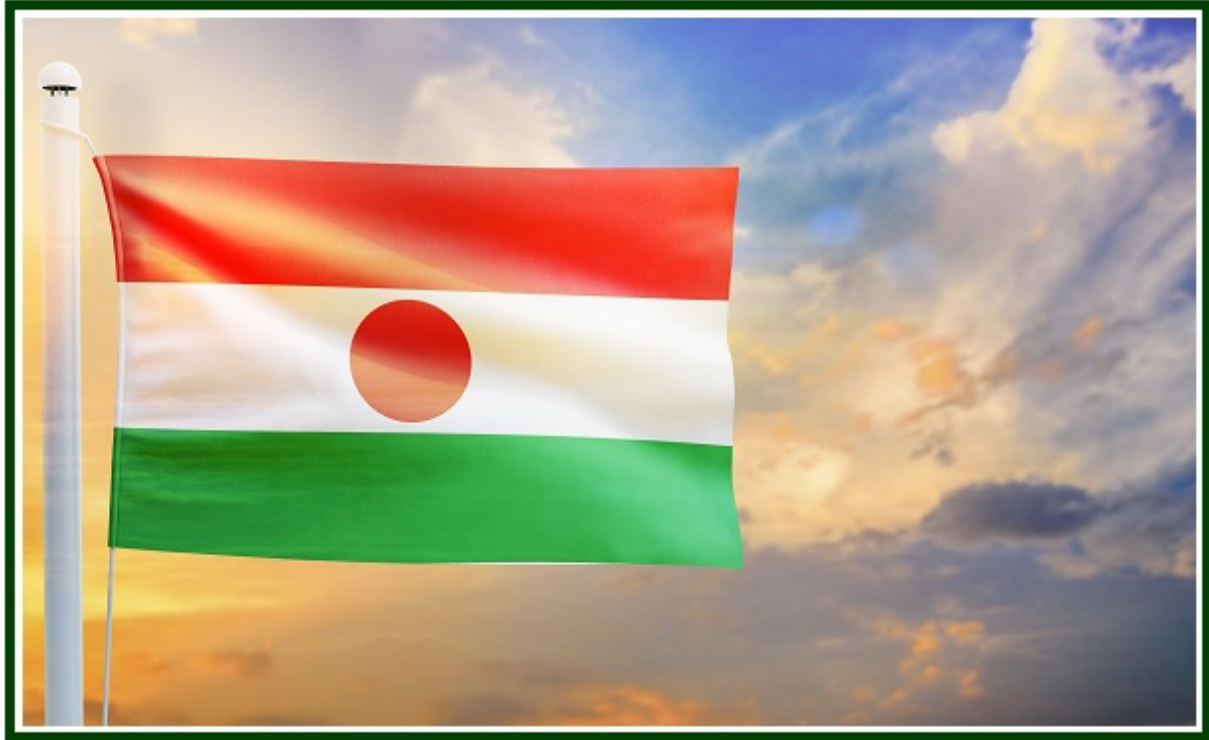




## Intercultural Harmony Among Nations: **Muslims Want Peace in Africa**

*Freepik*



**The Flag of Niger**

Allegations that the Islamic religion has incurable links to terrorism and violence are not confirmed by facts. The mechanistic labelling of a religion is never a wise thing to do.

Although the growing cooperation in recent years between Israel and several Muslim countries is ground-breaking in its powerful effects, it does not constitute an isolated reality. All over the world, most Muslims are peace-loving people. In several African countries, including Niger and Nigeria, Muslims are actively defending peace against the Western-inspired warmongering that threatens the continent.

For those who are spiritually inclined, this is no minor issue. War is more than a social and economic catastrophe. It severely harms the spiritual progress of mankind. It is the most radical enemy of universal brotherhood. It reduces many a human being to mental states dominated by blind fear and thoughtless hatred. It should be avoided, although the arms manufacturers in the West may disagree with the friends of mankind in this point.

Fortunately, in Niger, Muslims pray for peace and unity. The new military government established in July 2023 has the support of the population and religious organizations. [1]

In the neighboring Nigeria, the Ulama Forum (a forum of Islamic scholars) defends peace and condemns the recent military threats against Niger. A public document of the Forum expresses its view of the present crisis in Niger.

“The Guardian Nigeria” reports:

“In a letter signed by 25 members of the forum and made available to journalists in Kano, they insisted that the Federal Government (of Nigeria), and by extension the ECOWAS, should retract from treading the undemocratic path of issuing threats as solution to the unfortunate development.”

“They called for more enlightened and more informed diplomatic protocols in assisting Niger Republic to restore its democracy.”

The forum added:

“Nigerian National Assembly should wake up to its constitutional responsibility of critically looking into this issue and exercising the necessary check on the Executive and prevent Nigeria from going into needless war.”

“Faith based organisations in the country, from across the faiths, should embark on preaching for peace in the region and maintaining the good neighbourliness that has long existed between Nigeria and Niger.”

“The Ulama Forum calls upon the Muslim Ummah to embark on earnest prayers for Allah’s mercy in touching the hearts of our leaders so that they listen to the voice of reason and not to succumb to the influence of subterranean hands.”

“Subterranean hands” is an allusion to France and the USA, which have explored the natural resources of Africa and kept Niger and other nations in extreme poverty, while not helping them to defeat terrorism. This circumstance caused recent changes of government in several African countries which now condemn and reject Western domination.

The Forum of Islamic Scholars in Nigeria (the Southern neighbor of Niger) says:

“It is vitally important for the Nigerian government to consider its current formative stage and the security threats that are spread all over the nation which are stretching its resources and capabilities”, instead of rushing “into an avoidable conflict with a neighbour at the behest of global politicking.”

A clear reference to the warmongering coming from France and the US. The declaration proceeds:

“The Forum commends the latest diplomatic initiative of sending envoys by ECOWAS to engage the military leaders of Niger in a robust and constructive dialogue. This is indeed, the right way to go and it should be explored to the maximum extent.” [2]

Recent events in Africa unmask the dirty secrets of Western neocolonial practices. International life renews itself. A new era of mutual respect is emerging worldwide. African Muslim organizations want peace, order, political stability, respect for human rights, and national independence, so that terrorism loses its influence in the continent.

Some of the Western leaders suffer from a limited ability to see facts. They seem to be interested in sacking the natural resources of Africa and keeping the continent so poor and so divided that it cannot defend its rights, or preserve its cultural dignity. Western populations, however, see better than that and are natural friends of every country - regardless of religion or ethnical factors.

The next step in evolution is about universal respect and practical cooperation. Most religions are ready to promote brotherhood among sovereign nations, which will help create the moral foundations of a lasting peace. Fortunately, every form of ignorance is short-lived, and many a political leader is wise enough to adapt to new realities.

## NOTES:

[1] The newspaper “[Le Sahel](#)” describes a recent collective prayer in [Niger](#).

[2] The news is in “[The Guardian - Nigeria](#)”.

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# **An Offer to the Lord of Light** **From the Wisdom of Africa: The** **Fifth Prayer of the Truth-Seeking Man**

**P. G. Bowen**



For an age I dwelt alone with Blackness and with Light; and then once again in the Twilight Land I saw the two Brothers appear.

Calm and serene and glorious as before was the face and form of The Shining One, but weary and bowed was the figure of his Dark Brother, with all his Fires extinguished, save only his Flaming Crown.

And I saw that the Dark Face was veiled as of old, and that though the eyes looked towards the Bright Brother they saw him not at all. And I saw the bowed form sink to the earth, and I heard his voice murmur this prayer:

### **The Fifth Prayer of the Dark Man**

**O Sleeping Sun! O Hidden Fire! O Nameless Glory!  
Dawning is Nigh, Yet Blackness Thickens Round My Feet and Numbs My Heart, and  
Blinds My Eyes.  
Return, O Saving Glory: Return on Thy Courses, O Lord of the Flame!  
Touch Me Again with Thy Healing Flame  
And Kindle My fires to a New Birth.**

Long silence fell as the prayer ended: then to my waiting ears came the Golden Music of the Voice of the Shining Brother:

*The Golden Voice asked:* What is Thy desire, O weary brother?

*The Dark Brother answered:* I desire Thy coming, O Lord of Light, that this Dark Land may know the day.

*The Golden Voice asked:* What wilt thou sacrifice to thy desire, O Patient Watcher of the Night?

*The Dark Man answered:* I will sacrifice my *Shadow*, and my *Light*.

The Dark Brother bowed his Bright Crown to the Dust; and its Light was quenched; and Blackness swallowed the kneeling figure.

Timeless Silence endured while the Dark Brother dwelt with Blackness. Then from the deeps of the Silence a Voice of Immeasurable Music pealed out in these jewelled words:

**Light for Darkness: Rest for Toil: Joy for Pain:  
To Him who Yields up All to All these Precious Jewels Come.  
Thy Offering is Accepted, O Servant of the Night:  
Rise from the Darkness of the West, and Take Thy Just Reward.  
Brother, Receive this Body and this Light....**

I saw no more, for Form melted into Light, and the beams of ten thousand hidden Suns enveloped Boundless Space. I heard no more, for Words were lost in Sound, and the Voices of all the Circling Stars combined in a Chant of Peace.

Time was not, and I dwelt in Eternity with the Light, and joined in the Song of Peace.

(P.G. Bowen)

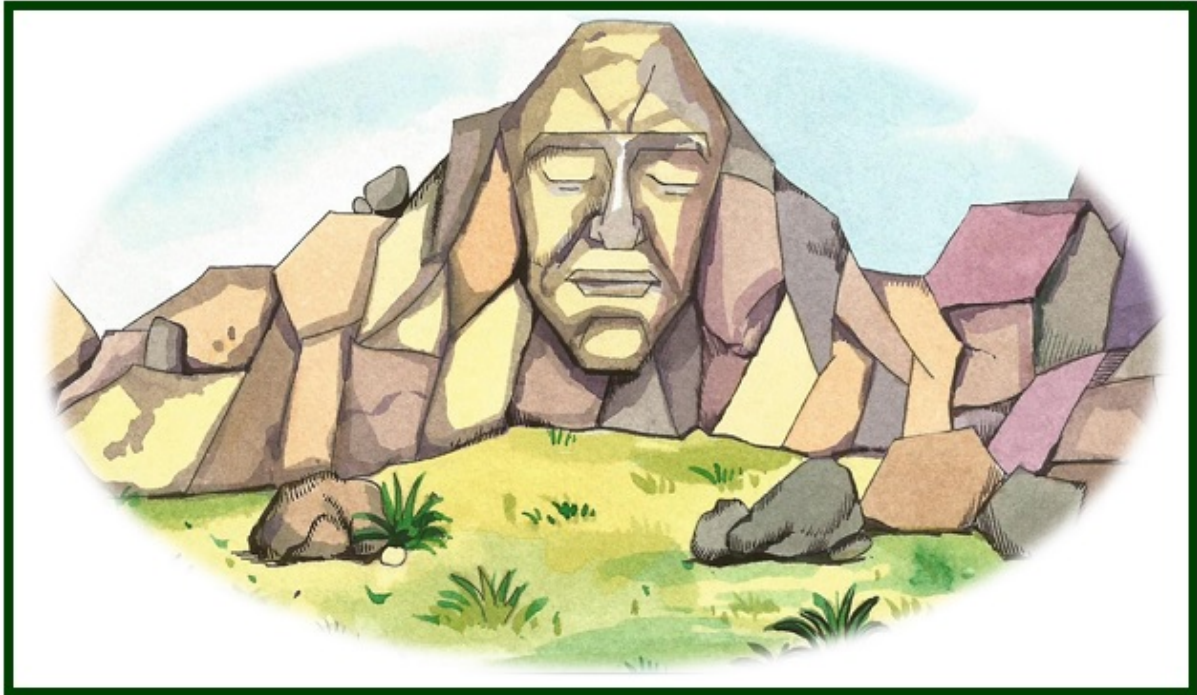
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The above text is reproduced from the book “**The Sayings of the Ancient One**”, by P.G. Bowen, which contains teachings from the ancient esoteric wisdom in Africa; Theosophical Publishing House in the UK, London, 1935-1985, 160 pages, see pp. 56-58.

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# **You Are Headed Toward Your Ideal** **Daily Remember the Moral Heroes Who Inspire You**

**O. S. Marden**



**Faith and the ideal still remain the most powerful levers of progress and of happiness.**

(Jean Finot)

**If we are content to unfold the life within according to the pattern given us, we shall reach the highest end of which we are capable.**

(Emerson)

**We tend to grow into the likeness of the things we long for most, think about most. The gods we worship write their names on our faces.**

(Emerson)

In Hawthorne's story, "The Great Stone Face", we have an impressive illustration of the power of an ideal. One's memory holds a vivid picture of its hero, whose mind had dwelt from childhood on the local tradition that a man-child should be born whose face would resemble that of the mountain profile above the little hamlet of his nativity; and that this child would eventually become the leader and savior of the people. So whole-heartedly did he believe the legend, so earnestly did he long for its fulfillment, and so constantly did his eyes dwell on the prophetic profile, that unconsciously his own features changed until, outwardly as well as inwardly, he completely embodied the ideal which his mind had absorbed.

On every hand we see illustrations of the transforming power of the ideal. It is outpictured in the faces we see in the street, in trains and shops, in theaters and churches, wherever people congregate.

How quickly we can select from a crowd of strangers the successful business man. His initiative, leadership, executive ability, speak out of his face and manner. The same is true of men in other vocations, - of the scholar, the clergyman, the lawyer, the teacher, the doctor, the farmer, the day laborer. Go into any institution, factory, store, or other place of business and you can quickly detect the nature of the ideals outpictured in the faces, in the expression, in the manner of the people you see there. Visit Sing Sing and you will see the power of the ideal which has worked like a leaven in its inmates. The criminal suggestion, the criminal thought, the criminal ideal is reflected in the faces of those who visualized crime, planned and thought out its details long before they committed the criminal act.

Whatever we hold in our minds, dwell upon, contemplate, whatever is dominant in our motives, will stand out in our flesh so that the world can read it. Many absolutely authentic cases of stigmata are recorded in the lives of medieval saints, on whose bodies appeared an exact reproduction of all the wounds of the crucified Christ. Some of these cases were in convents and monasteries, and were the result of long and intense concentration of the mind of the subject upon the physical sufferings of Christ. Frequently the phenomena occurred after the austerities of Lent, during which the monks and nuns had focused more intensely and steadily upon the tortures of the Savior's passion and death.

If the contemplation of those tortures, the constant mental picturing of the sufferings of the God-man, the soul's great sympathy with its ideal could change the very tissues of the body, could reproduce on it the actual physical marks of the cruel spear in the side, of the nails in the hands and feet and of the thorns in the head, think of the wonderful possibilities in the reversal of these thoughts and this picturing. Think of what the contemplation of the wonderful work accomplished by the Savior on earth, of the constant mental picturing of His glorious life, of His tenderness, and love for humanity, of His power and dignity, of His continual outpouring of Himself in service; think of what the constant holding of such an ideal, such a model, and the perpetual effort to realize it would do for the race!

We tend to become like what we admire, sympathize with and persistently hold in mind. The hero of "The Great Stone Face" became the counterpart of his ideal. The history of Christianity is a continuous record of the power of the ideal to raise men and women to their highest power. St. Paul, one of the most conspicuous of these examples, is so possessed, so enthused by the inspiration of his great model, that he cries, "I live, not I, but Christ in me".

"The contemplation of perfection is always uplifting." Nothing so strengthens the mind, enlarges manhood, or womanhood, widens the thought, as the constant effort to measure up to high ideals. The struggle to better our best, to make our highest moments permanent, the continual reaching of the mind to the things above and beyond, the steady pursuit of the ideal, which constantly advances as we pursue, is what has led the race up from savagery to twentieth century civilization.

A great artist was one day found by a friend in tears in his studio. When asked the cause of his distress, he replied, "I have produced a work with which I am satisfied, and I shall never produce another". It is said he never did. The inspiration that had urged him on was his ideal. That kept him always striving to improve on what he had previously done. Without it there was nothing to strive for.

Without an ideal there is no growth; and where there is no growth there is retrogression. Without a vision the people perish. Nothing in the universe is static. None of us stands still. We are all traveling in some direction, either forward or backward. Everything depends on the ideal.

What we admire and aspire to enters into the very texture of our being, becomes a part of us. If we had the power to analyze any individual, we could tell what books he had read, could detect the type of his friends and associates, and could name his heroes; that is, we could tell what ideals had actuated him.

Parents and teachers should urge upon the young the importance of hero worship, of choosing the highest human ideals. Our lives are molded chiefly after the pattern of the ideals of our youth, and there is no danger of too much hero worship, if only the heroes are worthy.

History is full of examples of the powerful influence of ideals upon our great men. It is said that Alexander the Great always carried a copy of Homer's "Iliad" in his pocket, and that he never tired of reading about Achilles, the great hero, whom he was ambitious to resemble. Many a young man in this country who has been inspired, encouraged and stimulated by Lincoln's career, has not only lived a grander life and made a truer success because he modeled his life after that of his hero, but he has developed many qualities in common with Lincoln which otherwise might have lain forever dormant. Many a young officer in our army is more efficient because of his imitation of Grant and Lee, the ideals which haunted his dreams and which have ever urged him up and on.

It is of the utmost importance to choose our ideal early in life, a high and beautiful ideal that shall be our pole star, the highest, brightest light we know. A recent writer says: "My advice to all those just starting to travel life's turnpike is:

*"Don't start until you have your ideal.  
Then don't stop until you get it."*

Of course we all have ideals of some kind when we are young; but how many of us keep them even till middle age? What young man has entered into active life without an ideal before him of what he is going to do, and how the world is going to be bettered by him? What young girl but who, leaving school, life smiling before her, dreams of the ideal love she will find, the ideal happy home she will make, and the beautiful work she will do in life with the ideal man of her girlish dreams by her side? But do the youth and the maiden hold these ideals throughout the years, with the strength of conviction that overcomes all difficulties, or do they abandon them with the first discouragement and settle down into a commonplace existence with interest in nothing above the material?

To youth, naturally, come glorious ideals, not only of what one's own life is to be, but of what life in general should be, - the ideal man, the ideal woman, the ideal social system, - and with all these is a vague desire or intention to help toward their fulfillment. But too often the result of disappointment in the effort to better conditions is, first, to give up the hope of realizing the ideal, and then to abandon the ideal itself. Here is where the great danger of retrogression comes in. Unless the ideal be held with a tenacity that no failure or disappointment can relax, it is apt to fade away after the first ardor of youth is past.

One of the greatest aids to the preservation of the youthful ideal in all its freshness and beauty is to recall frequently, daily, the moral heroes who first gave one a glimpse of one's possibilities and aroused one's ambition. Read the special books, or particular chapters which fired you to emulate some noble character. Renew yourself mentally by visualizing the life



and work of men and women who have wrought nobly for humanity. Think of the Washingtons, the Franklins, the Lincolns, the Emersons, the Ruskins, the Florence Nightingales, the Jane Addams, the Susan B. Anthonys, the Frances Willards, and you will be strengthened to resist the debasing influence of the fierce competition for wealth and preferment, even for mere subsistence, which in so many instances pushes out of sight the aspirations and ideals of youth. Keep constantly in mind the grand characters whose achievements aroused you to noble thoughts and endeavor in the springtime of life and your standards will never drop. Character always develops according to the pattern within us. No artist could paint the face of Christ with the model of Judas before his mental vision. No great character can ever be built with low, groveling ideals in the mind.

The constant struggle to measure up to a high ideal is the only force in heaven or on earth that can make a life great, beautiful and fruitful. If we would ever accomplish anything of worth, if we would ever establish our oneness with the Creator, and accomplish the work He sent us here to do, we must live up to our ideal.

With eyes fixed on this ideal, we must work with heart and hand and brain; with a faith that never grows dim, with a resolution that never wavers, with a patience that is akin to genius, we must persevere unto the end; for, as we advance, our ideal as steadily moves upward.

“The situation that has not its duty, its ideal”, says Carlyle, “was never yet occupied by man. Yes, here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy ideal; work it out therefrom, and, working, believe, live, be free. Fool! the ideal is in thyself.”

Never were truer words spoken. Wrapped up in every human being there are divine energies which, if given proper direction, will develop the ideal from stage to stage. Who sees a sculptor at work upon a block of marble sees what appears to be only a mechanical performance. But, out of sight in the sculptor’s brain, there is a quiet presence we do not perceive; and every movement of the hand is impelled by that shining thought within the brain. That presence is the ideal. Without it he would be a mason; through it he becomes an artist.

“The ideal is the real.” By it we shape our lives as the sculptor shapes the image from the rough marble. External means alone will not accomplish this. You must lay hold of eternal principles, of the everlasting verities, or you never can approach your ideal. Your first advance toward it lies in what you are doing now, in what you are thinking. Not on some far-off height, in some distant scene, or fabled land, where longing without endeavor is magically satisfied, will we carve out the ideal that haunts our souls, but “here and now in this poor, mean Actual, here or nowhere is our ideal!”

In the humble valley, on the boundless prairie, on the farm, on sea or on land, in workshop, store, or office, wherever there is honest work for the hand and brain of man to do, - within the circumscribed limits of our daily duties, is the field wherein the outworking of our ideal must be wrought.

“Your circumstances may be uncongenial”, says James Allen, “but they shall not long remain so if you but perceive an Ideal and strive to reach it. You cannot travel within and stand still without. Here is a youth hard pressed by poverty and labor; confined long hours in an unhealthy workshop; unschooled, and lacking all the arts of refinement. But he dreams of better things; he thinks of intelligence, of refinement, of grace and beauty. He conceives of, mentally builds up, an ideal condition of life; the vision of a wider liberty and a larger scope

takes possession of him; unrest urges him to action, and he utilizes all his spare time and means, small though they are, to the development of his latent powers and resources. Very soon so altered has his mind become that the workshop can no longer hold him. It has become so out of harmony with his mentality that it falls out of his life as a garment is cast aside, and, with the growth of opportunities which fit the scope of his expanding powers, he passes out of it forever. Years later we see this youth as a full-grown man. We find him a master of certain forces of the mind which he wields with worldwide influence and almost unequalled power. In his hands he holds the cords of gigantic responsibilities; he speaks, and lo! lives are changed; men and women hang upon his words and remold their characters, and, sun-like, he becomes the fixed and luminous center round which innumerable destinies revolve. He has realized the Vision of his youth. He has become one with his Ideal.”

The great curse of the average person is commonness, - the lack of aspiring ideals. There are thousands of farmers who never get above cattle and wheat, of doctors who never become superior to prescriptions and diseases, of lawyers who never wholly subordinate their briefs. The ideals of the masses rarely rise out of mediocrity. Most of us live in the basement of our lives, while the upper stories are all unused. Millions of human beings never get out of the kitchen of their existence. We need aspiration and great thought-models to lift us.

God has whispered into the ear of all existence, “Look up”. There is potential celestial gravitation in every mortal. There is a spiritual hunger in humanity which, if fed and nourished, will lead to the upbuilding and developing of great souls. There is a latent divinity in every son of Adam, which must be aroused before there can be any great progress in individual uplift.

In a factory where mariners’ compasses are made before the needles are magnetized, they will lie in any position, but when once touched by the mighty magnet, once electrified by that mysterious power, they ever afterwards point only in one direction. Many a young life lies listless, purposeless, until touched by the Divine magnet, after which, if it nourishes its aspirations, it always points to the north star of its hope and its ideal.

Every faintest aspiration that springs up in our heart is a heavenly seed within us which will grow and develop into rich beauty if only it be fed, encouraged. The better things do not grow either in material or mental soil without care and nourishment. Only weeds, briars, and noxious plants thrive easily.

The aspiration that is not translated into active effort will die, just as any power or function that is not used will atrophy or disappear. The ostrich, naturalists say, once had wonderful wings, but not caring to use them, preferring to walk on the earth rather than mount in the air, it practically lost its wings, their strength passing into its legs. The giraffe probably once had only an ordinary neck, like other animals, but being long used to reach up to gather its food from the branches of trees, it lifted its body in the upward direction until it is now the tallest of all animals, its elongated neck enabling it to gather the leaves from lofty trees.

Something like this takes place continually in human lives. We rise or fall by our ideals, by our pursuit or our disregard of them. The majority of us make bungling work of our living. We spend much precious time and effort catering to the desires of our animal natures and live chiefly along the lines of life’s lower aims and opportunities when we might be soaring.

Everywhere we see men making a splendid living, but a very poor life; succeeding in their vocations but failing as men, swerving from their own highest ideals for the sake of making a little more money. On every hand we see people sacrificing the higher to the lower, dwarfing

the best thing in them for a superficial material advantage, selling the birthright of the soul's ideal for a mess of pottage.

Is there any reason or intelligence in a man's continuing to turn his ability, his energies, all there is in him, into dollars after he has many times more of these than he can ever use for living and betterment? Is the gift of life so cheap, so meaningless, of so little importance, that we can afford to spend time on things that do not endure, - upon unnecessary material things which so soon pass away, - to the neglect of those that endure? We know that life is our great opportunity to acquit ourselves like men. Yet it is too often into these transient things that we pour the full force of our energies, while we only sigh and "wish" that we could achieve our ideals. We sacrifice much to gain wealth, but practically nothing to realize the outreach of our souls.

Yet the ideal is indeed the "pearl of great price", in the balance with which "all that a man hath" besides is as nothing. The red letter men of the world have always been men of high ideals, to which they were ever loyal: men who have said "this one thing I do", and have put the whole strength of their lives into their effort to realize their ideal.

If from the start you listen to and obey that something within which urges you to find the road that leads up higher; if you listen to and obey the voice which bids you look up and not down, which ever calls you on and up, no matter what its outward seeming, your life can not be a failure. The really successful men and women are those who by the nobility of their example contribute to the uplift, the happiness, the enlargement of life, to the wisdom of the world, - not those who have merely piled up selfish dollars. A rich personality enriches everybody who comes in contact with it. Everybody who touches a noble life feels ennobled thereby.

There is machinery so delicate that it can measure the least expenditure of physical force. If similar machinery could be devised for measuring character many a millionaire would be chagrined at the record of his own just measurement, while many an humble worker would be amazed at the high mark his earnest unceasing efforts to reach his ideal had achieved.

I believe the time will come when not money, but growth, not lands and houses, but mental and moral expansion in larger and nobler living, will be even the popular measure of true riches, real success. The measure of a successful man will be that of his soul; he will be rated in a new sort of Bradstreet, a spiritual Bradstreet, as a large heart, a magnanimous mind, a cultured intellect, instead of as a great check book.

Phillips Brooks said: "The ideal life of full completion haunts us all. We feel the thing we ought to be beating beneath the thing we are. God hides some ideal in every human soul. At some time in his life, each feels a trembling, fearful longing to do some great good thing. Life finds its noblest spring of excellence in its hidden impulse to do one's best."

Everyone who substitutes the finer for the cheaper goal, each one who to-day and every day holds to his high ideal despite the stress and turmoil of modern daily living, in such measure hastens the day when such an ideal will be the inspiration of the masses and the power that moves the world.

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The above article reproduces chapter twelve of the book "**The Victorious Attitude**", by O.S. Marden. The volume was published in 1916 in the U.S.A. by Thomas Y. Crowell Company.

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## In Portugal, the Pope Defends Life, Attacks War, Condemns Euthanasia



Every voice is welcome that stimulates respect for life, good will and mutual help among different cultures and civilizations.

Pope Francis visited Portugal in August 2023 to take part in the World Youth Day. Upon arrival, he spoke against abortion and euthanasia. Francis defended the basic principle that life is sacred, and condemned those who promote the war in Ukraine.

Independent observers know that a large part of the Ukrainian population is ethnically Russian. They are aware of the fact that the campaign of the Kiev regime against Russian Ukrainians and Russia was fabricated and has been kept alive by the NATO countries and their media, since the expensive 2014 coup d'état, which was financed and organized by the USA.

While not mentioning these facts in his visit to Portugal, the pope said he thinks the duty of Western Europe is to promote peace, not war - in Ukraine and elsewhere. His position is helpful.

As authoritarian censorship is now fashionable in the West, the big media in United States and other rich countries was submissive enough to keep silence and meekly ignored the pope's anti-war remarks.

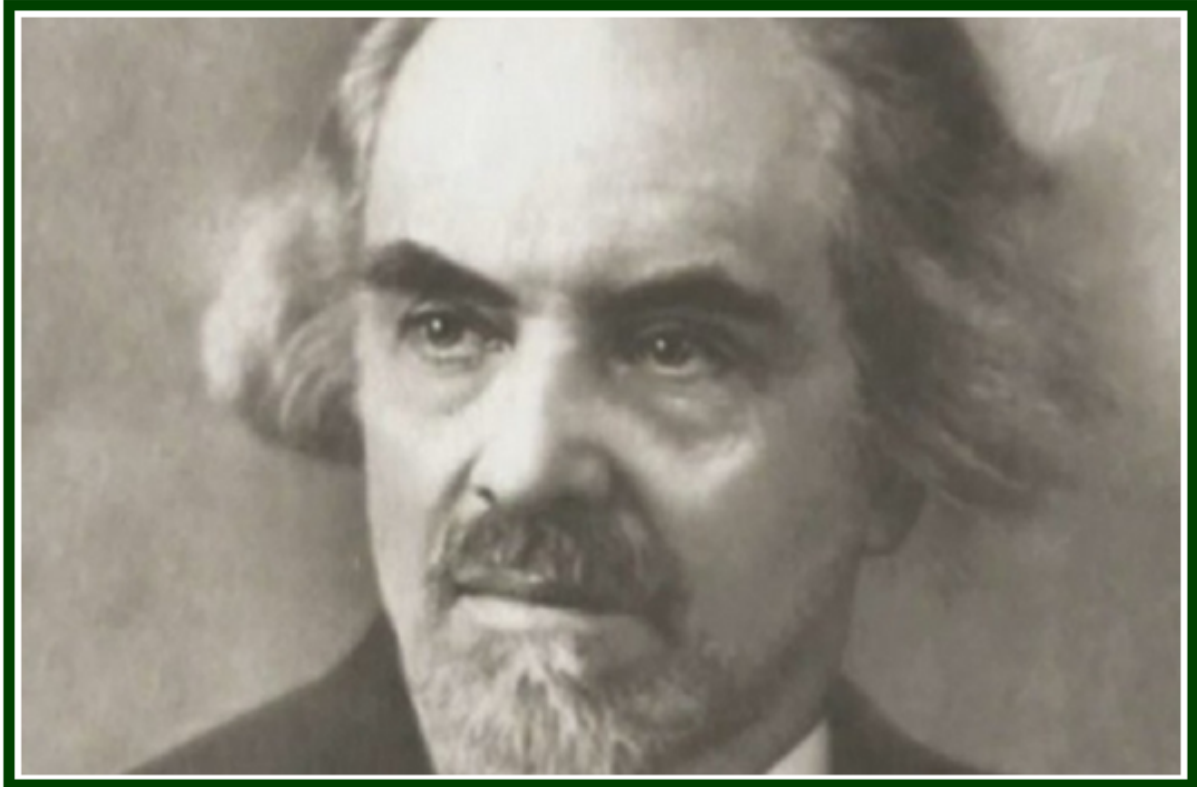
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Read more:

\* [Progress in the Art of Massacre](#), by [Visconde de Figanière](#).

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## Russian Thinkers, on the Science of Willpower



N. Berdyaev (1874-1948)

- \* All the substance of human dignity is in honest and unselfish action. In the strength of willpower, we find the conditions of our success along the chosen course of life. (Vissarion Belinsky)
- \* A mature and free will is a creative will that emerges from itself into cosmic life. (Nicolas Berdyaev)
- \* Freedom from the “world” is a connection with the true world - the cosmos. Getting out of yourself is finding yourself, your nucleus. And we can and should feel like real people, with a nucleus of personality, with an authentic, not illusory religious will. (Nicolas Berdyaev)
- \* What is will, if not a thought turning into action? (Alexander Bestuzhev-Marlinsky)
- \* The wise man does not submit to the reckless will of the crowd, but he himself sets its direction. (Ivan Lazhechnikov)
- \* The Russian people are fulfilling their great and national and human task, when all the forces of the great people are working regularly and in harmony, from the tsar to the plowman and the soldier! As long as everything is quiet, everyone, like ants, lives, works, as if in disunity. People think, feel about themselves and for themselves; they probably speak

different languages. But as soon as a cloud appears on the horizon, a war starts, starvation or some other trouble overtakes Russia - look! All moral and material forces are combined, everything merges into one feeling, into one thought, one will - and suddenly everyone, as if under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, instantly understands each other and speaks the same language, with one strength! (Ivan Goncharov)

\* The rupture of will and reason is a painful drama in the life of an individual, and if it occurs in the life of a nation, this rupture is a tragedy. (Maxim Gorky)

\* Nothing is done without an effort of the will, without sacrifice and labour. Human will, the will of one resolute man, is terribly great. (Alexander Herzen)

\* The will of a person can do a lot; its strength is tremendous; there is almost no limit to it as long as it is pure, selflessly surrendering to the Ideal, and feeling the ocean currents inside itself. (Alexander Herzen)

\* People swim as the will would have it, where an unknown force pushes them. And a thinking person senses this direction better than others and, consequently, chooses it before others. (Boris Mozhaev)

\* Rules for submitting the feeling of self-interest to will: *Live always in harder circumstances than you could live. Do not change your way of life, even if you become ten times richer. Use every addition to your property not for yourself, but for society.* (Leo Tolstoy)

\* Our will, like our muscles, is strengthened by ever-increasing activity; without giving them exercise, you are bound to have weak muscles, and weak will. (Konstantin Ushinsky)

\* Firmness is strength, based on the union of reason and will. (Vasily Zhukovsky)

\* Stubbornness is a weakness that has the appearance of strength. It comes from an imbalance in the union of reason and will. (Vasily Zhukovsky)

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The above thoughts were selected by Olga Attovna Fedorova. Source: "Dictionary of Aphorisms of Russian Writers", compiled by A. V. Korolkova, A. G. Lomov, A. N. Tikhonov. Nicolas Berdyaev: "The Meaning of Creativity, the Experience of Human Justification" (in Russian language), chapter VII, M., edition of G.A. Leman and S.I. Sakharov, Moscow, 1916, 358 pages. There is also an English edition of "The Meaning of the Creative Act", which includes the updating of the contents that was made by the author in 1926, for the German edition of 1927. The English edition was translated by Donald A. Lowrie and published by Harpers & Brothers, New York; copyright 1955; printed in England, 344 pp.

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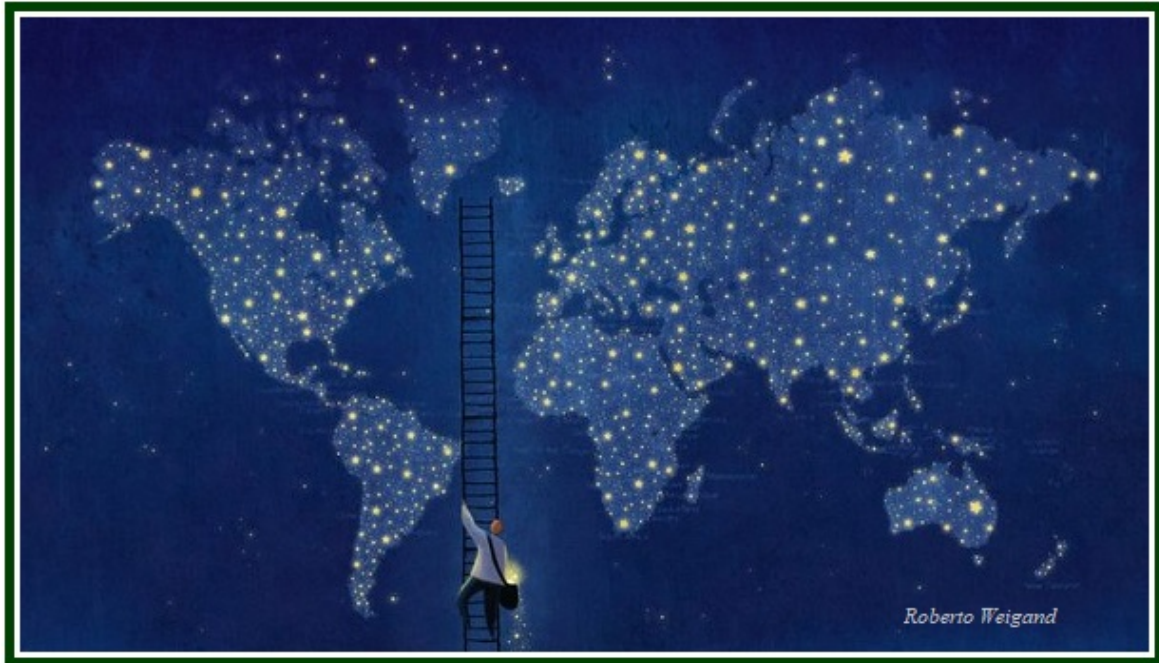
## [How Theosophy Defeats Racism](#)

### [Understanding the Law of Justice, of Ethics and Universal Brotherhood](#)

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# Thoughts Along the Road

## When Ignorance Becomes Talkative, Opinions Start Playing a Key Role in Life



\* **A**t all times, an honest questioning has stimulating effects. One day a couple of friends discussed on Facebook a sentence in the article “The Challenge of Learning”.

\* “*Opinions cannot replace knowledge*”, says the sentence [1] - to which a reader commented: “*But this is only your opinion.*”

\* And a theosophist explained:

\* “The sentence is not meant to be a weapon against anyone. It states a simple fact: it is up to each pilgrim to examine in practical terms what the actual difference is, in his own life, between knowledge and opinion.”

\* In theosophy, each student must be his own master. He has to “take up his cross” and walk along the Path, as recommended in Matthew (16:24). In other words, the learner must assume responsibility for his own Karma and follow the Wisdom taught by the immortal sages.

\* Another reader wrote on the same sentence:

\* “Opinions cannot replace knowledge, no doubt. But what about opinions based on intuition?”

\* We then said:

\* “The idea of the sentence is not to solve all problems at once, nor deny the complexity of life. The sentence but indicates the fact that *there is a difference* between believing something and having direct knowledge. All the rest remains unsolved. One sentence is always a limited assertion, even if it is valuable. Progress is made step by step.”

\* “Besides, one must be careful in using concepts. What exactly is intuition? True knowledge of intuition may require an enduring process involving meditation, study and self-examination. Even when there is a *direct knowledge* of intuition, it is not easy to express it in so many words. Lots of people have opinions about intuition. A smaller number of individuals have a direct and accurate knowledge of it - but they find it difficult to demonstrate it for non-intuitive people to see.”

\* Ignorance is often talkative, while knowledge lives in harmony with silence. Propaganda campaigns promote the opposite of truth. Theosophy is not about imposing ideas on others. It aims instead at stimulating self-knowledge, self-respect, self-control, patience - and a love for truth.

## **Learning to Learn:** **A Lesson to the West**

\* Truth-seekers do not aim at replacing any of the existing religions or philosophies. If they have a universal view of things, they study and try to live up to the common essential wisdom present in the main religions, philosophies, sciences, and arts.

\* Yet everything is dynamic. As the richest part of the West has to deal with an accumulated Karma of materialistic ignorance, the friends of wisdom must make sure they have enough detachment regarding the various forms of decay that surround them. After dominating the world for a 500 year cycle, the West has been quick to destroy itself from a moral, religious, cultural, and even demographic-migratory point of view.

\* On the other hand, citizens from every nation can get spiritual renewal and unlimited inspiration from non-Western civilizations and their philosophies, and from various spiritual traditions usually suppressed by colonial and neocolonial practices.

\* The wisdom from the ancient West is also inspiring. For many centuries the West had true spiritual impulses. Self-destruction accelerated, it seems, since the industrial revolution. Pythagoreanism and Platonism are tantamount to theosophy. The two philosophies are present in the essence of Christianity. They are available even now, if one pays attention to them. The same can be said of the Jewish wisdom, one of the main sources of Christianity, which has much in common with theosophy.

\* Medieval philosophers transmit to us - to a large extent - the sacred message coming from the ancient Western wisdom. Andean philosophy talks to us, along with the African philosophy. The Russian wisdom and the ancient sages of Asia can be heard by us. In all such instances, however, one must go beyond appearance - and transcend dead letter.

\* There is no reason to despair. In human evolution, often the deepest failures are the sources of the best lessons. Every “end of times” paves the way to a new bright epoch. Western societies can always start again from the essentials, leaving aside their established forms of egotistical pride and ignorance.



\* Each individual will help the birth of the new age by listening to the silent voice of his own conscience. The price to pay for this privilege is in rejecting the mechanisms of collective hypnotism. One should look at human misery from the point of view of the spiritual soul.

\* Many Western nations will be blessed if they *learn to learn* from the lands and continents they have systematic despised for the last 500 years. There is much to *unveil* in the neglected spiritual traditions of indigenous peoples around the world, including Asian nations.

\* Truth will liberate the West.

\* By humbly correcting their mistakes and seeking for eternal wisdom, our societies may correctly rebuild themselves. And this seems to be the next phase in human history. It is the step to take, now that old cycles end and new and better times get gradually inaugurated.

## **The Science of the Soul:** **How to Develop Willpower**

\* Portuguese physician and educator João Serras e Silva wrote in the early 1940s:

\* “The way to develop willpower is clear; everyone can try to develop this precious faculty any time. An abstention from speaking, or from being silent; the containment of the tendency to follow curiosity, vanity, gluttony, a thousand things, is enough to fortify the will. As there is a gymnastics to strengthen weak muscles, there is also a gymnastics to tone up an anemic will. In both cases experts have invented appropriate techniques.” [2]

(CCA)

### NOTES:

[1] See “[The Challenge of Learning](#)”.

[2] Translated from the article “Como Educar a Vontade”, published in the July 2023 edition of “O Teosofista”. Portuguese thinker João Serras e Silva was born in 1868 and lived up to 1956.

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## **Spiritual Light in the United States:** **The Wisdom of William Penn** **Philosophical and Theosophical** **Thoughts by the Founder of Pennsylvania**

**William Penn**

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**J**oin the Google Group **E-Theosophy**: <https://groups.google.com/g/e-theosophy>.

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# The New Items In Our Websites

On 11 August we had 3221 items in the associated websites, including texts, books, poems, audios and videos.

Of these, 25 items were in [Russian](#), 23 items in [French](#), 309 in [Spanish](#), 1431 in [English](#) and 1433 in [Portuguese](#).<sup>[1]</sup>

The following items were published in English, Spanish and Russian between 07 July and 11 August 2023. The more recent titles are above:

1. **Una Lección Para Henry Olcott** - Carlos Cardoso Aveline
2. **A Heroic Legend** - N. Misheyev [a booklet]
3. **El Teósofo Acuariano 21, Agosto de 2023**
4. **Unos Versos a Tijsi Viracocha** - Jesús Lara (Ed.)
5. **Progress in the Art of Massacre** - Visconde de Figanière
6. **¿Quién Tiene Derecho a Juzgar?** - Carlos Cardoso Aveline
7. **El Disco Solar de Diecisiete Rayos** - Helena P. Blavatsky
8. **Thoughts Along the Road - 71** - Carlos Cardoso Aveline
9. **Progrès dans l'Art du Massacre** - Visconde de Figanière
10. **Теософ эпохи Водолея, июль 2023** [*The Aquarian* in Russian language]
11. **Pachakuti, Una Clave del Futuro** - Carlos Cardoso Aveline
12. **Los Andes y los Mahatmas** - Carlos Cardoso Aveline
13. **The Aquarian Theosophist, July 2023**

NOTE:

[1] These are some of our associated websites: [www.TheosophyOnline.com](http://www.TheosophyOnline.com), [www.HelenaBlavatsky.net](http://www.HelenaBlavatsky.net), [www.HelenaBlavatsky.org](http://www.HelenaBlavatsky.org), [www.FilosofiaEsoterica.com](http://www.FilosofiaEsoterica.com), [www.CarlosCardosoAveline.com](http://www.CarlosCardosoAveline.com), [www.TheAquarianTheosophist.com](http://www.TheAquarianTheosophist.com), and [www.RussianTheosophist.com](http://www.RussianTheosophist.com).

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## **A Heroic Legend**

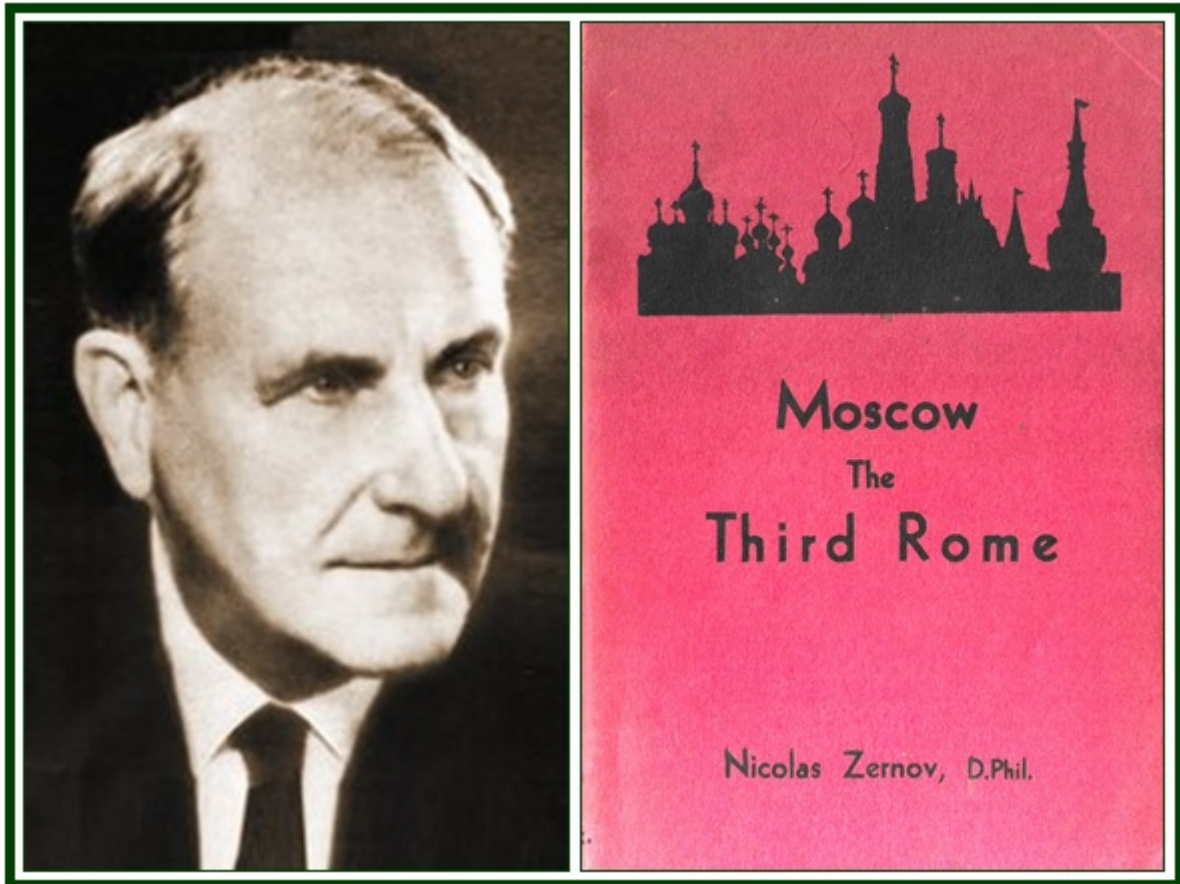
### **How the Holy Mountains Let Out of Their Deep Caves the Mighty Heroes of Russia**

**N. Misheyev**

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Spiritual Light from the East  
**The Triumph of Moscow**  
Russia and the Mystery of the  
Third Rome in Christian Tradition

Nicolas Zernov



Nicolas Zernov (1898-1980) and the front cover of his book

The fifteenth century and the first part of the sixteenth, so important in the development of modern Europe, were equally decisive in the history of eastern Christendom. In the West, the hundred years between 1450 and 1550 made a complete break with the past and created a new Europe sharply divided into two hostile religious camps. In the East this period was one of transition from the Byzantine to the Russian Empire, from Constantinople to Moscow, from the second to the third Rome. But whereas the Reformation is one of the best studied subjects, the religious and political changes which occurred almost simultaneously in the East have been passed over almost in silence.

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 was one of the greatest catastrophes of history. It stopped for centuries the cultural development of the near East, it retarded the advance of Christian civilization, it also affected the normal intercourse between Asia and Europe, which has not

yet been restored to its full degree. The Byzantine Empire formed a natural bridge between Asia and Europe, where East and West could meet and enrich the life of the other on the basis of mutual respect and equality. This co-operation received its first set-back with the split between the Greco-Roman and Semitic elements in Christianity during the Monophysite controversy of the fifth and sixth centuries. It was further endangered, first by the advance of the Mohammedans and then by the Crusades, and was finally ended in 1453. When the contacts were later renewed they took the new form of the colonial domination of the West over the East.

The breach between these two parts of the world brought about by the fall of the Byzantine Empire was, however, not as complete as is usually supposed. Byzantium had an heir and successor in the north. There the Russian Empire continued, although along very different lines, the work of its predecessors of Rome and Constantinople; it became a new link between the East and West, stretching its frontiers from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the North Polar Sea to the borders of China, India, Persia and Turkey, and so uniting once again Europe and Asia.

The growth of every great Empire has been inspired by some dominating ideas. The Russian Empire was founded on the belief that it had received from God the task of defending the true Faith, of continuing the work begun by Constantine the Great and commissioned by him to the Byzantine Empire.

In order to understand how the idea that Moscow is the heir of Constantinople was born we have to remember that the Empire was believed in the East to be, like the Church, an indispensable part of God's plan for the salvation of the human race. Constantinople, the second Rome, was the recognised capital of the Christian Empire, a city especially protected by the Divine grace and selected by God for the maintenance of the Orthodox Faith and worship. Until it had actually happened it would have seemed unbelievable that God should allow this Holy City to be taken by the Turks, its magnificent churches to be profaned, and the relics of the saints and other treasures of Christian piety and art to be destroyed.

This catastrophe, comparable only to the destruction of Jerusalem or the sack of Rome, required an explanation, and this was found in the apostasy of the Emperor and the Ecumenical Patriarch, both of whom had betrayed the true faith of their fathers in the hope of obtaining military help from the West. At the Council of Florence in 1439 they had entered into communion with the Latins on the basis of the submission of the Orthodox Church to the Papacy.

This explanation of God's wrath provided a moral justification of the fall of Constantinople, but there still remained the problem of how to preserve the Christian revelation without the help of the Empire.

There seemed to be only two alternatives: either this disaster was an omen of the approaching end of the world (which was universally expected in the East in 1492, in the seven thousandth year from the creation of the world according to the Eastern tradition) or the rejection of the Greeks for their faithlessness was only a temporary punishment, and God in His mercy would select another nation which would restore the Empire and eventually deliver the Christians from the oppression of the Mohammedans. The second view was gradually accepted throughout the whole East, especially when the expected end of the world did not take place. This conviction provided a soil on which the belief in Moscow, the third and last Rome, could take vigorous root.

The feeling that the Greeks had betrayed their Orthodoxy, and were therefore punished by God, was particularly strong in the remote Church of Russia, where anti-Latin tendencies were very pronounced. Although the Russian Church had at the beginning shown little interest in the conflict between Rome and Constantinople, and did not take any part in the final breach between them, it gradually learnt to consider the Western Christians as apostates, and towards the end of the fifteenth century outstripped even the Greeks in their condemnation of all the Western customs and traditions. The Council of Florence was repudiated by the Russian Church, and Isidor, a Greek Metropolitan of Moscow, who was one of the great supporters of “Unia”, was after his return from Italy immediately banished from the country.

Canonical relations between Constantinople and Moscow were temporarily suspended, for the Russians were unwilling to be in communion with those who might be already infected with Latin heresy. Thus the Russians came to believe that they were the chosen nation, their orthodoxy and their devotion to the Church being superior to that of their Greek teachers, since they alone remained uncompromisingly hostile to Rome.

This conviction was strengthened by the rapid growth of the principality of Moscow, which coincided with the gradual decline of the Byzantine Empire. Thus at a time when all other Eastern Christians were being forced, one after the other, to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Mohammedans, the Russians won their political independence and their prince acquired the title of “the Autocrat” or “Tsar”, which belonged to the Emperor alone. Colour was given to the idea that the Moscow princes were the heirs of the Byzantine Emperors by the marriage between John the Third and Sophia Palaeologus, niece of the last Emperor of Constantinople, 1472. After that Russia adopted the Byzantine coat of arms bearing the two-headed eagle (photo).



To the Russians it seemed that, if the Greeks were rejected by God for the betrayal of orthodoxy, they themselves were restored to political independence because of their devotion to the Church. The Russian nation was the last stronghold of the Orthodox Faith, and would thus inherit all the privileges and duties of the Christian Roman Empire. Its new capital Moscow was to take the place of Constantinople, and was to become the third and last Rome.

This conviction was not born of any one place or person. It sprang spontaneously in all parts of the Eastern Christendom, and was soon well established both in and outside Russia, being recognised in Greece, in Asia Minor, and among the Slavonic nations of the Balkans. We find

its first literary expression in the writings of a monk named Philotheus [1], who in his epistle to the Grand Duke Basil the Third (1505-1533) made the following statement: “The first Rome collapsed owing to its heresies, the second Rome fell a victim to the Turks, but a new and third Rome has sprung in the North, illuminating the whole universe like a sun”. The Russian Tsar was, according to Philotheus, the sole head of all the Christians; all the Christian kingdoms were merged in his realm; he was the legitimate heir of the great Roman Emperors. “The first and second Rome have fallen, but the third will stand till the end of history, for it is the last Rome. Moscow has no successor; a fourth Rome is inconceivable.”

But if this idea of Russia’s special mission was accepted almost at once, it needed longer before it became clear that the Russian message to Christendom had a character of its own, distinct from that of Rome and Constantinople.

Russian Christianity has from the beginning of its history been absorbed in the problem of sanctifying the whole of human life and in perfecting the art of Christian worship. The Russian Church has never been able either to equal the Roman in her vision of unity, order and discipline, or to follow the interest of the Greeks in theology, but she has, however, become supreme in the beauty of her worship and in the originality of her approach to the question of Christian conduct. [2]

Thus in her own spheres the Russian Church was able to bring fresh gifts to the treasury of Christianity and the unique character of her message justified her belief that Moscow could rank with Rome and Constantinople as one of the spiritual centres of Christendom.

## NOTES:

[1] The best study of his life and works, *Philotheus and his Epistles*, is by V. Malinin. Kiev, 1901 (in Russian). (Note by N. Zernov)

[2] A Russian writer of the time of the fall of Constantinople raises the perplexing question as to how the Emperor and Greek bishops could betray the Orthodox Faith in favour of Latin heresy. His main argument against the latter is typically Russian, for it is neither doctrinal nor canonical, but aesthetical. He writes the following: “What hast thou, O Emperor, seen of worth among the Latins? They do not know how even to venerate the Church of God. They raise their voices as the fools, and their singing is a discordant wail. They have no idea of beauty and reverence in worship, for they strike the trombones, blow the horns, use the organs, wave their hands, trample with their feet, and do many other irreverent and disorderly things which bring joy to the devil.” (Note by N. Zernov)

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The above paragraphs are reproduced from pages 32-37 of the book ‘[Moscow the Third Rome](#)’, by Nicolas Zernov, which was first published in London, UK, 1937, and is now available online.

[Click to read the book ‘Moscow the Third Rome’](#)

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**Helena P. Blavatsky** referred to Russia as “*the only country where the pure ideal of Christ is still preserved*”. See more about that in “[Slavophilism and Theosophy](#)”.

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