.e. concerning the disasters of the end times), mention a “kingdom of the beasts” - in contrast to “the kingdom of the son of man”.

Understand: one who is of human descent and thus exhibits a “nature” that is that of a human being -- : it could well be that the sojourn of Jesus, who explicitly refers to himself as the “son of man” of the prophet Daniel, is directly related to this.

If this ‘apocalyptic’ interpretation of Jesus’ contact with the animal world of the savage region where he resided is correct, then this further strengthens the interpretation of our Eastern monk: Jesus’ influence of the desert animals would then be a ‘conjuring’ and liberating influence to a much stronger degree.

Indeed: the whole Bible says that the foundation of the kingdom of God - the deification - begins with the reckoning with the satanic powers.

Human nature.

The Jesus Prayer, 26/28.-- The Eastern monk explains as follows.

1.-- The appearances of the glorified Jesus.

The risen Jesus appeared several times to his disciples in “a form”: a form even that aroused their amazement. Thus *Mark. 16:22*: “Then He appeared to them in another form”. The form of a traveler on the way to Emmaus, that of a gardener at the tomb, that of a stranger on the shore of the lake.

2.-- The interpretation.

“In each case it was the form of an ordinary person as we also meet them daily. With this, Jesus emphasized an important aspect of His presence, namely in all people. In this way He proved what He had learned: “I was hungry, and you gave Me food. I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink ..., -- without clothing, and you clothed Me,-- sick, and you visited Me,-- imprisoned, and you visited Me.-- What you did to the least of my brothers, you did to Me” (*Matt. 25: 35/36, 40*).

Update

This Eastern realist interpretation of Jesus' presence contrasts sharply with our nominalist understanding of it: we "think of" Jesus in terms of a fellow human being, whose "face" we meet; the monk knows himself - materially - directly - confronted with something of Jesus in every fellow human being (the effect of the incarnation in Mary's womb).

Says the text, "Jesus appears to us in our days in the facial features of men and women. Indeed: this human form is now the only one in which everyone can recognize at will - at any time and in any place - the face of our Lord."

The "mystical" body of Jesus.

What else: "Men and women, -- they are the flesh and bones, the hands and feet, the pierced side of Christ, -- his mystical body. In them we can experience the reality of the resurrection, the real presence -- without however identifying it with his essence -- of our Lord Jesus."

Note: -- The term "mystical body" of Christ is a theological term: every human being, at least insofar as he/she does not utterly cut himself/herself off from Jesus' revelation, is somewhere, mysteriously, "Christ once more."

Note: -- To this the monk again joins his Jesus Prayer: "The name 'Jesus' is a concrete and powerful means of 'seeing' people - think of the Platonic theoria, a 'seeing' that looks right through modes of appearance - in their hidden and most inner reality. (...).

We must pronounce over them/all the name 'Jesus', because that is their/their real name. (...). In many of these men and women - in the wicked and criminal - Jesus is enthralled. Free Him by recognizing and honoring Him in them/their. All will appear to us as transformed and transfigured (*op.*: as Jesus "changed shape"). (...). -- Thus literally the text.

Conclusion.-- With this we have tried, by detours, to draw out Soloviev's earthboundness. We could have done it directly, -- with his texts.

But that still left the question, "From where, after his crisis of faith, did Soloviev. take that view?" The answer is now abundantly clear.

Part V.-- Thinkers for Soloviev. (33/40).

Bibl. st.: Nikolai Berdjajew, *Russian Thought in the XIXth and XXth Centuries*, Amsterdam, Bezige Bij, 1947 (esp. Chapter II (O.c.,32/ 63: *The problem of 'historiosophy' (philosophy of history)*)).

From this book we remember the following: "Russian independent thought comes to an awakening at the problem of historiosophy.

This involves deep reflection on the question of what the Creator had in mind for Russia,--what "Russia" means and what its fate is.

The Russian people had always had the feeling -- yes, more the feeling than the realization own that Russia had a special destiny,--that the Russian people were a special people.

Messianism (**note:** the conviction of being "Messiah," salvationist) is therefore almost as characteristic of the Russian people as it is of the Jewish people. Can Russia go its own special way without repeating all the stages of European history?

The whole XIXth and XXth centuries will be occupied, with us, with the question, "What are Russia's roads? Do they mean a simple repetition of the paths taken by Western Europe?" (O.c., 32).

Note: It does well to keep this problem statement firmly in mind, if only because a very analogous question about what remains of the Soviet Union hangs in the balance right now.

Bibl. s.: Helen Iswolsky, *Soul of Russia*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1944.

This book is interesting as a whole, but, for our purposes, it is especially so from *Chapter VII (From Peter to Pushkin)*, o.c., 58/68. After all, from Peter the Great (1672/1725) a brutal westernization begins. Western Europe had gone through first the Middle Ages and then the Renaissance before catching the full Modernity, with its Enlightened Rationalism.

Russia did not have that transitional period. Protestant rationalism and the ideas of the French Encyclopedists - according to Iswolsky, suddenly broke through in a Russian intelligentsia that was not prepared for this (o.c., 58).

Bibl. s.: Nic. von Bubnoff, Hrsg./Uebers., *Russian Religionsphilosophen (Dokumente)*, (Russian philosophers of religion (documents), Heidelberg, L. Schneider, 1956.

The book says that Russian thinkers excel in humanities, ethics, philosophy of religion (metaphysics included), -philosophy of history,-- not in logic and epistemology (o.c., 10).

Bibl. st.: *J. Tyciak, Die Liturgie als Quelle ostlicher Frömmigkeit*, (The liturgy as a source of Eastern piety), Freib.i.Br., 1937, 108/125 (Liturgischer Geist und russische Religionsphilosophie).

With a childlike unconcern they speak the language of their time: they speak like Schelling,-- Fichte, Hegel (**note.:** Schelling, the German Romantic,-- Fichte and Hegel, the Absolute or German Idealists),-- yes, even as of Baader (1765/1841; pupil of Michael Sailer, who introduced him to the theosopher Louis Claude de Saint Martin (which includes occultism)) and Boehme (1575/1624; German mystic who helped clear the way and for the later Romantics and for the German Idealists (as well as for the later Russian Slavophiles (Sol. Kosm. 04)).

Yet their speaking is merely bringing up Christ and Church. They are not subject to the danger of “Gnosticism” (**Note:** the natural and possibly extra-natural knowing effort of the “Gnostic” leads to true God-knowledge). More than that, they overcome the aberrations of non-Christian Western philosophy through their Christian realism, which points again and again to something beyond merely natural (or extra-natural) philosophizing, -- which draws its final ground from mysticism.” (O.c., 109).

We quote this text, as literally as possible, to show how richly and variously influenced the Russian thinkers were. How decidedly they nevertheless carried through their Christian realist presuppositions,--without loss of faith. Even though the wording was more than once, as is understandable in such difficult situations, open to much and severe criticism.

Bibl. st.: *T. Spidlik, Les grands mystiques russes*, Paris, 1979, 351/368 (*Le Christ chez les penseurs russes*).-- For the (mainly Greco-Eastern) Church Fathers ‘philo.sophia’, being at home with (divine and human) wisdom, was first and foremost a natural (and sometimes, as with many Late Antique thinkers, extra-natural) matter. But the capstone was and remained, just as naturally, the divine-trinitarian ‘wisdom’ of Old and New Testament times: Christ is, after all, the eternal wisdom incarnate - *hagia sophia*

Philosophical life - says Spidlik - was synonymous with mortified life and the term ‘philosopher’ was synonymous with ‘monk’. - After all that goes before, we understand this very well . -- but Western influence is going to change that very thing.

The concept of “Russian intelligentsia”.

Berdiaev, *The Russian Mind*, 18vv.. -- “Only in the XIX century did Russians really learn to ‘think’” (O.c., 18).-- By this Berdiaev means “modern thinking”. He maintains that what we, in the West, call “intellectual and artistic élite” is still something else than “Russian intelligentsia.” -- He exaggerates in that. But he is right when he claims that the Russian vanguard has its own characteristics.

First kentrek.

“We must recall that the awakening of Russian consciousness - *Note::* The emergence of a Modern thought, the vanguard - meant a revolt against Imperial Russia. And this is true not only concerning the Zapadniki (Westernists, Oksidentalists) but even concerning the Slavianophiles (= Slavophiles).” (O.c., 25).

Second kentrek.

The Russians were dragged along by Schelling, Hegel, Saint-Simon (1760/1825; thinker concerning the industrial and political revolution), Fourier (1772/1837; forerunner of Socialism), Feuerbach (1804/1872; theological transformation of Christianity), Marx,--as no one in the countries of these thinkers was dragged along themselves.

The Russians are not doubters: they are ‘dogmatists’; with them everything takes on a ‘religious’ character. For example, with regard to Darwinism: in the West this was a biological hypothesis; with the Russian intelligentsia it acquired a ‘dogmatic’ character as if it were a matter of salvation for eternal life.

For example, Materialism: it became an object of “religious” belief and its opponents were, at a certain period, treated as enemies of popular liberation.

To sum up, in Russia everything was estimated according to two basic concepts: either rectitude or heresy.-So much for Berdiaev’s description. Cfr o.c., 25v..

Third kentrek.

The main motive of the XIX- d’ century Russian intelligentsia was twofold:

a. a stormy desire for progress,--for revolution, the latest results of world civilization, socialism;

b. a deep and obvious realization of the emptiness, the wantonness, the soullessness, the petty bourgeoisie of all those results of world progress, of revolution, of civilization, etc ...

So much for three traits that Berdiaev, himself an authentic Russian, believes he has discovered.

We dwelled on the notion of the “Russian intelligentsia” because it allows one to understand much better the crisis of Soloviev (and countless others), as well as the way out of it.

What influences did Soloviev undergo?

Bibl. s.: *Maxime Herman, V. Soloviev (Crise de la philosophie occidentale)*, (V. Soloviev (Crisis of Western philosophy)), Paris, Aubier, 1947, 5/157 (*Vie et oeuvres de Soloviev*), (Life and works of Soloviev).

When one reads that introduction to the translation of Soloviev’s work *Crisis of Western Philosophy (Against the Positivists)*, published in 1874, a complete list of influences is impracticable. One can, however, give groups of influences:

1. The Orthodox religion (especially its liturgy, which is unusually rich like all Greco-Eastern liturgies);

2.1. Scripture and the Church Fathers (primarily the Eastern Church Fathers);

2.2. Platonism (including the Neo-Platonism of Late Antiquity (250/600)),--at once the influences that Late Platonism incorporated: Pagan, Jewish (Philon) and Gnostic-Manichean currents,--including the Jewish occultist Kabbalah (the Old Testament occultly interpreted,--especially since -200);

2.3. Western philosophies of all kinds, especially German (because so many young people from Russia went to study in Germany),--especially the Romantic Schelling and Hegel;

2.4. The sophiology (cfr. Sol. Kosm. 06)

2.5. Russia’s own currents of thought, especially the Slavophiles (Cfr. A.Gratieux, *A.S. Khomiakov et le Mouvement Slavophile*, (A.S. Khomiakov and the Slavophile Movement), II (*Les doctrines*), Paris, Cerf, 1939, 252/255 (*Khomiakov et Soloviev*)). -

Note: An influence apart are the Western Romantics in general. To understand something of that, *L.J. Kent, The Subconscious in Gogol’ and Dostojewski and its Antecedents*, The Hague / Paris, Mouton, 1969, is particularly revealing: depth psychology and occultism intertwine in that sphere. Soloviev knew that too, if only through his intimate friend Dostoevsky.

Conclusion.-- All this shows ready the encyclopedic - comprehensive of Soloviev ‘s face end. We can only give samples here.

Note: -- Those who wish to learn about the element of ‘popular culture’ concerning magic, we refer to a recent work: Andreï Siniavski, *Ivan le Simple (Paganisme, magie et religion)*, (Ivan the Simple (Paganism, magic and religion)), Paris, Albin Michel, from which it appears that what Soloviev, in his time, knew is still far from dead.

The Russian Christian Realists.

Follows now a list of figures who paved the way.

G. Skovoroda (1722/1794), P.J. Chadaëv (= Cadaëv (1796/1856), I.Kireëvski (1806/1856), A.S. Chomiakov (1804/1860), V.Gr. Bielski (1810/1848), K.Aksakov (1817/1860), J.F.Samarin (1819/1876), and others, who usually, sooner or later, belonged to the Slavophiles.-- According to now brief characterizations.

1.-- Skovoroda.

N. Arseniev says of this preeminent pioneer, in full XVIIIth century: “With real zeal (...) he is, in a deliberate way, Christocentric” (T. Spidlik, o.c., 353). In particular: cosmology stands or falls with “Christ is the essential law of the cosmos” (which shows how what we have outlined above concerning the Christ as Universal Wisdom (‘Logos’, after Herakleitos of Ephesos, but Christianized) does give rise to real philosophizing.

One flaw with Skovoroda: he brings Christ as Logos so much into the whole creation-ing evolution that the fact that Jesus is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is too much lost. But then again: Skovoroda was a “novice.

2.-- Chadaëv.

Known for his Philosophical Letters,-- Christianity is the last word on the riddle of the world: like ever-active cosmic energy, Christianity penetrates societies and changes them (even without their realizing it). Christianity leads humanity to the goal that emanates from deity: happy those who consciously fit themselves into that all-embracing process.

Chadaëv and the multicultural.

“How to make all people, so different by race and culture, yet one?” was a main concern. -- According to Chadayev, this unification desire runs aground on death which creates a radical divide between the living and the dead.

True unity is only to be expected from the One who conquered death. When asked, “If Christ had not come, what would the world be?”, he answers, “Nothing!” “Sad philosophy that does not want to see that eternity is nothing but the life of the ‘righteous’ (*Note:* the Christianly conscientious), -- that life of which the Son of Man has given us the example.” Thus literally Chadaev.

Christianity, through its universalism, which includes all people, shows that it is of divine origin. People like Dostoevsky, Soloviev, -- V.I. Ivanov (1866/ 1949) will think through universalism further.

3.-- Chomiakov.

The headpiece of the Slavophiles.-- Noteworthy is Chomiakov's epistemology: central to it is life. That "life," understood in the broadest possible sense, comes to (full) consciousness of itself, first of all in rational thought, but not without primal Christian faith.

Note: In this he differs, with all other Christian-Realists, from Western Scholasticism (especially when it opposes mysticism) and, certainly, from Western Enlightenment rationalism. For these thinkers, nevertheless, the fact - the known historical fact - of Christianity makes thinking a form of one-sided abstract thinking.

Note: -- G. Samarine, *Préface aux oeuvres théologiques* (Preface to the Theological Works), de A.S. Khomiakov, Paris, Cerf, 1939, 52, characterizes Khomiakov: "For those who were indifferent to faith, Khomiakov was something strange and even comical."

To those whose high protection was behind the faith, he was insufferable by upsetting them.-

For those who knowingly rejected the faith - responsibly, according to their own judgment - he was a living refutation to which they knew no answer.

Finally, for those who had preserved in themselves the sense of a gifted religiousness, but at the same time got stuck in all kinds of contradictions and suffered from a split in their inner being, he was, in his own way, a guardian who gave them (...) real insight (...)"

Note:. -- This enumeration reflects the enormous crisis of foundations (which, especially since the Second Vatican Council (1962/1965), has broken through in our midst), with which the Russian Christian-Realists are trying to come to terms.

4.-- Belinski.

Cfr Spidlik, o.c., 357ss.. "Eternal movement" reads Belinski's main idea. Life is constant change. Well, from this, grief is not to be dismissed. For human history is one unbroken series of collapses and deaths".

What is the real value of living in such a framework? For the individuals who perish in that stream, the only salvation is the unity of Cross Passes and Resurrection Passes, which constitutes the pedestal of human history.

Says Belinski, "In this world of destruction and death, a hopeful voice still resounds - soul-strengthening - "Come to me, all of you who groan under the weight of the burden, and I will give you relief (...).

It seems that, in the atmosphere of that solemn soul-peace, man brings before his eyes the mystery of eternity - specifically: a new earth and a new heaven."

Note -- The term "new earth and new heaven" comes directly from the Apocalypse of St. John, -- a book that is archly foreign to us Westerners, but can be very close to the Greek-Eastern Christian.

Vladimir Soloviev.

T. Spidlik, o.c., 364ss.. -- Soloviev has genially summed up and surpassed all his predecessors. Even his opponents admit this.

"Soloviev (...) has succeeded in demonstrating masterfully how the entire cosmic and historical process -- i.e., the entire evolution of nature, -- from the basic elements up to and including the emergence of human consciousness -- is centered on the god-man, on Christ, the incarnated Second Person of the Holy Trinity." So says Spidlik, explaining.

1. He severely criticizes those who - like Lev Tolstoi (1828/1910; Tolstoi does denote Christianity as ascetic-mystical but rationalistic) - want to reduce Christianity to a mere system of excellent truths that we ought to put into life. Christ is not the mere result of our human intellectual and ethical efforts.

2. Christ is, on the contrary, the primordial principle of cosmic history,--the force which directs the events of the universe in the direction he has willed.--To there a first acquaintance.

Note.-- *Nik. Berdiaev, Russian Thought*, 80, characterizes Soloviev as follows. In doing so, he uses the term "humanism. Generally speaking, 'humanism' means "all that promotes man". In a religiously alien or worse religiously hostile sense, 'humanism' means "all that promotes man outside of religion, indeed against religion." The two, three meanings run, for many, rather confusedly together.

However, we listen to Berdiaev. -- "Vladimir Soloviev can be called a Christian Humanist. This 'humanism' however, carries a very special character.

In his polemic with the right-wing Christian camp, Soloviev insisted that the “humanist” process of Russian history was not only a Christian process, albeit an unconscious Christian process, but also that the non-believing Humanists accomplished Christianity better than the believing Christians, who did nothing for the betterment of human society.

The non-believing Humanists of Modern history attempted to build a society in which more humanity and more freedom could be found. This, while the religious Christians opposed them and defended the existence of a society built on violence and servitude.

Soloviev expressed this view primarily in his article *On the Fall and End of the Middle Ages World View*, -- thereby provoking the stormy indignation of K. Leontiev (1832/1891; nicknamed “The Russian Nietzsche.”

At that time, Soloviev had already recovered from his “theocratic utopia” (*Note -- for a time Soloviev dreamed of bringing about on this earth a kind of utopian system; it was called “theocracy”*).

As the fundamental idea of Christianity, Soloviev considered the idea of “God-humanism” (*Note -- also God-humanism*).-- What Soloviev called “Humanism” is an integral part of the religion of God-humanism.

a. In the person of Jesus Christ, the union of the Divine with human nature took place in such a way that “the God-human” made its appearance.

b. This, however, must also take place in humanity, in society, in “history.

The realization of the God-human(s) - of the God-human life - presupposes an activity of man.

In the Christianity of the past, there was no sufficient activity of man. Especially is this true of the right-believing churches. In the process, man was often oppressed.

The liberation of human activity in Modern history was therefore necessary for the realization of God-humanism. Hence Humanism -- which in its consciousness was perhaps non-Christian, yes, even anti-Christian -- lived up to the religious idea without which the ends of Christianity are unattainable.-- Thus Soloviev attempted to illuminate Humanism religiously. Thus Berdiaev on Soloviev.

Part VI.-- Soloviev's cosmology. (41/44).

The motto.

Soloviev's main intention is expressed in his *La Russie et l' Eglise universelle* : (Russia and the Universal Church), "The basic truth, the characteristic idea of Christianity,--that is the perfect union of the Divine and the human. Its individual realization takes place in Christ; its social realization takes place in human society." (Fr. Muckermann, S.J., *Soloviev*, Olten, 1945, 105).

Note.-- Virtually no attention is paid in the following exposition to the role of evil in, the cosmos and in humanity. This does not mean, however, that Soloviev, who was very optimistic by nature, even to the point of naiveté, had no awareness of "evil. Quite the contrary: the evil in the world exhibits, in his view, two main forms:

- a. the inertia ("inertia") or ethical lameness of humanity,
- b. the actually evil power of the Evil One, (including in the person and operation of the Evil Antichrist).

But here is what Muckermann, o.c., 173f., says about this. Soloviev, who with such optimism devoted himself to progress, (...), nevertheless always had an inner sense of evil. Although he had this awareness,--yes, precisely because he had it, he devoted himself with such energy to good.

a. That he was capable of such a thing ultimately rests on his confidence in the final victory of good which, compared to the phantoms of evil, is the only real thing.

b. That he was capable of such a thing also rests on his belief in the historical Christ who makes world history and concludes world history with final victory. Soloviev's total outlook is decidedly Christocentric: his worldview is the step-by-step unfolding of the Incarnation of the Man of God in all things and in all people.--What Muckermann says, we will now see in detail.

Bibl. s.: VI. Soloviev, *Le justification du bien (Essai de philosophie morale)*, (The justification of the good (Essay on moral philosophy),), Paris, Aubier, 1939.-- This work dates, in edition 2, from 1898. It is perhaps his most mature work.

The five realms.

We begin with an overview. O.c., 185ss. Soloviev takes as a viewpoint what can be translated by "rising fullness."

Viewed, from the point of view of “increasing fullness,” minerals, plants, animals, “natural” humanity and “pneumatic” (animated, glorified by God’s spirit) humanity are distinguishable.

Note--”Pneuma” stands for “God-given, life-force”. The principal identifiable stages in the development of the universe on the way to fullness (where ‘fullness’ is understood as the effect of the self-revelation of the Triune God in matter) as they are given in experience, are designated by the traditional and, incidentally, meaningful name ‘realms’. The name ‘realm’ is meaningful by-that it is only fully applicable to the final and decisive stage of the universe’s development. Something that is not usually taken into account.

Note-- This implies that Soloviev considers the whole of creation development as purposeful, indeed as purposefully guided by the Trinity. This does not exclude the fact that many things in the cosmos and humanity appear to us as ‘contingent’: God’s purposeful action involves precisely the twists and turns of creatures, -- including the evil ones who seek to plummet the goal to be achieved. Which means only one part of one encompassing purposefulness.

From other approaches than increasing volubility, one can - according to Soloviev - also make other classifications.

a. Plants and animals, can be summarized as “organic nature” (coming after “inorganic nature”).

b. One can label both inorganic and organic beings as ‘nature’: which then gives rise to a threefold classification “nature/ humanity/ the kingdom of god:

c. One can also contrast “the world” (= the Biblical universe) with “the kingdom of God”: this gives the contrast “world / kingdom of God” (in Western theological language: “nature (outside nature) / supernature”).

Characterization of the five realms.

‘Characteristic’ means “short description”. -- We first provide a shorter description to give a first insight.

1.-- Inorganic nature.

Note-- The term ‘nature’ (from Antique Greek ‘fysis’, Lat.: natura) means:

a. the collection and system of all that has a ‘nature’ (creature form)”,

b. the creature form itself.

“All that exhibits nature”: everything exhibits ‘nature’ (creature form). In other words: the term ‘nature’ (as collection and system) includes everything. It is an all-encompassing or transcendental concept.

More than that: the term “nature” invariably refers to “origin” (and, then, runs in tandem with “genesis,” becoming, arising). Indeed: the nature of something is passed on through reproduction, among other things. So that ‘nature’ easily gets the connotation of “(obtained by descent) form of being”.

So e.g. in Biblical language: “son/daughter of God” means “(sharing) the nature of God”. Or “son of man”: he who possesses (by human descent) human nature.

As samples in inorganic nature, Soloviev names “stones and metals.” -- These are satisfied with themselves, and out of themselves they do not evolve. In other words, if it depended only on such things, nature would never have awakened “from a dreamless sleep.” -- This, however, does not prevent, from the plant phase onward, the subsequent growth phases of all that is, from finding precisely therein -- in dead matter -- “a firm foundation or terrain” -- we said paraphrasing almost “biotope” --.

2.-- *Plant nature.*

Plants are distinguished by - what in poetic terms Soloviev calls - “unconscious and immobile dreams.” So that the terms “dreamless” and “unconscious and immobile dream” play a serious role in Soloviev’s poetic characteristic.

More matter-of-factly, he says, the orientation to heat, light, and humidity makes plants distinguishable from inorganic matter in terms of their essential form.

In other words: not just any dead matter, but warm, luminous and moist matter chooses the plant to form a biotope, to nestle into the dead matter,... to be livable in it.

3.-- *Animal nature.*

The creature form of animals as animals is distinguishable from the rest by the fact that an animal exhibits perception (sensation) and free movement.

Immediately, animals are oriented toward the satisfaction of sensory existence: they seek the “fullness” of sensory existence through

- a. satiate themselves on food and drink,
- b. to satisfy themselves sexually,
- c. to enjoy being there by, e.g., playing and/or singing.-- Above all, animals exhibit their own type of “consciousness” (on a purely animal level, of course).

Note.-- Curious: unlike Platon, who in his psychology gives a large place to the urge for money (“the lesser lion” he says),-- unlike Darwin and other evolutionists who give a very large place to the “struggle for existence,” Soloviev nowhere mentions that plants and animals -- as well as humans and basically everything else that lives -- must resist in order to survive.

Berdiaev says somewhere that Soloviev was exceptionally “irenic” - peace-loving: perhaps this trait explains the omission.

4.-- *Natural Humanity.*

‘Natural’ here means “that which has not yet been made fuller by Biblical grace (‘spirit’, life force).” If one wants: ‘Pagan’. -- Pagan human nature is oriented toward sensual existence, just like the animals: it wants satisfaction through food and drink, through sexual life, through pleasure.

But it does not stop there : past biblical humanity wants to improve existence on the basis of “spirit”. Skills of all kinds, sciences, social institutions show that the will to improve destiny can indeed succeed.-- Also, natural mankind comes to the idea of “absolute-full existence.”

5.-- *Pneumatic Humanity.*

Humanity guided by God’s spirit (“pneuma,” Lat.: spiritus, life-force) encompasses the kingdom of God. As “born of God” (and thus gifted with divine nature), this type of humanity not only understands full-fledged existence with the spirit: it is, by God’s grace, in Christ, up to its realization. It accepts, after all, in heart and behavior, the idea of “full-fledged existence” in the Christian sense as “the true beginning of all that, in all things of the universe, is at work as a direction of purpose.”

Final sum.-- Full existence.

By that term, Soloviev means:

1. actual existence (inorganic realm),
2. being alive, (plant kingdom),
3. be aware of the environment (animal kingdom),
4. be gifted with spirit (human kingdom),
5. being moved by God’s spirit, i.e. supernatural life force (God’s Kingdom).

The Biblical concept of man is both a summary of what goes before and a transcendence of all that goes before, simultaneously. The “new” man, in Christ, is situated in the overall cosmic order, which in Christianity experiences “the true beginning of all things.

Part VII.-- Soloviev's cosmology.-- notes (45/65).

Note.-- Before we go on, a word about the relations between the stages of evolution.

It is clear - says Soloviev - that each of the 'realms', which precede, serve as an immediate basis for the realms that follow. Thus, plants find their food in inorganic matter, animals thrive on the plant kingdom, humans on the animal kingdom, and the kingdom of God consists of humans.

The irreducibility of what follows to what precedes.

If we examine a living being more closely, we find, from the point of view of "material composition", only inorganic elements. However, as soon as these inorganic elements are incorporated into a life form, they are more than mere inorganic matter.

1. Life possesses physical and chemical properties and, in general, the laws of dead matter, but life, notwithstanding this, remains irreducible to dead matter.

2. In an analogous way, human life, under material point of view, exhibits animal functions. These, however, are no longer valuable in themselves as purely animal: they are transformed into means and/or tools. For human life, compared to animal life, is directed toward other, higher objects and purposes. Indeed, it values from a higher level of life - in particular: the life of the spirit - all that is animal, as an integral part.

Applicable model.

The sole purpose of the animal as an animal is, e.g., the gratification of its sexual instinct. If, however, a human being seeks only that kind of satisfaction, such a person is called "a brute" (*note --* we would now say "a sex maniac").

This, not just to express an insult, but for the very reason of the decline to a lower level of existence.

3. By analogy, the kingdom of God.

It consists of "people. Yet they have ceased to be "people" because they share in a higher plane of existence. That is where purely human objectives become the means and/or instruments of a new objective.

Special Characteristics.

We now explain, with Soloviev.

1.-- The distinctiveness of the inorganic.

Note.-- As may have been noted, the term "(actual) existence" is reduced to "inorganic actual existence".

Language which Soloviev knows very well should be used with reservation. After all, ontologically, “actual existence” means that which exhibits anything as soon as it is “something” (the aspect of “existence,” distinguishable from “essence” (mode of being)). In this cosmological context, however, the bare term “actual existence” is the word to pithily denote the paltry existence of merely inorganic realities.

Thus Soloviev typifies the inorganic with the sentence, “The stone exists.” The “proof” (if one may use this heavy word here) Soloviev, with other thinkers on the other hand, seeks in the experience of resistance: if you doubt the existence of inorganic-material things (which some hyper-individuals or hyperspiritualists did at one time or another), bump your head against a stone e.g..

That purely material-inorganic existence thus becomes “palpable” and at once unquestionable. And in a sensory way.

Note.-- Hegel saw everything “dialectically. This means: even a stone exhibits, in its being, an inner tension (usually referred to by the term ‘contradiction’ (contradiction)).

This inner tension begets movement (understand: change, yes, evolution) and does so “of its own accord.”

Thus, a stone, e.g., in cosmic context in itself would involve movement somewhere and even dialectical evolution.

Soloviev: “A stone, as an inorganic reality, shows no “inner tendency to turn into its opposite. “A stone is what it is and what it has always been, namely the symbol, of a mode of existence without change. A stone does nothing but merely exist. For example, it does not live, with the result that it does not die. It can, however, disintegrate: the fragments into which it is crushed, for example, do not differ in composition from the parts of stone when it was still whole.

Note.-- Consider the phrase “a petrified existence.”

Soloviev on the sacred view.

We know that Soloviev took an encyclopedic interest. Among other things, he was interested in the science of religion (which, in his time, was very hard to come by). -- One speaks in religions, for example, of “the life of nature”.

Note.-- Primitives see even dead things as animated (animism) or alive (animatism).

Some Archaic thinkers - think of some pre-Socratics - felt all matter to be “alive” or even “animated” (which is indicated by the word “hylozoism”; “hulè”, Lat.: materia, substance, and “zöè”, Lat.: vita, life).

a. Soloviev mentions the presence of a “soul” in more or less complicated aggregates in nature, such as a sea, rivers or streams, mountains and forests.

Note.-- Think of the “sacred” river Ganges in India; think of the “sacred” forest of the Germanic people, about which the Roman writer Tācitus.-- The presence, subtle that is, of “beings” of all kinds included “life in nature.”

b. Separate inorganic bodies -- according to Soloviev -- as e.g. stones, although without any life in themselves, can nevertheless be made subservient, i.e. as durable means for the living activity of place-bound beings. Such a stone. Such a ‘bethel’ (also: ‘bethil’) or house of God.

Angels e.g. (in a Biblical context) or simply divine forces seem to “dwell” in such inorganic stones.

2.-- The distinctiveness of the vegetable.

“The stone exists, The plant exists and lives.” -- As evidence: it is a commonly experienced fact that plants die. This implies that they were “alive” first. Stones have no such thing.

Consider the unmistakable distinction between a tree that is standing to grow, and a bunch of blocks of firewood.

Think of a newly budded flower and a wilted one.

The miracle of plants.

Amidst an inorganic environment, plants once arose. As the first Life forms of plant life. Over time, they evolved into a “lush realm” of flowers or trees.

a. It is sometimes heard that this plant phenomenon emerged “just like that”, i.e. without any necessary and sufficient reason or ground, a.k.a. “of its own accord”.

b. It is sometimes claimed that they “arose” from inorganic elements that became structures purely by chance.

Both propositions Soloviev considers “incongruous.

The added value.

Life, of which the plant is one degree, exhibits a well-defined new, positive (determinable) form of being. Something stands out in this regard: the fact that a plant is more than lifeless substance.

Reasoning of Soloviev.

To infer something that exhibits surplus value. The term “infer” taken in the strictly deductive sense -- from something that lacks that surplus value, amounts to saying that **a.** from nothing (i.e., the radical absence of something) **b.** something can emerge, -- without any other intervention. Which is pure incongruity.

Note.-- Something like this does occur in fairy tales, where it is called “conjuring”.

Note.-- One can clarify the absurdity of such a deduction in another way: what is at first ‘a’ without more, if that formula to be “conjured up” were to merge into reality, -- not in fairy-tale atmosphere, would suddenly, without any other factor or parameter, become ‘a+b’. -- Replace ‘a’ with “mere inorganic matter” and ‘a+b’ with “plant life” e.g..

Decision.-- On the one hand, then, between inorganic nature and plant nature there is a clear break, a gap; on the other hand, this gap builds somewhere on an uninterruptedness, a ‘continuity’.

Are there borderline cases, where inorganic and organic are difficult to distinguish - think of the viruses - it is nevertheless the case that, as plant growth continues to develop, the distinction from dead matter becomes clearer over time. Which points to the fact that the new form of being is gradually gaining ground.

3.-- The distinctiveness of the animal.

“The stone exists. The plant exists and lives. The animal exists, lives and is aware of its life, in its variety of states.” -- Behold the first sketch.

Note.-- One can define the term “consciousness” naturally, in such a way that it cannot be said of the animal. But Soloviev reserves the right to speak of “natural consciousness.” By which he means the following.

Between **a.** the inner - psychic life of e.g. the animal and **b.** its environment there is a mutual ‘agreement’ and ‘effect’:

Note.-- In a current use of language, one could replace these terms with “communication” and “interaction” Well, - Soloviev reasons - such a thing does exist, on closer inspection, in the animal.

1. Environmental awareness.

This type of awareness exists mainly in higher evolved animals. Note the difference between the animal in the sleeping state and the same animal in the waking state: the animal in the waking state participates, and does so in a somewhere ‘conscious’ manner, in what is present around it.

That type of realizing what is and is happening is clearly absent, when an animal is asleep. A second clear indication of the fact of animal awareness lies in **a.** the purposeful movements an animal performs, **b.** the facial expressions, and **c.** the animal language with its alternating cries.

Note.-- We are thinking of:

- a.** the fact that a cat stalks a mouse and jumps to it (purposeful movement),
- b.** the expression of a horse when it sees its master(s) approaching in the distance (where head, eyes and ears, facial muscles suddenly take on a different shape) (mimicry),
- c.** the yelping sound of the dog expressing satisfaction following the homecoming of its master(s) (language expressions). When compared to plants, it appears that this is absent in plants.

2. Time Awareness.

So far, it has been about synchronic awareness. Now the diachronic aspect.

An animal does not only have perceptions and ‘images’ at its disposal: it connects them by means of correct associations.

a. On the one hand, the animal is governed by the interests and impressions of the “now” (the present moment).

b. On the other hand, it has memories of past situations it lived through, and anticipates what is to come. -

Note.-- A letter carrier once kicked a dog on his rounds. Whenever the animal saw the man coming, it reacted with attack: the past lived on in its “awareness.

Some animals build up winter reserves when winter has not yet set in. In the spring, birds prepare their reproduction by nest building. The future is already present somewhere in the awareness of such behavior.

Soloviev says that animal education and dressage would be unthinkable if animals did not have such a sense of time: everything would be forgotten; the animal would not ‘learn’. Nobody denies the memory of a horse or a dog: ‘memory’ includes ‘consciousness’ (according to Soloviev). What some ‘philosophers’ on account of ‘deviation in thinking’ deny.

Note.-- Add to this: an animal has a kind of “understanding”! As soon as a little dog sees or senses a hare, it reacts specifically, i.e. it distinguishes the creature form (which amounts to a kind of understanding) .

The added value.

a. Sometimes it seems that plant and animal sprout from the same principle of life (form of being). Soloviev brings up the “zoophyte” here. Early zoological classifications bore this term, meaning “plant animals”. -

Note.-- We can now add that some observations point to something analogous: for example, “red blood bodies” (hemoglobin) are said to occur in plants (which seems to indicate a common ancestor).

b. Soloviev readily admits such things. But he says: the further animal wealth develops, the more clearly the animal differs from the plant. The creature form “animal” gradually comes through more clearly.

If you will: the borderline cases confirm the “rule” (the pure form of being).

4.-- The distinctiveness of the human.

“The stone exists. The plant exists and lives. The animal exists, lives, and is aware of its life, in its various states. The human being exists, lives, is aware of his life, in various states of it, grasps the meaning of life according to the ideas.”

Where “meaning of life” means “the full-fledged conscientious order brought about in all things and this endlessly.” (O.c., 187). In other words: an ethical definition.

The natural man as spirit.

O.c., 189.-- Not by consciousness is man distinguishable from the animal. Consciousness becomes “human consciousness” thanks to the human mind. This principle in man (o.c. 244ss.) shows itself phenomenally: unlike the animal, man possesses universal concepts in the strict logical sense, (with inductive basis), yes, (higher) ideas, such as the good.

Note.-- Here one gropes a.k.a. the Platonic element.

The natural man as language gifted.

Animals possess a kind of cries language.

Language, however, becomes “human” only insofar as it is “thoroughly and radically determined by the mind” (o.c., 189). -- Thus, insofar as the word is truly human, it expresses not only states of consciousness but also “the all-encompassing sense of everything.” Thus Soloviev.

Which brings us to full ontology: ‘everything’ is strictly all-encompassing (transcendental). -- Says Soloviev: the Antique ‘wisdom’ determined for good reason that man is not a being who exhibits consciousness.

For such a definition says too little. Ancient wisdom defined man as “a being possessed of language, i.e., a being gifted with ‘reason’.”

Note -- “Reason” means “language ability,” “logos.

The natural man as amenable to truth.

‘Reason’ and the language associated with it naturally exhibit the ability to grasp the truth.

A truth that **a.** encompasses everything and **b.** makes everything one. It is precisely this ability that shows once again that man, as a form of being, is elevated above the animal level of life.

Which does not exclude the fact that, to a large extent, this happens gradually: for it is a fact that this ability has worked very differently, so far, from people to people, for example.

Biological evolution is not yet cultural evolution.

Soloviev appropriates, to some extent, an evolutionary scheme, which takes the form of a differential: “ape/human eater (semi-wild)/culture man.”

1. Thus he says: a man-eater is perhaps in himself of a not much higher level compared with the ape. The ‘low’ of that level of being human lies in that he remains below the typically human.

2. Human fullness has as a condition ‘spirit’. This is present, however, even in the most backward savage, though its expression (especially from our modern cultural level) is ‘rudimentary’.

Note.-- With this, Soloviev categorically opposes a Hume (David Hume (1711/1776; skeptical Enlightener) and a Darwin (Charles Darwin (1809/1882, the famed evolutionist), who are known for their disdain, typical of the Enlightenment in Western Europe, for the “primitive savages.”

In Soloviev’s case, his reaction against this disdain certainly has to do with the Biblical conviction that every human being is without exception a child of God. (Cfr. Sol. Cosm. 32: mystical body).

a. Biological transmission.

The animal has a sense of time. But this does not extend very far. From the previous to the next animal genus there is heredity of traits. Evolutionists argue that the animal shares to some extent in evolution.

But - says Soloviev - animals do not realize that they are in such a large-scale evolution: the scope of their consciousness falls short.

b. Cultural-historical transfer.

An uninterrupted series of genera - they occasionally rise in cultural level - lead from the man-eater (the “wild” or “semi-wild” in the language of the day) to figures like Platon or Goethe.

But - in contrast to the animals - (cultural) man realizes this. In other words, in addition to a hereditary bond similar to that of animals, there is clearly a cultural-historical memory and a unity of collective consciousness in the human form.

The added value.

“The ape as long as he is an ape acquires no substantial surplus value regarding full existence. The human being does.

a. In the phenomenal order (the immediate data) there is unmistakably a close association and a profound material bond - unbrokenness - between animal and human.

b. By his spirit, however, man apparently transcends the animal, even the ape. -- As the history of mankind, which is essentially more than mere biological history -- it is cultural history -- progresses, the chances increase that the difference “human/animal” will become more clearly delineated.

Note.-- In passing, mention should be made of the brilliant exposition of the ethical nature of man as expounded by Soloviev in *La justification du bien*, 25ss. (*Le bien dans la nature humaine*).

- a.** sense of shame (“I am ashamed. So I exist (as a human being)” (o.c., 32)),
- b.** compassion (“I sympathize with my fellow man. So I exist (as a human)”)
- c.** reverence (“I am reverent. So I exist (as a human being)”).

In these feelings of value, man situates himself as a human being with respect to what is beneath him (shame), -- what is his equal (fellow humanity), -- what is above him (reverence).

The more human man becomes, in ethical evolution, the more clearly he/she draws himself against the background of the animal. - Cfr. *Fr. Muckermann, Soloviev*, 35/90, where the author comments on the main points.

5. -- *The distinctiveness of the deified man.*

“The stone exists. The plant exists and lives. The animal exists, lives, and is aware of his life, in its various states. The human being exists, lives, is aware of his life, in its various states, -- grasps the meaning of life according to the ideas.

The supernatural man rises above this: he/she is moved by God’s ‘spirit’ (life force) (he/she is then a ‘pneumatic’ man).”

With this we touch the end point of cosmic evolution.

The Biblical Basis.

First we read *Mark. 9:2/8*.

Six days later Jesus takes Peter, James and John and leads them alone and separately to a high mountain. -- In their presence He changes His appearance: His clothes shine, - with a whiteness such as, on earth, no follower can make anything white.

Appearing to them also were Elias and Moses, who were having a conversation with Jesus. -- To which Peter says, "Rabbi, it is wonderful for us to be here. So let us raise three tents, -- one for you, one for Moses and one for Elias". But Peter did not know what he was saying, for they were beside themselves with fear.

A cloud overshadowed them: from that cloud a voice came through saying, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him". -- Suddenly, as they looked around them, except for Jesus, they saw no one.

The threefold interpretation.

According to *La Bible de Jérusalem*, 1469, it is as follows.

1. *Mark* - faithful to the main motto of his gospel - sees in the glorification of Jesus a theophany: the messiah harbors in him divine glory. This is: "divine life force." This power is behind the miracles (healings, exorcisms, other miraculous facts).

If this revelation - by showing His true "aura" or radiance - is only transitory, yet it shows what Jesus - who will be humbled for a short time as a "suffering servant of Yahweh" (think Isaias) - is and what He will definitively be later, after His death on the cross.

Note.-- It is that glorified Jesus who appears to well-defined persons (Sol. Cosm. 31), in the "guises" of, e.g., a traveler.

2. *Matthew (17:1/9)* interprets the transfiguration or "metamorphosis" differently: Jesus is solemnly proclaimed in that event as the new Moses who meets God on the mountain-a new Mount Sinai-in the cloud.

3. *Luke (9:28/36)* shifts the emphasis again: the metamorphosis of Jesus is the immediate preparation for Jesus' suffering. As He prays, He is "transformed" and "heaven" informs Him about His passing, i.e. His death in Jerusalem, "the city where they put prophets to death. -

Decision.-- All three interpretations highlight one aspect of this extremely rich event.

If we are to understand anything of what Soloviev says about "pneumatic" (= glorified) humanity, we must be constantly mindful of the transformation.

The liturgical foundation.

Here the cosmic aspect of the new humanity in Jesus (and in time in us, believers) comes especially to the fore.

Note -- Before taking a few samples in the liturgical riches of the East, a model of cosmic poetry.

J. Ballard et al, Permanence de la Grèce, Cahiers du Sud, 1948, 245.
A love song is given there.

The desire for love.

I kissed a red lip, and my lip turned red. I pressed them on a handkerchief, and it too turned red. I threw it into the river, and it too turned red. And the edge of the sea turned red. And the middle of the ocean turned red. The eagle came to drink from the water, and its wings also became red. And half of the sun became red. And the whole moon turned red.

Note.-- One sees the cosmic-unlimitedness of the minuscule kiss of the lip of the beloved. Just that, -- that cosmic-solidarity of something with everything, is, with Soloviev, said of Jesus.

He is the center of a glorified cosmos. In it he situates humanity, -- each one of us. But that's what the Greco-Eastern liturgy does all the time. A few samples.

Romanos (V-th century).

This Syrian from a Jewish family has been called "the Pindaros of Byzantine Literature."

Listening to his Christmas song, "What can we offer to thee, Christ, who appeared on earth as a man to save us? All that Thou hast created pay thee homage: the angels the hymn, the heavens the star, the magi the gifts, the shepherds the miracle, the earth the grotto, the desert the crib, and we a virgin who is mother."

Note.-- Again the newborn, however lithe, is center of the cosmos. Cfr J. Ballard, o.c., 201.

Romanos. -- Passion Song.

O.c., 212s. -- Jesus, on his way to Calvary, says to his mother, If thou wilt follow, be not as mother to me an unhappy woman! Marvel not that the elements shudder. The whole creation rebels. The blinded dome of heaven waits for My command to open its eyes. The temple tears the veil as it cries out to the spoiled. The earth and the sea hastily take their leave. The mountains are coming apart at the seams. The sepulchral cities begin to tremble.

When you experience that spectacle, astonishment will overcome you. As a woman then cry out to Me, "Be merciful, my son and my God." -- A text that is again cosmic.

The Akathistoshymn.

Bibl. s.: Kilian Kirchoff, *Ueber dich freut sich der Erdkreis (Marienhymnen der byzantinischen Kirche)*, (Ueber dich freut sich der Erdkreis (Mary's hymns of the Byzantine Church)), Münster (Westphalia), 1940, 163f..

The “mystery” (**Note** -- event which, by God’s grace, transforms the cosmos) at work from the beginning is revealed today: the Son of God becomes a human child. He takes upon Himself our poverty in order that we may share in His glory.

Once Adam was outsmarted. And, though he desired it, he still did not become a “god. But God becomes man to make Adam a “god.

Jubilation befits creation. To a choral dance, nature should surrender itself, as the archangel, in deep reverence, appears to the virgin and lets her hear the “joy be to you” that takes away the sorrow.

Thou, our God, who out of deepest endearment hast shown thee in the form of a man, glory be to thee.

Note.-- The wise song applies, as one may have sensed, to the message of the archangel.-- Again, that cosmic-word that spans the whole of sacred history.

John of Damaskos (+749).

This Late Antique thinker and poet speaks as follows: “The nature that dies and perishes, assumed the immortal in thy womb, -- thou, who art above all blame. In Himself He has made them -- graciously -- imperishable. Therefore we proclaim thee as the ‘Mother of God’”. (K. Kirchoff, o.c., 72).

Or still “The nature of the progenitor (**Note:** Adam) you have deified by your birthing, -- it transcends nature. Make me, who, by not interfering with the limits of my nature, sinned and displeased God, who is good by nature, through your maternal atonement, God’s confidant(s).” -

Note.-- In the texts of John Damascene, the pre-Socratic concept of fisis (nature) resonates very clearly: the salvific action of the Triune Godhead is more than display. It changes the very “nature” (creature form) of the cosmos and of humanity.

Note.-- Again: if one wants to understand something of Soloviev’s philosophy, that one keeps in mind such texts. His Christian philosophizing, is

a. real philosophizing, i.e., personal thinking (as he emphasizes).

b. But it does not think beyond the reality of Christianity (it is not a “parafrosunè”), -- no “abstracting” from Jesus’ cultural-historical and salvific action.

To recap:

Both the biblical texts and their liturgical processing testify, “Not only this miracle

Note.-- John 5:17, 19 - but all Christ’s human acts of salvation are thus God’s revelation to men.

The divine act of salvation continually transforms itself into the human acts of the Lord. And this is meant when Scripture speaks of the gradual breakthrough of the kingdom of God taking place in and through the person of Jesus Christ.

The power of God - it is at work in history according to Old Testament testimony, transforming it and propelling it to a meaningful end - has taken on the form of the reality of Christ in the *New Testament*. Once and for all, God’s active power is now fully portrayed in it.” (A. De Groot, S.V.D., *De Bijbel over het wonder*, Roermond / Maaseik, 1961, 44).

Note -- Is speaking to someone who apparently does not even suspect how he is saying, unconsciously, the same thing as the great New Testament-Patristic tradition. Tradition in which Soloviev explicitly wants to be situated.

Nikolai Gogol’ on the Incarnation.

“God’s incarnation on earth dawned in the consciousness of all those whose conceptions of deity had begun to purge even a little.

Nowhere, however, was this spoken of with such clarity as through the mouths of the prophets of God’s chosen people.

His immaculate incarnation from the pure Virgin was vaguely suspected even by the Pagans somewhere, -- nowhere, however, with such graspable, blinding clarity as with the prophets.”

Thus speaks Nikolai Gogol (1809/1852; Russian literator), in a little work he wrote in the years, 1845/1852 and which appeared in Moscow in 1889 (the censors did not allow it until then).

We shall see that, in slightly different words, Soloviev maintains the same.

Soloviev on the godhead.

Now that we have presupposed all the necessary conditions for the most correct understanding of what Soloviev is saying, we can begin the actual exposition.

1.-- Christianity as a “new” form of being.

“Enanthropèsis Theou theiosis anthropou” (Incarnatio Dei, deificatio hominis), “The Incarnation of God is the deification of man”.

Behold the lapidary summary, which for centuries and centuries has motivated our Eastern brothers in faith.

In Christianity, too, Soloviev sees a law of evolution at work: the lower - Pre-Christian - forms of life, plant/animal/human, are a necessary - conditioning - but not a sufficient - creative - prelude to the higher ones that follow.

Application:

a.1. Christ is not simply the product of overall pagan and Jewish history;

a.2. by analogy, the kingdom of God that constitutes the previously hidden essence of today's Christianity is not simply the product of Christianity and its actual, earthly history. -

b. In other words: biological evolution - the plant, animal and human life forms founded on inorganic existence - and cultural history - due to its questions and partial solutions - worked and still works today on the existence of necessary - natural and ethical - presuppositions, insofar as they are necessary and/or useful for the independent self-revelation of the divine man Jesus, paragon and source of grace of the humanity deified by him. Cfr. *La justification du bien*, 197.

2.1.-- *The concept of the kingdom of God inwardly.*

The idea - more than a human 'idea', because a divine idea present both in its realization and in the knowledge of it - "kingdom of God" arose in the minds of men along two lines:

a. the ideal of the Pagan deified man and the God idea of "God's Kingdom," centered around the God-man Jesus;

b. the Pagan ideal rose in the minds at the time in virtue of theosophical philosophy as a method; the Biblical kingdom of God also rose in the minds but rather in virtue of prophetic inspiration.

Note -- One sees that Gogol, decades earlier, put down the very same thought.

Note.-- "Deification" is actually an ancient Greco-Heathen idea.

The Orphics, the Paleopythagoreans (-560/-300), later the Platonists and others were already talking about 'deification' centuries before Jesus' appearance on earth. Man only becomes truly human to the extent that he/she reaches the level of deity, however conceived.

In Late Antiquity -- 200 / +600 - this gives rise to a separate type of philosophizing, namely 'theo.sophia', god-given philosophy.

Note -- Soloviev does lean towards Late Antique Theosophies. One thinks of the fact that he, o.c., 189, n. 5, refers to the unity of naturally conceived deification by the Late Antique Theosophists as well as the Old Testament prophetic method as the completion of the Biblical pedestal with the very influential thinker Philon of Alexandria (Philo Judaeus) (-20/+50), -- in Soloviev's eyes "the last and greatest thinker of the ancient world.

2.2.-- *The concept of the kingdom of God, externally.*

Parallel but, of course, slower - according to Soloviev - than the inner side just outlined was the external evolution and history.

The cultural, including political, unification of the main "history-making" peoples took shape in the Imperium Romanum, the Roman world empire.

Notes. -- Hellas and Rome.

A certain tradition, of which Soloviev was still alive, concentrates in those two terms - what Soloviev himself calls - "the extreme limits of 'natural' (= past biblical) humanity."

According to Soloviev - whom we want to reproduce here as fully as possible - the natural mankind of the time saw "the ultimate meaning" - a main concept in his philosophy - of life in "something absolute and unconditional", namely the deification of the - in Soloviev's eyes certainly, but to some extent also in Pagan eyes (one thinks among others but far from only Platon) - all too animalistic mankind.

Hellenic cleanliness.

The meaning of life, among the Hellenes, lay, among other things, in beautiful sensuous body form.

Note-- That Soloviev sees very correctly here is further demonstrated by the fact that the "arid" Aristotle labels a very beautiful woman as "in Greek eyes divine.

The high meaning of life - said again very correctly Soloviev - also lay in some higher philosophical-scientific insight. Think of Platon and his student Aristotle.

Roman Peace.

'Pax romana'. -- still S. Augustine, many centuries later, will speak of it as of a peculiar Pagan good.

The "godliness" - in Soloviev's sense - emerged, among other things, in the reasoned will of the Romans to build a cultural-political power system - imperium romanum.

Where Soloviev once again speaks the truth is where he talks about the most monstrous form of deification, which later Roman emperors had “applied” to their own person and work. In this context one does speak of ‘dominate’.

The ‘Roman peace’ as a multicultural ideal.

Bibl. s. : Fr. Mukkermann, S.J., *Solowiew*, 29f.. -- The kingdom of God must be re-established on earth: we must learn to see all peoples as “in servitude” to this kingdom that rises above all nations.

a. Not to eternal repetition in the context of a never-ending cycle with its “eternal return” - Soloviev does mean here Nietzsche, among others - should the universe fall victim, -- still less to horrific disasters.

No: the “mystery” of glorification is at work in the universe in a hidden way. What was once created in God’s image and likeness should be reduced to deification. (...).
Note -- Precludes the rejection of pure Paganism.

b. In the living midst of humanity and of the immeasurable cosmos rises the figure of the man of God, who should grow into the seed of a community renewed thanks to God-given grace. (...).

Christ is the bearer of a life-affirming universalism that stands in sharp contrast to any separatism that pulls itself out of the whole, -- especially to that type of nationalism that emerges as the greatest enemy of peaceful community anywhere in the world.

Note.-- It is as if Soloviev had anticipated decades in advance the current tensions in the nationalist-populist field in the former Communist Soviet state. The different cultures -- a myriad of languages -- in his homeland must have been clearly sensed by Soloviev as potential hotbeds of discord.

‘Multiculture’ has by now grown - especially in Post-Modern middens - into a kind of ideal of tolerance. However, it is not well understood how such a mutual ideal of understanding between cultures - religious (Islam/Judaism/Christianity/Paganism) racial (the ethnics of all kinds), etc. - will be practically achievable. - will be practically achievable. At least without a supra-national, supra-religious (better: supra-confessional), supra-racial ‘community idea’. In this the Pax Romana has indeed been a kind of forerunner, -- however imperfectly.

Note.-- As Muckermann, notes, Christ is also the bearer of a life-like universalism that opposes “a purely abstract humanity” just as starkly.

The coherence viz. in this case is purely ‘abstract’: such a society amounts to the mere aggregation of as radically independent individuals as possible. The cohesion among them is not the expression of anything organic!

Note.-- Here Soloviev uses the term “organic. As one may know, this term appears fiercely in the language of the Romantics. ‘Life’ and specifically ‘life-in-common’ (using a living organism as a model) was contrasted by the Romantics with the rational-abstract ‘thinking together’ so typical of Enlightened Rationalism.

But add immediately that “organicism” can lead to e.g. the National Socialist or Communist interpretations.

Something to which, in passing, Soloviev with his universalism is radically immune.

3. -- *The kingdom of God tested.*

That the both Pagan and Christian concept, resp. idea “realm of deity” - or “Godmensdom” - must be testable, Soloviev, of course, knew that too.

3.1.-- *The Pagan ‘deification’*

This one demands to be “embodied” - realized.

When the Pagan world was confronted with the failure of its ideal, a few believing minds and a bunch of sages got the prospect of something else.

But first, the deified but basically situated within nature - though decked out with the pomp and circumstance - the “glory” - of a Roman emperor (at the time of the dominate) - had to prove to be “an empty dream” .

Says Soloviev, “As the monkey anticipates man, so the deified Roman emperor announces the God-man.” A God-man who, even in the pitiful appearance of an itinerant rabbi in Israel, can nevertheless show his true -- divine -- nature, -- in healings, exorcisms, other signs.

Conclusion.-- The outcome from the natural impasse is a fuller existence than that of natural humanity.

Explanation. -- It may cause wonder to see how the appearance of a God-man fits into the evolutionary scheme.

For clarification, *W. Vogel, La religion de l’ évolutionnisme*, (The religion of evolutionism), Bruxelles, 1912, 321, is cited. -- The author himself cites *L. Ménard, Hermès Trismégiste* Paris, 1910.

Premise: Religions - if “real” - are modes of solving human problems.

The application: Christianity did not strike like lightning into the Antique habitat. It had, in its way, an incubation period. While it was itself still searching for the final articulation of its main truths, the thinking minds in Greece, Asia, and Egypt were also wrestling with the problems whose solution it sought (...).

Mankind namely had raised major philosophical - including ethical - issues. E.g. the final destination, fall (with the question of the origin of evil) and redemption of the soul. What was at stake in this struggle was the control of souls.

The Christian solution to said problems prevailed over all others of the time. The latter even fell into a kind of oblivion because of it. -

The breakthrough of Christianity was thereby prepared by those who imagined themselves to be its contenders. Whereas, in fact, they were only its precursors.

They truly deserve the title “precursors of Christianity,” -- even if some of them were contemporaries of Christianity and others came a little later. In particular: the breakthrough of a religion dates only from the day when it is accepted by the peoples, - - just as the true rule of a crown pretender dates only from the day when he makes it. -- To the quoted Ménard.

Note.-- Ménard, even though he compares with politically - military victories (which is not appropriate here), expresses a truth: our Biblical religion once knotted up with true life problems. In this sense it had a ‘vital’ -- now we say easily ‘existential’ -- character. The ‘souls’ of the time of emerging Christianity were happy to be ‘controlled’ by a religion which they believed posed and ... solved life issues. -

Note.-- Also one sees that Ménard tries to situate Christianity in an evolution. Which Soloviev in his way also does. Both complement each other.

3.2. -- *The Christian deification.*

She too like the Pagan asks to be “embodied” - realized! What test of reality comes out of it.

Christianity had two basic presuppositions:

a. the theophany on Mount Sinai, with the Ten Commandments, folk summary of a lofty morality (morality defines manhood-for-God);

b. the theophany on the “high mountain,” where Jesus showed his true life energy to three apostles (the glorification).

In *La justification du bien*, 275, Soloviev says the following:

a. There was once a day when people belonging to a variety of nations and social classes pneumatically - i.e., guided by Jesus’ life force for glorification - became one in worshipping a “stranger” and a “beggar”: Jesus as a Galilean was hallowed as a criminal “in the name of” national and caste interests.

b. Since that day, an admittedly concealed and internal operation has actually been going on against international wars, against indignation of masses within society, against putting criminals to death (cfr. Sol. Cosm. 05).

To which - listen carefully - Soloviev says: “Let us admit that this inner change needed eighteen centuries to become visible and tangible, -- to become only partially visible and tangible.

Let us admit that this coming to the light of day becomes precisely visible- er tangible- at that moment when the moving force at work in that change, namely the Christian faith, is in the process of being phased out and even seems to be weakening in the present consciousness of the times.”

Note. -- Sol. Cosm. 39v. taught us what Soloviev thought about the religiously critical role of Humanism that had exposed the default of Christendom (not Christianity). Here Soloviev relates the same thing to the great apostasy (which the Bible, by the way, speaks clearly about in regard to the end times): Christendom is waking up to its being and its failure.

Note.-- In 1898 Soloviev traveled again to Egypt. There he experienced a sight: a demon sat there before him, “And ye there! How know ye with certainty that Christ is risen?”. Whereupon Soloviev claims that the demon jumped on him and he lost consciousness.

M. Herman, Vl. Soloviev, 139/144, elaborates:

a. before, for Soloviev “evil” was “nothing” (absence of good); he did not believe in demons (“Soloviev ne croyait pas au démon” says Herman, o.c., 141);

b. since then “his apocalypse” (= end-time perception) arose in him (what he himself calls), with the Evil Antichrist (which he saw active in thinkers such as Marx, Nietzsche and Tolstoi, among others) as a looming figure; moreover: he believed in demons since then (“Il y crut désormais” says Herman, . ibid.).

Conclusion. -- Throughout his life, Soloviev was a peaceful, naive - idealistic figure, trying to see “the good” everywhere.

Even where “evil” was real. In this he shared something of the reality-denying optimism of a number of contemporaries for whom “man is essentially good.” That belief collapsed two years before his death, -- when he was improving the proofs of *La justification du bien*.

Conclusion. -- Immediately the dream of a rapid and thorough realization of the kingdom of God became very fragile. He did remain convinced that Christianity was slowly transforming mankind. But the actual kingdom of God, of which he had dreamed, was henceforth for after an “Apocalypse,” -- for after a general resurrection. Cfr Herman, o.c., 139.

Note.-- Notwithstanding the Decalogue (Sinai theophany) and the glory (Transfiguration theophany) as “trump cards,” the Christianization of mankind seems to be proceeding extremely slowly, reeling from enormous resistances.

To this end, the testing of the kingdom of God.

The theological idealism of soloviev.

This chaplet is the conclusion.

Note.-- The term “idealism” is highly ambiguous.

a. In antiquity (and the Middle Ages) he stands for (Platonic) theory of ideas.

b. from the Modern times onwards, he stands for philosophy centered on abstract concepts.

1.-- Platon’s ideocentrism.

Platon once founded a theory of ideas.

An idea with him is **a.** a form of being, **b.** which explains both the general and the ideal (pictorial) in a basically endless series of copies of it. It is a presupposition. However, the idea, at least the ‘good’ or ‘sharing in the good’ is ‘divine’.

2. -- Albinos of Smurna’s theological theory of ideas.

Albinos (100/175) is the first thinker who, centuries after Platon, situates the ideas, understood Platonically, in God. They then become divine ideas stricto sensu.

3. -- Christian doctrine of ideas.

As O. Willmann, *Geschichte des Idealismus*, says: Christian developers quickly saw that between the basic structure of Platonic thought and that of Christianity there is some similarity of form. Hence they began to express Christian truths in Platonic terms, -- not without, in essence, seriously transforming them. Thus S. Augustine of Tagaste became and remained Platonic over time, even when converted. -- In Christian terms, the ideas are ideas of the Holy Trinity.

Note.-- O. Willmann, Gesch.d.Idealismus, III (Der Idealismus der Neuzeit), Braunschweig, 1907-2, 66, mentions the Pythagorean Platonism of Johannes Kepler (1571/1630), known for his "Kepler's laws" concerning planetary orbits.

"Ubi materia, ibi geometria"(Where there is matter, there is space mathematics) was his slogan. The essence of matter is captured by mathematics.

Our soul is attuned to this (Platon's "noble yoke") . -- She is even more: she is "imago Dei", image of, God.

In particular: the light of God's spirit in our soul, built into it in a created way, as it were, captures with God the essence of the material data.

What he calls "the laws of planetary orbits" is, according to him, already present in God's mind as an idea from all eternity. When God created our souls, He planted an image of His creation models (ideas) in our souls.

Conclusion. -- One form of Christian Platonism.

4. -- Soloviev's theory of ideas on creation evolution.

Something analogous proclaims Soloviev, but on evolutionary grounds.

4.1. -- The Phenomenal Basis.

Soloviev is explicit: there are facts - "phenomena" in Platonic language - which, if and only if something like evolution of being forms (inorganic and biological) is presupposed, are then intelligible. "Evolution in this sense cannot be denied".

4.2. -- The idea doctrine interpretation.

We provide an overview.

A.-- Bio.logically the higher life forms appear out of and after the lower forms. But ontologically they exist before.

In particular: the appearance from and after the lower forms of being does not at all imply that the lower forms of being create or produce the higher ones. -- Ontological reason: the higher ones are more full, 'richer' in valuable reality.

What is not or less real, cannot possibly produce what is real or more real. -- let alone “create” (in the Biblical sense e.g.).

Note -- Quite a few materialists get around this objection by arguing that the lower forms of matter already “germinate” or somehow “potentially” (= predispose) the higher ones.

Agreed, but then they are no longer purely lower, but lower and higher at the same time. -- Cfr. Sol. Cosm. 47v. (Soloviev’s reasoning).

B. -- *The role of the lower forms of being.*

This is limited to providing material conditions, i.e., a favorable middle of life.

Note.-- This comes down to the concept of a biotope (appropriate habitat).

Thus, natural humanity is the appropriate living center, after deification in a minimal way, of pneumatic humanity.

C. -- *New and/or eternal.*

a. The evolution of the cosmos gives us new forms of being. In this sense, Soloviev is really taking on “new” things.

b. From the perspective of the Trinity, however, the idea that takes material and created form in the course of the evolution of the cosmos is “eternal” just as the Trinity itself is eternal.

God - with His ideas, which He possesses from all eternity - exists from all eternity (without beginning).

What appears to us as “new” is merely the manifestation of something “eternal” in God’s spirit .

Note.-- The Biblical idea of creation includes all forms of being: also the idea of “evolution” is in God’s mind from all eternity. It guides Him in His work of creation.

One can still hear people say, “I don’t believe in God, because I am an evolutionist.” Such a person misunderstands the concept of a creative God. That is all.

Incidentally, if God can create unchangeable things, why can He not create changing things? No one gives any serious evidence of this impossibility.

Concluding remark. -- The welcome.

During his lifetime, Soloviev was little accepted. But after his death, his influence was enormous.

H. Isuolski, Soul of Russia, 136f., says that **a.** the Russian Symbolists (Alexander Block, Andrei Biely), **b.** N. Berdiaev, S. Boulgakov, the Neo-Orthodox theology (the Godhead as the main idea), **c.** a Russian-Catholic movement (in Moscow especially) followed in Soloviev’s footsteps.

Soloviev: cosmology. Contents and study notes. 66/67)

Preface.-	1
1	
Part I.-- Episodes from Soloviev's life. (01/07).....	11
Part II.-- Soloviev's Christian "realism" (07/16).....	77
Part III.-- Soloviev's philosophical "realism". (17/23).....	17
Part IV. -- Soloviev's earthboundness. (24/32).....	24
Part V.-- Thinkers for Soloviev. (33/40).....	33
Part VI.-- Soloviev's cosmology. (41/44).....	41
Part VII.-- Soloviev's cosmology.-- notes (45/65).	45
Soloviev: cosmology. Contents and study notes. 66/67)	66

Notes

Goal: To learn about typical Eastern Russian Christian realism . 'Realism' is seeing "words/concepts" as real representations.

I. -- *Episodes from Soloviev's life* (01/07).-- Crisis of faith. Survival of it. Crisis of Western philosophy (= Postmodernity). Resistance v. Oksidentalists and Slavophiles. Brutal elimination. Magic of Soloviev's personality. Mysticism.

II. -- *Soloviev's Christian realism* (07/16).-- The Eastern-Greek Church Fathers, from the Bible. -- *Appl. model.*-- The haimo.roöusa in the three gospel accounts. Further explanation (Three synoptics. --Healing/obligation. Different method/same result. Automatic or not. Practical Fideism. Synergy. Trinitarian life). -- Realism (textuological (dogmatic, textcritical, literatological, -- hermeneutical). Interpretationism.

III. -- *Soloviev's philosophical realism* (17/23).--

1. The pure Nominalist (mere sounds).
2. The Symbolidean Nominalist (sounds filled with our experience).
3. The Realist (facts cited, eyewitnesses, texts on the subject are reliable - real, actual - until further notice). Testing problem.
4. The Eastern Russian Realist (Liturgical ideation,-- worship of the gospel book; dramaturgical aspect).

IV. -- *Soloviev's earthboundness* (24/32).-- Sidereal world. Earth-mother belief. Plant nature.-- The Jesus Prayer: Jesus as risen omnipresent. His 'name' is the 'name' of all that comprises the cosmos, since his incarnation in the womb of Mary.

Note - Rom. 8:19/24 on the subject. -- The animal nature. The human nature (Mystical body).

V. -- *Thinkers for Soloviev* (33/40).-- Westernization. Russian “intelligentsia. Influences undergone by Soloviev. -- Russian - Christian Realists : Skovoroda, Chadaäev, Chomiakov, Belinsky. -Soloviev (Humanism).

VI. -- *Soloviev’s cosmology* (41/44).-- The five realms: inorganic, -plant, animal, human (natural), human (pneumatic).

VII. -- *Soloviev’s cosmology (notes)* (45/65).

Note.-- *The theological idealism of Soloviev* (63/65).-- The rich respond to as many ideas of the Holy Trinity.