

A concise and honest look back:

Moscow Patriarchate's **U n b r i d l e d** **E x p a n s i o n i s m**



by Hagiographos

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“He must be one who manages his own household well,
keeping his children with all dignity “

1 Timothy 3:4

Intro

I'm exploring church history and the Moscow Patriarchate's immediate and continued break with territorial jurisdiction according to Orthodox canon law, and not with Moscow's doctrine and grace. The fact that Orthodox phronema was not adhered to in Moscow's historical context doesn't afford the "New World" the ability to continue this deluded ideology. We are at the point where the improper overlapping jurisdictions needs to be resolved, not to whom fault is attributed.

To remedy the current "state of affairs," we must first set apart the historical anomalies. The standard cannot be uncanonical uncontested ambiguities of prior sins. The standard must be proper in Orthodox praxis and phronema mutual understanding of our two millennia of ecclesiological history.

Current Russian church leadership condescendingly declare, "well no one ever complained" or egotistically pronounce "if not us, no one would have done it," and other ecclesiological double entendres. The current objective of the present-day Patriarch of Moscow is a neo-Cesaropapist approach of authority. He absurdly exclaims, "wherever there are Russians, there too is the Russian Orthodox Church." This is neither a mindset concerning jurisdictional anomaly resolution nor is it proper Orthodox ecclesiology.

The epoch from the 16th to 19th century was the period of unbridled expansion, begun under the Duchy and exploited by the Czars. Muscovy gained considerable territory, established a strong army, navy, modernized the economy, and expanded the church and her bias throughout the new "Russian" Empire and beyond.

I take confidence lacing the realities together in one cohesive quilt of history.

According to Canon Law: "the bishops of every nation may do those things only which concern his own parish and the country places which belong to it' (Ap. 34). One can participate in the missionary work of a Local Church, only on her invitation."

And this exapnsioism is wholly a Moscow Patriarchate innovation. This is a canon Moscow has clearly disregarded from her inception.

A Complicated Regional History

Whether you agree or disagree with this millennial held understanding of Canons, nowhere does it declare, the Muscovite escapade of venturing beyond your territorial integrity, this is absurd. Russophile's maintain the juvenile "well it doesn't say we can't" attitude. Nevertheless, as we will see the "Russian Ideology" of monastic/military cohabitation lends to the fabricated expansionist ideology which has pervaded the Russian Patriarchate's mindset for centuries.

Let's recall, Moscow was a small village in the Kyiv Eparchy (891-1686) of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. War ravaged the region 17th century (Polish-Lithuanian war with Moscow, and Russo-Turkish War). Kyiv has always been a pawn of the Moscow Church.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate seeking peace in the region, granted temporarily administratively authority of the Metropolitan of Kyiv, to the Moscow Patriarchate. The "Eternal Peace Accord" of 1686 acknowledged the status quo and put the Kyiv political authority under the temporary control of Russia. For just over 300 years this totalitarianism continued and worsened under the

Communists after 1917. These horrendous conditions for Kyiv have fortunately been resolved with the grace and compassion of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and the granting of autocephaly to Kyiv.

The Patriarch of Moscow's aspirations to dominate Kyiv and break from the Patriarchate of Constantinople started long ago. In fact, the Moscow Patriarchate sees itself as the only "Free Orthodox Church" and "True Center of Orthodoxy." This delusion has infected other sycophant hierarchy still closely tangled in the former Soviet Union's web. A new radical ethnic and distinctive Russian Orthodox creation of cohabitation was fashioned, an insular military/merchant/monastic amalgamation aimed at expansion, as we will see.



Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysios IV

Russian Expansionism: Military, Merchant, & Missionary

14-15th Century

The city of Moscow was a small settlement which gradually grew around the fortified complex called the Kremlin. This growth beginning in the 14th century would impact Orthodoxy to this day. Moscow was the capital of the ruling Grand Duchy of Muscovy, from 1340 to 1547.

The Kremlin's outermost line of defense built a chain of strongly fortified monasteries which housed

military units and monastic communities. Established beyond the ramparts to the south and east, principally the Novodevichy Convent and Donskoy, Danilov, Simonov, Novospasskiy, and Andronikov monasteries.

This militaristic-monastic cohabitation remained as a Russian standard practice for centuries, literally "the church militant." Perhaps not so bizarrely it was a Russian monk Philotheos from Pskov Krom (Kremlin), a citadel whose fortress and Holy Trinity Cathedral date from medieval times. In 1510 Philotheos proclaimed, "Two Romes have fallen. The third stands. And there will be no fourth. No one shall replace your Christian Czardom!"

It was during this Duchy period Moscow began to unilaterally and perniciously undulation against the deteriorating Roman Empire (now called Byzantium) which was waning against the encroaching Ottomans.



■ Core Territory ■ 1509 ■ 1533

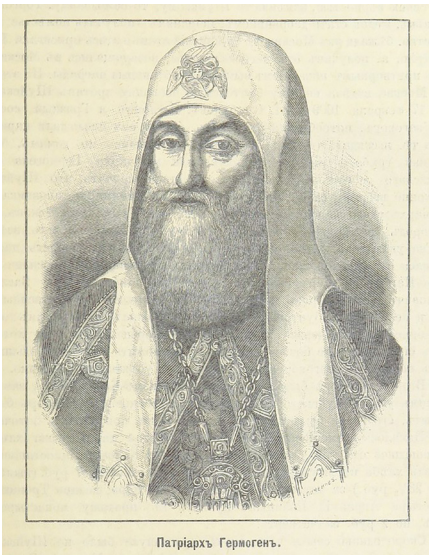


The Grand Duchy's intrigues and diplomacy with New Rome, Constantinople were centered around arranged marriages with Byzantine royalty, kidnapping, blackmail of Ecumenical Patriarchates, and treasonous betrayals of emissaries and ambassadors from eastern and western neighbors.

16-17th Century

On January 26, 1589 Metropolitan Job of Moscow was enthroned as the first Patriarch of Moscow by Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II. From the outset, the Holy Synod (May 13, 1589) consecrated Hermogenes diocesan bishop of the newly conquered city of Kazan. A city clearly beyond the geographical ecclesiastic authority of the newly pronounced “Patriarch of Moscow’s” geographically territory.

Beguiled with Metropolitan Hermogenes’ willingness to break with church canon law for decades, the new Czar, Vasily IV, arranged to have Hermogenes become Patriarch of Moscow on July 3, 1606. This new indulgence of



expansionism by the Muscovite church and state unleashed a synchronization of empire-building that would ultimately benefit them both. Eventually these Muscovite machinations lead to a contemptuous patriarchate, ensuing patriarchal power grabs. So abusive were the Moscow Patriarch’s obsessions, even the Czars took notice. This would lead to the subsequent abolishment of the Patriarchate by Peter the Great within the next century.

In the mid-17th century the Moscow Patriarch Nikon (1652–1658) came into

violent conflict with Czar Alexis. Upon Nikon’s ascension to the throne of Moscow, he imposed upon the whole assembly a solemn oath of obedience in everything concerning the dogmas, canons, and observances of the Orthodox Church. This was Moscow’s initiate neo-caesarpapist instituted which would influence her again in the 20th century revival. Nikon instituted the party of the Proto-Pope and he also issued Ukase (edicts) threatening with the severest penalties all who dared to disobey him. He continued, pursuing the ideal of a theocratic state, attempted to establish the papal-primacy of the Orthodox church over the state in Russia. Nikon was deposed in 1666, but the Russian church retained its reforms and anathematized those who continued to oppose the new ideology Muscovite papal-primacy and uninhibited expansionism. The patriarch’s behavior leads to mass excommunication and schism, who become known as “Old Believers” and formed a vigorous body of dissenters within the Russian Orthodox Church for the next two centuries.

Under the infamous Czar Ivan The Terrible, the Russian state: military, merchants, and monastics expanded dramatically: it conquered the Tartar states along Volga river and acquired access to the Caspian sea. Conquest, colonization and conversion of Siberia also started. Unfortunately, Russia's never-ending wars of conquest had a devastating effect on Muscovy, bringing constant instability and conflict within its ranks.

Russian elites failed to produce a suitable strategy for the developing of the state, and there was no widely accepted leader to become a new Czar. As a result, another Civil War had started in Muscovy.

In 1682 Czar Peter started his reign in Russia. He believed that only through intensive contact with Europe and European style reforms Russia could be successfully developed. Peter insisted Russian nobles get educations in Europe. He hired hundreds of officers, engineers and scientists from all over Europe to serve in Russia, including the Constantinopolitan brothers Joannicus and Sophronius. After their arrival in Moscow in 1685, the brothers established the Slavo-Greco-Latin Academy on the premises of the Zaikonospassky Monastery. Political relations with Europe suffered and were unstable because all the trading routes passed through Poland and Sweden, which prevented the development of Russia.



Moscow saw the entirety of Asia as acquisition to be explored and conquered, it sent religious merchants to be the “tip of the spear” and in 1685 Orthodoxy was introduced in Beijing and Peking. Poor foundation resulted in prisoners from the Russian fortress of Albazin. Demoralizing information was transmitted back to Russia, and the indecisiveness of the official Russian Imperial response (Political and Patriarchal) colored the entire subsequent history of missionaries from Russia.

18th Century

Czar Peter was forced to reform his tactics and establish a Russian navy. His initiated naval development would eventually make the Russian Navy the 2nd largest and powerful naval force in the world by the start of the 19th century. The reorganized forces crushed the Swedes and Russia acquired access to Baltic sea. The port of Saint-Petersburg was founded at the newly acquired territories in 1703 straight after the war. Newly conquered and named Saint-Petersburg was rapidly growing and, in several years, Peter moved the capital of Rus' here.

In 1721 Peter proclaimed Russia an Empire and became the Emperor. Peter put the Orthodox Church under the state control. He abolished the Patriarchate of Moscow and inducted a Holy Governing Synod, which was modeled after the state-controlled synods of the Lutheran church in Sweden. The chief procurator of the synod, a lay official who obtained ministerial rank in the first half of the 19th century, henceforth exercised effective control over the church's administration until 1917.

Witnesses recall Peter instituted "...a new ecclesiastic educational system. It aimed to improve the very poor education of local priests and monks. However, the curriculum was so westernized (emphasis on Latin language and subjects for the price of limited exposure to Greek, the Eastern Church Fathers, and Russian



Late 19th & early 20th Century Russians

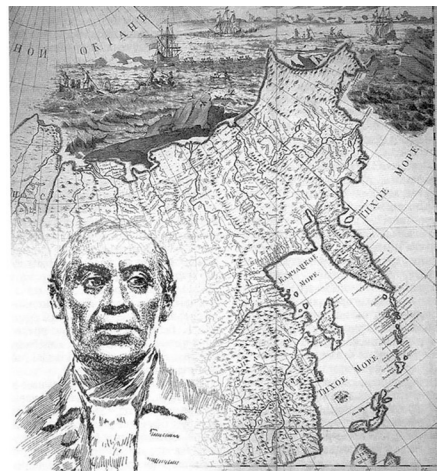
and Slavonic church languages) that monks and priests, while being formally educated, received poor training in preparation for a ministry to a Russian-speaking population steeped in the traditions of Eastern Orthodoxy." This seemingly new focus on westernized Orthodoxy and an unattested expansionist ideology continued for centuries, to the degree it has altered Moscow perspective and ecclesiastic understanding to this day.



In 1725, Czar Peter the Great called for another expedition. The Holy Synod, in 1727, named Bishop Innocent to be the first Bishop of the new Diocese of newly conquered lands of Irkutsk and Nerchinsk. Though it was not until Veniamin Blagonravov (1825–92), an influential missionary who saw the baptism of the local Buddhist population as critical for the Russification of Siberia.

On September 13, 1742 Nikodim I (Srebnitsky) was named its first bishop Bishop of St. Petersburg and Schliesselburg. The new territory of the eparchy included the Provinces of St. Petersburg and Vyborg.

Continued belligerent expansion (merchant, military, and monastic) continued for decades. For example, as a part of the 1733–1743 Second Kamchatka expedition, the ships St. Peter and St. Paul (captained by Vitus Bering and Alexei Chirikov) set sail from the Kamchatkan port of Petropavlovsk. The expedition was separated, but in 1741 the Russian





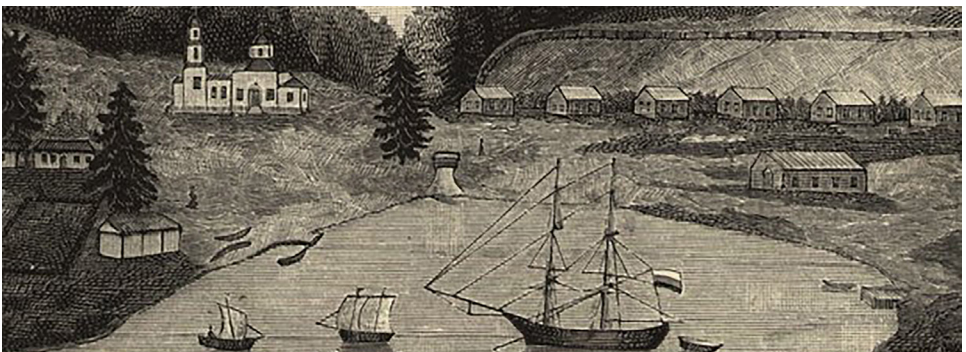
colonization of the Americas began with Vitus Bering and Aleksei Chirikov's discovery of Alaska.

Monks departed Saint Petersburg in December 1793 and the following September landed primarily on Kodiak Island and neighboring Spruce Island.

Soon thereafter Ivan Golikov founded a fur-trading company which eventually received a monopoly from the Imperial government and became the Russian-American Company. In addition to a monastic community, the Russian-American Company brutal exploitation of the Alaskan natives. Specifically, on Kodiak Island, Gregory Shelikov's and Ivan Golikov's trading company was infamous for its abuse of the native people.

The fierce competition for the lucrative fur trade led to Kodiak men being enslaved in the hunting of sea otters, while the women were routinely abducted; hunger and physical abuse became common.

At the command of the Holy Synod, the newly conquered "Russian Alaska" "St. Herman and the nine other missionaries sailed in 1794 bringing Peter's newly reformed Orthodoxy.. Despite the terrible conditions they endured – lack of food, insufficient clothing and shelter, and persecution by the Russian traders – the missionaries eagerly began their preaching of the Gospel. One would expect few of the natives to embrace the religion of a people they were resisting. Amazingly, the opposite occurred: almost every member of the Alutiiq tribe became Orthodox."



19th Century

Albeit uncanonical in nature, Russian expansionism's outpost in Alaska grew with some success. In the 19th century the missionary efforts take a new methodology and control. Facilitated by the political subservience of Moscow's "Synod" was especially marked during the procuratorship (1880–1905) of Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev, the "Evil Genius and Guardian Angel" who said "Achieving a harmonious society, meant there was a collective responsibility to uphold political and religious unity, hence close supervision of Russian behavior and thinking was a necessity..." This



new "Religious Trans-nationalism" promoted by Pobedonostsev was unparalleled in Orthodox history.



Eventually the 1917 catastrophe would engulf the entire Orthodox world. All of Orthodoxy would be confronted with new challenges and tragedies. The twentieth century's complex intrigues and martyric conditions for Orthodoxy are numerous: Lenin, Ataturk, Stalin, Hitler, Ceaușescu, and the many juntas... expansionism has left an indelible stain on Orthodoxy.

To complicate the next several decades, after the 1917 Revolution, a new parasynogue was developed for the Russian Diaspora. Sometimes know as the Russian Church Abroad (ROCA) or the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR). However labeled, this group stayed in schism until its reunion with Moscow in 2007, though it remains an anomalous administrative jurisdictional body with a tainted history.

Today, the government of Russia [Putin] and the Russian Orthodox Church [Patriarch Cyril] say "missionaries serve the interests of the countries from which they came" Post-Soviet Russia.



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