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Two Polemics: St. John of Damascus's *Apologetic Treatises Against Those Who Calumniate Divine Images* and Stefan Yavorsky's *The Stone Of Faith*

M.A. Thesis in Medieval Studies

The Central European University

Budapest

June 1997

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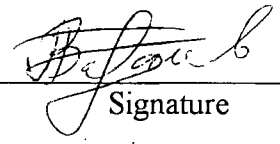

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Two Polemics: St. John of Damascus's *Apologetic Treatises Against Those Who Calumniate Divine Images* and Stefan Yavorsky's *The Stone Of Faith*

by

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Russia

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU

Chair, Examination Committee

External Examiner

Thesis Supervisor

Examiner

Budapest
June 1997

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Books, like people, live their own lives. They have their birth, relatives, friends and foes. Once born, they go their individual ways, sometimes very short and sometimes for millennia. Like people, books can be looked at from various angles. In dealing with two books, *The Stone of Faith* by Metropolitan Stefan Yavorsky[1] (1658-1722) and the *Apologetic Treatises Against Those Who Calumniate the Divine Images (*further *Apologies),* by John of Damascus (675?-ca754), I will propose to look from a particular direction, that of the relationship between matter and spirit. This will allow us to trace how philosophical ideas conditioned the external socio-political events of Byzantine Iconoclasm, on the one hand, and of the "anti-iconicity" of the Reformation, on the other. The work of John Damascene, an eighth-century writer, was used almost exactly one thousand years later in the Orthodox-Protestant polemics for purposes and in historical circumstances that the original author could not have imagined.

The Apologetic Treatises Against Those Who Calumniate Divine Images by John of Damascus, were written as a response to the Iconoclastic measures of Emperor Leo III (717-741). It is the first work which presents the whole synthesis of image-theology. In this study, I will focus on the apology of images in the first *Apology*, and on John's perception of the relationship between Church and State in the second *Apology*. The third *Apology*, although the longest and the most detailed, mainly develops the theological ideas outlined in the first one.

The Stone of Faith by Stefan Yavorsky was written as a reaction to the

[1]Metropolitan Stefan Yavorsky, *Kamen Very. Pravoslavnym tserkve synom na utverzhdenie i dukhovnoe sozidanie. Pretykayushchimsya zhe o kamen' pretykaniya I soblazna, na vozstanie I ispravlenie*. [The Stone of Faith. For the affirmation and spiritual creation of the sons of the Holy Orthodox Church. For those who stumbles against the stone of stumbling and temptation to restoration and correction] (Moscow, 1728).

Protestant influences challenging Russia during the reign of Peter the Great (1672-1725). In the treatise in defence of icons which initiates *The Stone of Faith*,[2] Yavorsky extensively uses the earlier polemics of St. John of Damascus. In some places Yavorsky inserts large passages from the *Apologies* with a proper reference; in others he borrows the argument, expressing it in his own manner. The goal of this study will be to investigate the similar and different features of the external circumstances of the two controversies, and of the literary works themselves. This enhances two important problems to be discussed: one, the fundamental similarity between Byzantine and Protestant Iconoclasm, except for the acts of destruction of artistic images; and, two, the extent to which the response of a prominent Russian prelate of the late seventeenth-early eighteenth century, Stefan Yavorsky, is similar to the theological methods of St. John of Damascus.

From this perspective, a serious methodological problem arises: according to which criteria should we accomplish our comparative analysis? As can be expected and as in the course of the following study it will become rather obvious, the Byzantine Controversy was much richer from the doctrinal point of view than the later Orthodox-Protestant polemics. Thus, many times, we will be comparing the sophisticated elaboration of an idea by John of Damascus simply with the absence of the same idea in Yavorsky's work, which happens much more frequently than Yavorsky introducing new ideas not present in John's work. I will argue, however, that the issues which were not present in Yavorsky's work give much food to ponder about the fate of Orthodox theology over the centuries. In order to make the comparison more transparent, I summarised the treatise on icons in *The Stone of Faith*, both its contents and structure, in a separate chapter.

Though it was the most important piece by Yavorsky, *The Stone of Faith* has

[2]The treatises of *The Stone of Faith* are dedicated to the holy icons, the holy Cross, the relics of the saints, the Eucharist, the prayers to the saints, the souls of the saints, the aid to the deceased, the Church tradition, the Divine Liturgy, the holy fasts, good deeds, and the punishment of the heretics, respectively.

not been studied thoroughly. There exists only one study entirely dedicated to *The Stone of Faith*,[3] which described all the treatises of this book insufficiently.

The *Apologies* of John of Damascus had better fortune. Almost every book on the theology of icons contains some reference to them. However, most of the scholars who have dealt with the *Apologies* concentrated solely on the hierarchy of icons with Christ, the immediate Icon (εἰκών) of the Father, being the principle base. In the meantime, the scholars neglected other important dogmatic elements revealing the theological face of Byzantine Iconoclasm in its initial stages. This study will try to go in the opposite direction—it will raise a great number of issues in order to shed light on a whole spectrum of problems concerning the concept of the artistic image in its historical genesis.

[3] I. Morev, *'Kamen very' Mitropolita Stefana Javorskovo: ego mesto sredi otechestvennykh protivoprotestantskikh sochinenij, kharacteristicheskie osobennosti ego dogmaticheskikh vozzrenij* ['The Stone of Faith' by Metropolitan Stefan Yavorsky: Its place among the national anti-Protestant writings, and the characteristic features of its dogmatical views] (St. Petersburg, 1904).

CHAPTER 2
JOHN OF DAMASCUS AND THE *APOLOGIES* STRUCTURE AND ARGUMENTS

To the betrayer of Christ and the enemy of the Emperor, to the teacher of impiety, to the perverter of Scripture, Mansur, anathema!

From the definition of the Iconoclastic Council in Hiereia

We define that the venerable and holy icons, in painting or mosaic or any other appropriate medium, should be set up in the holy churches of God and on the sacred vessels and vestments, on walls and on panels, both in houses and by the way-side. For the more often they are seen in figural representation, the more readily men are lifted up to remember their prototypes and long for them, and these should be given honourable veneration, but not the true worship which belongs to the Divine nature alone. But we should offer them incense and candles, as we do to the representation of the venerable and life-giving Cross and to the books of the Gospels and to other holy objects, according to ancient custom. For the honour which is given to the icon passes to that which the icon represents, and in venerating the icon we venerate the prototype.

From the definition of the Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicaea.

Historical and Theological Background of the Debate

In the Greek Church, the veneration of icons became a widely used expression of piety, particularly in the age before Emperor Leo III the Isaurian (717-741).[4] However, there existed, as well, an opposition within the Church which considered Christianity to be a purely spiritual religion,[5] and, thus, prohibited the use of images. Already before this conflict actually came out into the open, Patriarch Germanus (715-730) accused Metropolitan John of Synnada, and Bishop Constantine of Nacoleia, both from Phrygia, together with Bishop Thomas of

[4]E. Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Age Before Iconoclasm," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954): 83-150.

[5]Compare the definition of the Iconoclastic Council in Hiereia, where the iconoclasts emphasised that: "The Son... taught us the worshipping of God in spirit and truth." (P. Schaff and H. Wall, eds., *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. Gerdmans, 1965) reprint, vol. 14, *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church* by H. R. Percival, 543-546).

Claudiopolis, of holding iconoclastic views,[6] and of actually destroying icons in the case of Thomas.[7] This indicates that even earlier there existed a local Iconoclastic movement, but it was the Emperor who began the open conflict, removing the mosaic of Christ from the Chalce entrance of the imperial palace.

Scholars have suggested different political and religious reasons for Leo's hostile attitude towards images.[8] This event occurred in the early autumn of 726 and provoked Constantinopolitans to violent opposition.[9] From that date on and during the following century, "eastern theologians and churchmen, monks and simple believers, and not least emperors and empresses—all were engaged in a dispute over the propriety of the use of images in Christian worship and devotion."[10]

According to Jaroslav Pelikan, the theological meaning of the Iconoclastic Controversy consisted of the fact that the traditional piety of icon-veneration received new support from theological arguments. Consequently, it was a stronger and more elaborate theological system, developed by John of Damascus, Theodore Studite and Patriarch Nicephorus, that overcame the Iconoclastic arguments promoted by the Imperial power.[11]

There is no clear evidence about the original theological points in the

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[6]We know about this from the three letters of Patriarch Germanus to Bishop Thomas, Bishop Constantine and Metropolitan John. The letters have been examined in G. Ostrogorsky, "Les débuts de la querelle des images," *Mélanges Diehl* 1 (1930), 238. He proved that Constantine of Nacoleia and Thomas of Claudiopolis had visited Constantinople not long before Leo III started open attacks on the images. Quoted in G. Ladner, "Origin and Significance of the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy," *Medieval Studies* 2 (1940), 130.

[7]J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio,* vol. 13 (Florence and Venice, 1759-98), 100 B - 128.

[8]J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), 173-192; C. Mango, "Historical Introduction," in *Iconoclasm,* eds. A. Bryer, and J. Herrin (Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1977), 1-6; G. Ladner, "Origin and Significance."

[9] J. M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 37.

[10]J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine,* vol. 2 *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 91.

[11]*Ibid.*, 117.

beginning of the debate. According to the common opinion, before the son and successor to Leo III, Emperor Constantine V Copronymus (741-775), Iconoclasts did not have a written theology.[12] However, since during the controversies, so much evidence was destroyed, this thesis seems to be rather fragile. In fact, while holding power, the Iconoclasts destroyed all the icons they could get hold of, and, *vice versa,* when the Iconodules came to power, the Second Council of Nicaea proclaimed that all the iconoclastic writings be destroyed. Thus, if we do not have a single piece of writing survived in its original form of this kind of literature,[13] we cannot infer to the non-existence of it in any concrete period of the Iconoclastic movement, but rather to its disappearance.

With all this, from the extant sources, we can gather the following about the positions that were shared both by the Iconoclasts and the Iconodules, positions which, however, differed in their practical religious applications.[14]

As with any polemics, the two opposing parties in the Iconoclastic debate, had a common ground, a common arena on which the battle could be held. Although the sides shared a common liturgical rite, the Iconoclasts argued that the image had to be *consubstantial* with the prototype, and thus, the only justifiable *image* for them was the Eucharist. To that, the Iconodules replied that the Eucharist was not an *image*, but the *real* Body and Blood, and thus they considered it a blasphemy that the Eucharist be called "image."[15] This point of contradiction, expressed so clearly by the time of Constantine V, however, was not touched upon by John of Damascus for whom the Eucharist was in no way an image. He uses the example of the Eucharist for justifying matter, and not for defending the icon-veneration.

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[12] J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 44.

[13] See G. Ostrogorsky, *Studien zur Geschichte des Byzantischen Bilderstreites*, vol. 1 (Breslau, 1929), I.

[14] J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition,* 90ff.

[15] For Iconoclasts' attitude toward the Eucharist see: S. Gero, "The Eucharistic Doctrine of the Byzantine Iconoclasts and Its Sources," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 68 (1975): 4-22.

According to my view, the cardinal question of the debate concerned the exact nature of the image of God in man, and the answer to the other, more apparent question as to whether God could be visibly represented, depended upon the answer given to the first question. The late seventh or early eighth century author, Stephen of Bostra, whose writings John used in his *Apologies*, argued with Jews whose arguments partly overlapped with those of the Iconoclasts in the following way: "An image (εἰκών) is one thing and an idol (ἄγαλμα or ζῴδιον) is another. Now is it idolatry and impiety that man is an image of God? Far from it. If Adam were an image of demons, he would be abject and unacceptable; but because he is an image of God, he is honourable and acceptable... And what is the honour rendered to the image if not just honour, as also we, sinners do reverence (προσκυνοῦμεν) one another in accordance with honour and love?"[16]

In general, both the Iconoclasts and the Iconodules shared the same official dogma of the Church. Thus, concerning the union of natures in Christ, they both acknowledged the official Chalcedonian doctrine. What really concerned them, was the question of whether the images formed a part of Church tradition or constituted a recent innovation.

Although, according to Kitzinger's assertion, "no literary statement from the period prior to the year 300 would make one suspect the existence of any Christian images other than the most laconic and hieroglyphic of symbols,"[17] the Iconodules claimed that the Church could not have been in error on this issue for seven hundred years, and that there had been an unwritten tradition of immense importance. Basil of Caesarea's *On the Holy Spirit,* was quoted in support of this point of view, concerning the oral traditions of venerating the Cross, or of the prayer directed to the East.[18] Against this thesis, the Iconoclasts argued that the use

[16]J. M. Mercati, "Stefani Bostreni nova de sacris imaginibus fragmenta e libro deperdito κατὰ Ἰουδάιων," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 57 (1895), 663f, quoted in G. Ladner, "Concept of Image," 15.

[17]E. Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images," 86.

[18]St. Basil of Caesarea, *Traité du Saint Esprit. Texte grec, introduction et traduction,*

of images for unsophisticated members of the Church as "books for the illiterate" could lead to misuse of icons and their adoration. On this background, St. John begins his three *Apologetic Treatises Against Those Who Calumniate Divine Images.*

John of Damascus and His First *Apology*

John's[19] father held an important official post at the Caliph's court and belonged to the hellenised elite of Damascus. John was raised as a Christian and received a proper education from a Calabrian Greek monk Cosmas. John not only spoke Greek, but also knew the sophisticated style used for literary texts.[20] Before 720, John left the civil service and Damascus to become a monk at the monastery of Mar Saba (Great Laura) near Jerusalem, together with his adopted brother, the future famous hymnographer Cosmas of Maiuma. John died in that monastery probably before 754.[21] Let us now turn to the text of the first *Apology*[22] and examine its structure as well as the arguments John uses for justifying icons and

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ed. B. Pruche, Sources chrétiennes 17[bis] (Paris, 1968).

[19]John's secular name was Mansur, and he is anathematised by the Iconoclastic Council in Hierea under this name, probably to emphasise his non-Byzantine origin.

[20]According to J. Nasrallah, John's literary works contain at least 738 quotations from 258 works by forty-eight authors (Joseph Nasrallah, *Saint Jean de Damas* (Harissa: St. Paul, 1950), 95, quoted in T. Noble, "John Damascene and the History of the Iconoclast Controversy," in *Religion, Culture and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of Richard E. Sullivan.* Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), 96).

[21]Since the Iconoclastic Council of Hiereia seems to refer to him as already dead.

[22]There exists two English translations of the *Apologies.* The recent translation (John of Damascus, *Three Apologies against Those Who Attack Divine Images*, trans. D. Anderson (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 1980)) claims to be the revised version of the earlier translation (Mary H. Allies, published, as Anderson claims, "in Britain, in 1898, by Thomas Baker"), to which I did not have access. However, the translation by D. Anderson proved to be too imprecise, therefore I worked with the Russian translation: Ioann Damaskin, Tri *zashchititel'nykh slova protiv poritsayushchikh svyatye ikony i izobrazheniya* [Three apologetic orations against those who attack holy icons and images], trans. A. Bronzov (St. Petersburg, 1893), comparing it, where necessary, with the critical edition. Quotations are translated by Prof. István Perczel according to the critical edition: John of Damascus. *Contra imaginum calumniatores orationes tres.* In *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, ed. B. Kotter. vol. 3. Patristische Texte und Studien 17 (Berlin, 1973).

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icon-veneration.

In the introduction, John points out the aim of his treatise, to speak "not preferring the majesty of the king to the truth".[23] He defends tradition: the teaching of the Church will be "the keel and the foundation" of his entire argument.[24] But his goal is not just to argue but to find the truth, that for John is Christ himself, the "hypostatic truth."[25] John directs his treatise to the Byzantine Church, to the "royal priesthood, together with the good shepherd of Christ's flock," with Patriarch Germanus.[26] Thus, the first *Apology* must have been written before 730, when Patriarch Germanus refused to approve the Imperial edict against images and was deposed.[27] Perhaps, John not only argued with the Byzantine Iconoclasts, but he intended also to circulate his writings among those Christians who lived under Islamic rule and were tempted by their environment to abhor images and thus escape accusations of idolatry from the Moslems.[28]

In Chapter 4, John exposes his faith in terms of apophatic theology and in relation to two main theological issues, Trinitarian dogma and the Incarnation. In this part John introduces his core argument, putting the debate into a Christological

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[23]*Apology I*, 1, 25. The first number is the number of the *Apology*, paragraph, the second is the number of the paragraph, and the third is the number of the line according to the critical edition B. Kotter, *Die Schriften*, vol. 3.

[24]*Apology I*, 2, 2.

[25]*Ibid.*, 3, 22.

[26]Bonifatius Kotter proposes another chronology based on the assumption that the "good shepherd," mentioned by John (*Apology I*, 3, 12) is Patriarch John of Jerusalem (705-735). It can be argued that since the *Apologies* deal exclusively with events happening in Byzantium, it is more plausible that the patriarch mentioned was Patriarch Germanus of Constantinople. Moreover, in the second *Apology* John explicitly refers to "blessed Germanus," who "was hit and became a refugee" (*Apology II*, 12, 27-29). In his attribution Kotter refers to "V. Grumel in *Echos d'Orient* 39 (1940), 471s," to which I did not have access.

[27]G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 164.

[28]A similar thought was suggested by N. Baynes concerning Christian-Jewish polemics which were: "indirectly intended to meet the scruples of Christians impressed by the Jewish contention." (N. H. Baynes, "The Icons Before Iconoclasm," *Harvard Theological Review* 44 (1951), 103).

context: "Together with the King and God, I worship the purple of his Body, not as a garment or a fourth Person (God forbid!), but as being itself called God, and having become without any change that what its Anointer was... This is why I depict with confidence the invisible God, not as invisible, but as having become visible for our sake through His participation in flesh and blood."[29] Here John refutes accusations of Nestorianism.[30] It was in fact the constant charge brought against dyophysites and especially against Nestorius, and his followers, that they include a fourth Person into the Trinity. To the apophatic doctrine of the divinity "without origin, uncreated, immortal and everlasting... bodiless, invisible, incircumscribable," John adds the teaching that Christ, the Divine Word, can be depicted in his visible but entirely deified flesh.[31]

With the Scriptural corollary, "the letter kills, but the spirit gives life,"[32] John quotes the disputed parts of the book of Deuteronomy. Quoting the Second Commandment which prohibits the production of "graven images" of created things, John submits the text of the Commandment to a detailed analysis. According to him, the only purpose of this Commandment was for created things to not be worshipped instead of God. God forbade Man to make images only because of idolatry. In the earlier times, it was impossible to depict the invisible and uncircumscribable God, hence, the Jews were inclined to idolatry. Now, however, the Christians received from God the ability to discern what could be depicted or not. John calls out to depict the scenes of Christ's life "in words or in colours"[33] He seems to describe real icons, and in this case we may regard his words as an early evidence of the Feast Cycle of the Orthodox Church. John mentions the

[29]*Apology I*, 4, 62-85.

[30]Nikolai Sakharov, "What Was the Aim and Scope of *The First Apology Against Those Who Attack Holy Images?*" (seminar paper in the Theology Department of Oxford University, 1994), 10.

[31]*Apology I*, 4, 29-35.

[32]2 Cor 3, 6, *Apology I*, 5, 11-12.

[33]*Apology I*, 8, 73.

Lord's: "unspeakable condescension" (Annunciation), "nativity from the Virgin" (Nativity), "baptism in the Jordan" (Theophany), "transfiguration on Mount Tabor" (Transfiguration), "Holy and Saving passions" (Crucifixion?), "miracles as signs of His Divine Nature" (Resurrection of Lazarus?), "Resurrection" (Anastasis), and "Ascension."[34] Thus, if our supposition is true, this passage may witness a fully developed Feast Cycle in pre-Iconoclastic time. [35]

John tries to define precisely what the two parts of the Commandment refer to, that is, what a "worshipped" object is, and what "worship" itself means. According to him, the exact meaning of *image* consists of five main types.[36] The first and the foremost is the Son, the natural image[37] or the natural icon[38] of the Father. Thus, in the thought of St. John, the doctrine that Christ is the *natural icon* of the Father constitutes the legitimate principle for all iconic representations. Second are the images in God's mind of things to come, a "draft" of the created beings designated as *proorismoi* by Dionysius John's illustration of this type of images is a man who, willing to build a house, uses the image as an idea of the house.

The third type constituted the visible things which express the invisible and shapeless reality, providing for us "at least a vague understanding." John quotes Dionysius the Areopagite: "the Holy Scripture wraps images around" God and

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[34]*Ibid.*, 8, 59-68.

[35]Perhaps, this may reffer to a cycle similar to that which was represented on several Ampullae, from the Holy Land (fourth-sixth century), the best known ones are preserved in the Monza Cathedral. On one of them we may see seven feasts: Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, Two Maries at the Tomb, and Ascention. See A. Grabar, *Les Ampoules de Terre Sainte* (Paris, 1958), 49.

[36]In the third *Apology*, John extended his hierarchical system into six groups by including *man* as a third type of image.

[37]Already the Cappadocians distinguished image by nature, φυσικός or by generation, γεννητός (St Basil) from imitation, μίμημα (St. Gregory of Nyssa), see G. Ladner, ""The Concept of Image in the Greek Fathers and the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 7 (1953), 3.

[38]As opposed to the two different words in English, *image* and *icon*, John uses the word εἰκών for any kind of image.

angels, because we are not "able to look up to the intelligible contemplation without some medium," which is akin to our nature. In such a manner, bodily senses are important; thus John provides here a detailed anthropological description of image perception: from senses through perception to discernment, and, finally, to knowledge. This type of images is illustrated by visible images of the invisible Trinity: sun, light, rays; spring, water, and stream; mind, word, and breath; stalk of rose, its flower and fragrance.

The fourth type is an image which foreshadows something that is to come, such as the Ark of the Covenant foreshadowing the Mother of God. A fifth type of images are commemorative images which remind us about historical reality of the past by means of either words or material objects. John invests material images with the same authority as Scripture. So, he says again, be consistent, "either destroy all images and establish a law against the One who ordered them to be, or accept each of them according to its principle and modality."[39]

Having presented the system of image-classification, he moves on to determining what true worship is. Worship, according to John, is a sign of submission and honour.[40] Again, whereas in the definition of images John focused on their entity and function, here worship is only a means, entirely depending upon the worshipped object. Thus, worship can be positive or negative; worship itself does not imply an absolute meaning. As with images, worship can have different stages: the adoration which is akin to God according to His nature, honour to His friends and companions, and an expression of respect. To illustrate this, John uses examples from the Old Testament. He concludes, addressing the iconoclasts, that if they want to be consistent in literally following the words of the Scripture, they should also be consistent concerning worship, that is either accepting all kinds of worship which existed already in the Old Testament, or to "do away with worship

[39] *Apology I*, 13, 12-15.

[40] Ἡ προσκύνησις ὑποπτώσεως καὶ τιμῆς ἔστι σύμβολον (*Apology I*, 14. 1-2).

completely."[41] What can be said if the Law forbids images, being itself the *proskiasma*, the foreshadowing of the image of promised things?[42] John asks this rhetorical question, implying the only answer: the Old Testament Law, the shadow, the image of the New Testament, cannot be truly considered separately from its fulfilment and explanation in the New Testament.

The sixteenth chapter of the first *Apology* is dedicated to John's conception of honouring the matter of which God's body has been composed, the matter through which we have obtained Salvation. Indeed, redemption happened not in a merely spiritual way, but on the Cross at Golgotha and the resurrection occurred in the Holy Sepulchre. The Holy Eucharist, Body and Blood of the Lord, is matter as well. "Don't say that matter is evil, " urges John, "it is not blameworthy. For nothing is blameworthy that has been brought into existence by God. This view is that of the Manichees."[43]

Thus, John, quoting a long passage of Exodus describing God's commandment to create the Ark of the Covenant and the materials used for this, adds: "Behold, this is truly a precious matter, although you disdain it. For what can be less significant than goat's wool or colours?"[44] The very Law, to which iconoclasts appealed, ordered to create material representations; moreover, if Israel has not seen God, "we all are reflecting with unveiled face the glory of the Lord" (2 Cor 3, 18).[45] John uses Patristic parallelism between the Creation (In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Gen 1, 1)) and the Prologue of the Gospel of John (In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the

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[41] *Ibid.*, 14, 19-20.

[42] Both parties acknowledged that the Old Testament was the foreshadowing of the New Testament, which in turn was the image of the real thing, the Heavenly reality.

[43] *Apology I*, 16, 33-35.

[44] *Ibid.*, 16, 79.

[45] I am quoting here the Greek used by John. All the modern translations of the Bible, and not only the English, are following the medieval interpretations based on the Latin translation. *Κατοπτριζόμενοι*, does not mean "beholding," as is translated in the King James Version, for example. I owe this information to Prof. István Perczel.

Word was God (John 1, 1)), on the one hand, and between the Moses' vision of God on Mount Sinai (Ex 19, 16), and the Apostles' vision of Transfigured Christ, on the Mount Tabor (Matt 17, 1), on the other. Moses could not see the face of God, only His "back parts," and after this, Moses' face shone so brightly that the Israelites could not bear this light, so that Moses had to veil his face. This semi-hidden, "veiled" manifestation of the Divine marked the whole Old Testament. The Truth could not be seen with open eyes. It had to be "veiled" in symbols and foreshadowings. In the New Testament, however, God, the "true Light" was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1, 14). After the full manifestation of the Divinity of Christ on Tabor, to the measure of human abilities, there can be no question of idolatry any more since the Christians *saw* their God face to face. Thus, John stresses that the Old Testament prohibition had a temporary purpose which ceased to be after the Incarnation of the Divine Word in His visible flesh.

We "put everywhere His image expressed sensibly... thus, sanctifying the primary of our senses"—vision itself. Here John uses the old argument of icons being the "Bible for the illiterate." He created a scheme: the image is connected to us by means of the mind. But later, portraying the most important artificial image of the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant, John states, that this chain is not yet completed, because the last link is God, Whom alone the Old Testament people worshipped by means of venerating holy things: the rod, the pot of manna, and the tables exposed in front of the Ark.

Material things do not mean anything by themselves, without a context. The twelve stones taken from the Jordan River were not just bare stones since they served as a reminder of the glorious crossing of God's people (Josh 3, 16). Thus, icons mean something much deeper because they not only contain the images of images, like the material things from the Old Testament, but the images of divine condescension and the passions of God Himself through Whom "nature returned from the lowest parts of the earth, above all principles, and sat on the very throne

of the Father."[46]

The last part of the Apology is dedicated to honouring saints. John uses several arguments for this purpose. He now introduces the charge of the milder iconoclasts[47] who would agree to make images of Christ or the Theotokos, but not images of the saints. John states that in this manner they rejected "not images, but the saints."[48] Christ's flesh "was called God by virtue of its hypostatic union and participation in the divine Nature," and the saints are also gods not by nature but by virtue of divinisation.[49]

John argues for Church decoration, reminding the reader again of the Old Testament Temple of Solomon, which was decorated by the images of cherubs, oxen, and pomegranates. "Is it not much more worthy to decorate all the walls of the Lord's house by the figures of the saints than by those of animals and trees?"[50] From this analogy, John draws a clear and logical conclusion, namely, that in former times the Temple was sanctified by the blood and ashes of a heifer and was decorated with the depictions of the mute animals, but now churches are sanctified by the Blood of Christ and of saints, and are decorated by the depictions of Christ and the saints, "animated and rational churches—dwelling places of God."[51] Thus, we should depict Christ, the King and the Lord, "without depriving Him of His army. For the Lord's army are the saints...Let the earthly king deprive himself of his army and only then may he deprive his King and Lord!"[52] This suggestion may have sounded very bold to the Emperor, the former general and commander (if he ever happened to read it), and to his soldiers who mainly supported the

[46] *Apology I*, 18, 12-14.

[47] S. Gero in his analysis of the origins of the Iconoclast Controversy also notes about the existence of the fraction of 'moderate Iconoclasts,' who probably later joined either the Iconodulic or the Iconoclastic party (S. Gero, *Leo III*, 108).

[48] *Apology I*, 19, 16-17.

[49] *Ibid.*, 19, 27-30.

[50] *Ibid.*, 20, 10-12.

[51] *Ibid.*, 20, 25-26.

[52] *Ibid.*, 21, 2-5.

Iconoclastic movement.[53] Here John uses the old analogy of the earthly king to the heavenly Ruler.[54] Honour given to the Holy Theotokos and to the saints is inseparable from the honour given to the Lord, for all relate to the source and final goal—God Himself. "I venerate the icon of Christ as that of the Incarnate God, the icon of the Theotokos as that of the Mother of the Son of God, and the icons of the saints as those of the friends of God."[55] Indeed, this system is much more consistent and logical than the Iconoclasts' accusations. They forbade the depictions of Christ because of the separating or mingling of two natures, the depictions of the Mother of God simply because She "is exalted above all heavens and the Saints," and the depictions of the saints because of some kind of magical activity attributed to the icons which call the saints "back again to life by a dead art."[56]

John states that as Jacob saw with "the immaterial eyes of his mind the immaterial [image of God] announcing in advance that which is to come, so I see the fiery reminder of the One, Who has been seen in flesh,"[57] again using the two-fold meaning of image as both *foreteller* and *reminder*, mentioned above. The *relation* to its prototype makes the object important. That is why the shadows of the Apostles, as well as their handkerchiefs, healed the sick (Acts 5, 15; 19, 12). This could be put in parallel with John Chrysostom's treatment of the same Scriptural passage where he connects it to the image of the Emperor, and to the

[53]On the army in the Iconoclastic movement see Walter Kaegi, "The Byzantine Armies and Iconoclasm," *Byzantinoslavica* 27 (1966): 48-70.

[54]In connection with this it is worth quoting G. Ladner concerning the concept of "imperial image" in Byzantine theology: "While in the development of Patristic and Byzantine Trinitarian and image doctrine the 'imperial image' served as an important *simile*, the concept of 'the ruler himself' as 'image' or imitator of God paralleled but did not overlap the ideological field of religious imaginary. The relationship between God and ruler was never made use of in the theory of the religious image." (G. Ladner, "The Concept of Image," 21).

[55]*Apology I*, 21, 31-33.

[56]See the excerpt of the *Acts of Iconoclastic Council of Hierea*, n. 2, p. 1.

[57]*Apology I*, 22, 7-9.

role of the body in Salvation.[58] "Either remove the veneration of any kind of matter, or do not innovate and remove not the ancient landmark which our Fathers have set" (Prv 22, 28). The Fathers "handed down to us the laws of the Church, not only in their writings, but also in some unwritten traditions."[59] John quotes a passage from St. Basil the Great and describes many customs that are widely used in Church practice which were never written down. It is significant that the defence of tradition both introduces and concludes the main arguments of Christology and the justification of matter.

The controversial passages in the Scriptures referred to by the Iconoclasts, cannot be applied to Christian icon-veneration, because they relate to those depictions that are adored by the heathen. Both pious and wicked things may have some outward similarity, but are entirely different in essence. The pious custom which in outward appearance resembles that of the heathen habit should not be destroyed for this only reason. "Magicians and sorcerers take vows from the demons and the Church takes vows from the catechumens. But those invoke the demons, and She invokes God against the demons."[60] Even evidence on the part of some Saints who seemed to forbid images could be either forged, or simply oriented against a specific bad custom, hence, does not relate to icon-veneration as a principle. John sums up this conclusion by appealing again to tradition as the only true measure, urging acceptance of "the stream of Scriptural and Patristic passages" in this way.[61]

The Old Testament Prophets prostrated themselves before creatures: "angels and men and kings, even before the impious ones, also before the rod." Moreover, times radically have changed, and Apostle Paul, "the golden cicada of the Church," said that Christ entered not an Ark made by hands, but Heaven. And if the Ark,

[58]John Chrysostom, *In Corinthians II, Seventh Sermon*, PG 61, 449.

[59]*Apology I,* 23, 1-6.

[60]*Ibid.*, 24, 10-15.

[61]*Ibid.*, 26. 1-2.

itself an image, was obviously venerated in the Old Testament, the image of Christ deserves much higher veneration!

The first *Apology* consists of parts which are not rigidly connected with one another; rather, it resembles a flexible chain in which links, the parts, can also work separately as single arguments. Both for the second and third Apologies, John takes different sets of arguments from the first *Apology*, organically incorporating them into the fabric of the text and emphasises the polemical side in the Second and the theological conception of Image in the third *Apology*.

The system of image-hierarchy and image-worship of St. John have been incorporated in the system of the Orthodox theological thought, but has never been approved as an official doctrine in its integrity. The *Acts* officially accepted the doctrine of the difference between the "honourable veneration" of icons and the "true worship" paid to God alone. Even the name of St. John is mentioned only once in the Decrees of Nicaea, and this mention relates to the rescinding of the anathema against him. "Very little of the soaring theological edifice erected by the greatest defenders of images was incorporated into the canonical tradition. This tradition which we might label ecclesiastical, is also official, and it is interesting to see how much more cautious and conservative it was than the theological one."[62]

No other work among the rich literary inheritance left by St. John of Damascus reveals his personality as clearly as the *Apologies*. There is no doubt about his authorship, whereas the problem of establishing the date of these pieces in the entire corpus of St. John's writings cannot be successfully resolved. Chapter 89 of *The Precise Exposition of the Orthodox Faith (Exposition)* (the third part of John's major work, *The Fountain of Knowledge),*[63] also deals with icons and icon-veneration.[64] All of the main ideas of the *Apologies* are included in this later, and

[62]T. Noble, "John Damascene," 105.

[63]Critical edition by Bonifatius Kotter in *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskus* (Patristische Texte und Studien 17, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter) vol. 1, *The Philosophical Chapters* (1969); vol. 4, *On Heresies* (1981); vol. 2, *The Exposition of Faith* (1973).

[64]*The Fountain of Knowledge* can be dated after 735, since it is dedicated to John's

essential chapter.[65] However, no textual parallels to the *Apologies* can be found there, but rather, a parallelism of ideas. This can be explained by the difference of the genres which are skilfully used for different purposes by John, "serene theologian, resourceful philosopher," "erudite exegete," "fierce controversialist," and "moving hymnographer."[66] Thus, in the case of the *Apologies,* John is writing polemical pamphlets; and in the case of the *Exposition,* he is systematically describing the main doctrines of Orthodox faith.

His *Apologies* are of crucial importance concerning the initial stage of the conflict. The Iconoclastic movement argued for a literal understanding of the Old Testament's prohibitions of artistic imagery. Thus, as a polemical method, John of Damascus also relies upon scriptural quotations and examples from the Old Testament.

The exegetical tradition which John followed can be illustrated by the other, visual polemics against the Iconoclasts led on the margins of the ninth-century Byzantine Psalters.[67] These vivid scenes constitute a visual illustration, and an analogy to the passionate emotions expressed in the writings of the Iconoclastic period. They not only refute Iconoclastic views (equating them with Jewish teachings), but also illustrate the main doctrines about the Incarnation of Christ and the replacement of the Jewish religion by Christianity.

Three Psalters illuminated with marginal illustrations are of special interest for us because some images can be associated with historical persons and events.[68]

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adopted brother Cosmas, Bishop of Maiuma. This title Cosmas acquired in 734/35.

[65]John of Damascus, *Contra imaginum calumniatores orationes tres,* in *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskus*, ed. B. Kotter, vol. 3, Patristische Texte und Studien 17, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973), 6.

[66]T. Noble, "John Damascene ", 96.

[67]They are studied by Kathleen Corrigan in a recent book: K. Corrigan, *Visual Polemics in the Ninth-Century Psalters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[68]Moscow, Historical Museum 129; Mount Athos, Pantocrator, 61; Paris, Bibl. nat. grec. 20.

For example, two illustrations from the *Chludov Psalter* depict Iconoclasts actually destroying the icon of Christ at the Chalce entrance of the Imperial palace in Constantinople, the event which marked the open fight against images in 730.

However, the "historical" images make up only a small part of the numbers of illustrations which cover the margins of those Psalters. Most of the illuminations do not bear any political meaning but simply illustrate the verses of Psalms or Old Testament events connected with Psalms, which were already a part of the existing tradition of Psalter illustration. Some of the illustrations show the words of Psalms as referring to the events of the New Testament. For the sake of examining the topic of image-polemics, we will mostly concentrate on the new images introduced into the Psalters.

Kathleen Corrigan presents many striking innovations of Psalter illustrations, which consist of the images of the main characters of the Iconoclastic debate who in most cases can be identified. There exists a close parallelism between the illustrations and the contemporaneous writings where the Iconoclasts are portrayed as magicians, possessed by demons or similar to the Jews.[69]

The illustration to the first psalm in the *Chludov Psalter,* introduces this programme by interpreting the verse: "Blessed is the man who has not walked in the council of the ungodly; and has not stood in the way of sinners; and has not sat in the seat of evil men. But his pleasure is in the Law of the Lord; and in his Law will he meditate day and night." The "blessed" man with a halo is sitting turned away from three Jews dressed in a very distinctive type of clothes, and is meditating on the book of the Law in his hands. Christ in a medallion (which can be interpreted as an icon of Christ) is depicted in front of him.

The illustration to Psalm 68, 28-29: "Add thou iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come into thy righteousness," parallels the Jews bribing the guards at Christ's tomb with the Iconoclastic bishop ordaining priests for money. The well

[69] *Ibid.*, 27.

known illustration of the Crucifixion in the *Chludov Psalter* to the verse of Psalm 68, 22: "They gave me also gall for my food, and made me drink vinegar for my thirst" also associates the Iconoclasts with the Jews. A Jew standing at the cross, puts the sponge with vinegar in Christ's face, and a figure below, identified according to the inscription as an Iconoclast, is trying to wash off the icon of Christ with the same kind of sponge.

The long tradition of Christian apologetics against Judaism, provided many verses of the Psalms as well as other books of the Bible (such as the Prophetic books) with special polemical significance. The Jews were also often the targets of Christian polemics even when, in fact, Iconoclasts or Moslems were concerned.[70] This method was used because it was Judaism which Orthodox Christians regarded as the source from which both Iconoclasm and Islam derived their main doctrines.[71]

From the beginning of the controversy, the Iconodules tried to associate the new enemy, Iconoclasm, with an old, more familiar one, and ascribed Jewish or Moslem influence (or even Jewish influence *through* Moslems)[72] to Emperor Leo

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[70]John of Damascus clearly states that he considers the Iconoclasts as exponents of a fleshly, Jewish way of Scripture exegesis, as Judaisers, who disdain the grace of the New Despensation. PG 94, 1236D, 1237D, 1288D. For example, John says: "τί οὖν ἡμεῖς φαμεν πρὸς ταῦτα, τί ἄλλο, εἰ μὴ τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρί ου το ῖς 'Ιο υδαίοις εἰρημένον. Ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς Γραφάς , etc." [...Thus, what shall we say as a reply to this? What else, than what was said by the Lord to the Jews: Scrutinise the Scriptures..."] Quoted in S. Gero, *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Leo III with Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources,* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalis, Sub. 41 (Louvain, 1973), n. 6, p 60.

[71]In the introductory paragraphs to his first *Apology*, when describing the initial stage of the Iconoclasm, John uses Scriptural quotations and images connected in the Epistles of Apostle Paul with Jewish connotation. For example, "I considered fearful and more than fearful that the Church...turned again to the weak and beggarly elements." (*Apology I*, 2, 9; Gal 4, 9); also John wants to defend the Church against the Iconoclastic innovations, stating that if the Church was imperfect, it has "... on the middle of the face some brand, destroying all the beauty." (*Apology I*, 2, 14), term, usually describing the brand of a slave, the image of the Synagogue, as opposed to the free Church.

[72]Through the Jewish magician named *Tessarakontapikhis,* who inspired Caliph Yazid II (750-724) to destroy all the images so that the Caliph could have a long reign. This report is preserved in the Acts of the Second Council of Nicaea, where it is also emphasised that the first iconoclastic bishops knew about Yazid's iconoclasm and imitated Moslems and Jews in their actions against the Church.

III's fight against the images.[73] Byzantines saw the enemies of Orthodox Christianity, the Iconoclasts, and Moslems as "new Jews," because they rejected many Christian beliefs much as the Jews. And when the need arose to refute the views of their opponents, Orthodox Christians used the arguments from the long and elaborate tradition of *Refutations against the Jews*[74] in spite of the fact that by that time the Jews did not play any significant religious or political role in the Byzantine Empire and, moreover, were vigorously prosecuted by Leo III.[75]

As a proof of the continuous tradition of using and worshipping images ever since the New Testament epoch, John attached to his treatises a *florilegium*, a collection of excerpts from the writings of the Church Fathers. This *florilegium* contains excerpts in chronological order (to the best of St. John's knowledge);[76] some of these are provided with his own commentaries. John also borrowed some of his arguments from those theologians quoted in the *florilegium*.[77] In order to better understand why John decided to choose this structure, we must address Byzantine attitudes towards tradition and innovation. The history of human civilisation was considered not as a forward movement, or progress, but, rather, as a process of decline and, eventually oblivion. The Byzantines considered faithfulness to the past more valuable than any sort of "originality."[78] John also

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[73]In neither Armenian, Syriac, or Christian Arabic sources are Yazid's Iconoclastic measures associated with Jewish inspiration (S. Gero, *Leo III,* 83). In Syriac sources the Iconoclasm of Leo and of Yazid are not connected with each other (*Ibid.*, 128).

[74]K. Carrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 27.

[75]L. Barnard, "The Jews and Iconoclasm" in *The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 35.

[76]For example, the excerpts from Dionysius the Areopagite initiate each of the three *florilegia* attached to the *Apologies,* "since by St. John's lifetime the writings under the name of Dionysius Areopagite were accepted as written by the disciple of Apostle Paul. Concequently these testimonies are meant to demonstrate that the use of icons in Christian worship is attested - with St. John's words - from the very beginning, i.e. from Apostolic times" (I. Bugár, "How far St. John of Damascus is justified in his claim that veneration of icons has firm support from earlier tradition?" (seminar paper on the Theology Department of the Oxford University, 1994), 8).

[77]A very interesting task of comparing, which arguments from the florilegium John incorporated into his *Apologies* and in which way, has to be left out of the scope of the present research.

[78]A. Louth, "A Christian Theologian at the Court of the Caliph: Some Cross-Cultural

uses the past "with a scrupulous care of a scholar and belongs to a tradition of scholarship that seeks not to simply exploit traditional wisdom, but also to refine, verify and preserve."[79] John's distinct method, which he indicates in the very beginning, is the defence of ancient tradition as a basis of a true understanding of the Scripture, avoiding deviations to the right and to the left.[80]

"Manichaeism" and the Iconoclastic Doctrine

In all the three *Apologies*, John accuses Iconoclasts of holding views similar to those of the Manichees.[81] This accusation needs further explanation: the question is whether John had meant, under the term *Manichee*,[82] an indirect connection between Manichaeism and Iconoclasm, as having a common Platonic dichotomy between the perfect Spirit and coarse Matter, which survived throughout the ages in gnosticism and in dualistic religions, or the direct influence of Manichaeism upon the origins of the Iconoclastic movement.

There is a historical problem raised by Nina Garsoïan's argument, according to which the Manichees disappeared from Asia Minor after the fierce persecution led by Justinian two centuries before the events of the Iconoclasm.[83] Thus, the easiest way to fill the two century gap between the last evidence of Manichaeism, and John's repetitive associations of the Iconoclasts with the Manichees, is to consider his charges as a mere rhetorical device which has nothing to do with reality. The

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Reflections," *Dialogos/ Hellenic Studies Review* 3 (1996), 11.

[79]*Ibid.*, 12.

[80]*Apology I*, 3, 9-10.

[81]Leo is also accused of the introducing the Manichaean heresy in *Vita Stephani* (S. Gero, *Leo III*, 109).

[82]In another place, John also connects Leo with Manichaeism: "Μανιχαῖοι συνέγραψαν τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν Εὐαγγέλιον. Γράψατε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸ κατὰ Λέοντα Εὐαγγέλιον ."[The Manichees wrote the Gospel according to Thomas, you, write, too, the Gospel according to Leo] (*Apology II*, 16, 62).

[83]N. Garsoïan, "Byzantine Heresy. A Reinterpretation," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 25 (1971), 96.

question seems, however, to be more complicated. First, do we exactly know who were the Manichees persecuted by Justinian? In fact, all the ancient sources seem to call the Messalians simply "Manichees."[84] The Paulicians who appeared later, were indistinctly called Messalians and Manichees by Byzantines.[85] Thus the question could be reformulated in the following manner: is it possible that some Messalian groups survived Justinian persecutions, and that there is somehow a continuity of tradition between the Messalians and the Paulicians, both having undergone the influence of Manichaeism itself? We could also argue that the burden of proof is on those who assert that we should not attribute any real meaning to John of Damascus's rather precise hints at a connection between the Iconoclasm and dualist views. In the following we shall see that John's charges receive some support from the little evidence we have about the early theology of Iconoclasm.

Another problem connected to the first is that if we try to analyse Iconoclastic theological views, we cannot find any overt exposition of main Manichaean doctrine of the scattered and imprisoned Light. Moreover, Manichaeism itself seemed not to be against religious art.[86] Looking for "Manichees" we must not forget that the epithet *Manichee* was used by the Greeks as a synonym for describing those people who held dualist views, "views like Mani rather than followers of Mani."[87] Looking for a dualist sect holding Iconoclastic views, which might have influenced Leo, we must consider besides Manichees, the sect of the Paulicians.[88]

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[84]*Messalians* or *Euchites*: "Those who pray," from Syriac *mesalyônê*, translated into Greek by *εὐχεταί*. The doctrine of the Messalians is itself controversial. They most certainly underwent real Manichean influence.

[85]Cf. the title of the History of Manichees by Peter of Sicily: *Historia utilis et refutatio atque haereseos Manichaeorum qui et Pauliciani dicuntur archiepiscopo Bulgariae nuncupata.*

[86]M. Loos, *Dualist Heresy in the Middle Ages* (Prague: Academia, 1973), 24.

[87] S. Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee: A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 49.

[88]To give the precise location of the sect at a certain period of time is complicated by the fact that it changed its areas of residence several times during the eighth century, fleeing from the persecution of Justinian II (685-695, 705-711), then from the Arabs, whose tax system was burdensome for them. Leo might have met them either in his hometown, or in the Caucasus,

The Paulicians were most likely a dualist sect and their abhorrence to churches extended to icons and relics.[89] Theophanes described them as being similar to Iconoclasts. Paulicians reformed and revised Manichaean teaching "in a form more acceptable to Christians by rejecting the cosmological myths."[90] They believed in two principles: the Heavenly Being, three in One, and the Creator or the Demiurge of the material world[91] who was the God of the Old Testament. It was very difficult to identify them; attempting to avoid persecutions, they often hid their views and even accepted baptism and pretended to venerate the Cross. The Emperor and his authorities were probably interested in disputing about the views of the sect which held extremely Iconoclastic views. S. Runciman notes that in the interview of Gegnesius, a Paulician leader, and the Patriarch of Constantinople, conducted by Leo III, "it is tempting to see in it an indication of the Iconoclastic movement."[92] Interestingly enough, during this disputation, Gegnesius was accused of not believing in the main doctrines of the Orthodox faith: the Holy Cross, the Mother of God, the Holy Body and the Blood of Christ, Baptism, and the Catholic and Apostolic Church.[93] Gegnesius justified himself by claiming, that he did believe in

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where he spent a long time after 705 (S. Gero, *Leo III,* n. 17, p 29). Although "there is no evidence that the Paulicians were already present in any numbers in Germanicia, the hometown of Leo III in Northern Syria, in the late seventh, early eighth centuries; certainly by the ninth century, in the reign of Basil I, Germanicia became at least temporarily a stronghold of the sect. There is a possibility at any rate, that Leo may have come into contact with Paulicians in his early period." (S. Gero, *Leo III*, 26-27)

[89]Armenian Paulicians first rejected icons then the Cross (John Ojneci, *Opera*, ed. J. B. Aucher (Venice, 1834), 79). This Armenian source states that the "heretics progressed from the rejection of icons to the contempt of the cross, thence to "Christomachy," atheism and demon worship." According to the anti-Paulician abjuration formula, the heretics were condemned for rejecting both the Cross and the holy images (ed. J. Gouillard, "Les sources grecque pour l'histoire du Pauliciens d' Asie Minuere," *Travaux et Memoires* 4 (1970): 203, 74-85).

[90]A. Bryier, and J. Herren, eds., *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1977) "The Paulicians and Iconoclasm," by L. Barnard, 76; also D. Obolensky, *The Bogomils: A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), 17.

[91]S. Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee*, 50.

[92]*Ibid.*, 38.

[93]It is significant that the icons are not mentioned among the doctrines, rejected by Gegnesius; "Possibly, the heresiarch and Leo were of the same law opinion on the subject." (S.

all those doctrines. Peter of Sicily, who describes this event in his *Historia Manichaeorum*[94] contends that Gegnesius under the Orthodox faith really meant "his own heresy," by the Cross—the figure of Christ with stretched arms, by the Mother of God—"heavenly Jerusalem," by the Body and Blood of Christ—Christ's teaching, by the Catholic and Apostolic Church—"the communities of Manichees" (i. e. the Paulicians), by the Baptism—also Christ, Who gives the rivers of "living water." This mystification was apparently successful enough to receive an approval regarding his "Orthodoxy" and to enable him to turn back home.[95]

Iconoclastic Emperors must have sympathised with Paulicians; the only time in the history of the sect when they prospered, occurred during Iconoclasm.[96] In numerous sources Constantine V is accused of holding views similar to those of Paulicians.[97] It is probably too far to call him a Paulician (for example, he did not reject the Old Testament, as Paulicians did) but he and his father could certainly have borrowed their dislike toward matter from the Paulicians.[98]

We can discern the Iconoclasts' attitude toward matter in the Chalce inscription placed on the bronze gates together with the Cross instead of the

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Gero, *Leo III,* n.11 p 28).

[94]*PG*, vol. 104.

[95]*Ibid.*, col. 1284, quoted in D. Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, 40-41.

[96]This mild attitude toward Paulicians, who could barely be called Christians, reveals a sharp contrast to the persecutions of the Iconodules, who indeed shared all the main theological dogmas and liturgical rites with the Iconoclasts.

[97]Nina Garsoïan provides a list of sources on Constantine's dislike of relics, use of the name Theotokos, prayers to Her, and to the saints, (Theophanis, *Chronographia*, CSHB (Bonn, 1838), I, 415, 435, 446; Leo Grammaticus, *Chronographia*, CSHB (Bonn, 1842), 182-83; Zonaras, *Annales*, PG 135, col. 1328, cf. col 1333; Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon*, II, 751; Nikephoros Patriarch, *Antirrheticus,* III, PG 100 col. 344 A; Theostericus, "Vita Nicetae Medicensis," *Acta SS* (April, I): 18-26; Stephanus Diaconus, *Vita S. Stephani Iunioris* PG 100, col. 1144 BC; *Adversus Constantinum Coballinum*, PG 95, col. 337 CD; (N. Garsoïan, *Heresy*, 100 n. 65).

[98]While. Nina Garsoïan considers Paulicians as left-wing Iconoclasts, L. Barnard denies the idea of similarity between the two teachings and proposes the interaction in the opposite direction: "As Iconoclasm became widespread among different strata of the population, a more radical movement, such as Paulicianism, could gain converts from those already affected by Iconoclast propaganda." (L. Barnard, "The Paulicians," 78).

destroyed image of Christ. The inscription says:

> The Ruler because he bears not that Christ be described
> As a voiceless shape bereft of breath,
> By earthly matter, trampled down by the Scriptures.
> Leo with his Son, the young Constantine
> Engraves the thrice-blessed representation of the Cross
> -a boast of the faithful - on the gates of the palace.[99]

> Ἄφωνον εἶδος καὶ πνοῆς ἐξηρμένον,
> Χριστὸν γράφεσθαι μὴ φέρων ὁ δεσπότης
> Ὕλῃ γεηρᾷ, ταῖς γραφαῖς πατουμένῃ,
> Λέων σὺν υἱῷ τῷ νέῳ Κωνσταντίνῳ
> Σταυροῦ χαράττει τὸν τρισόλβιον τύπον,
> Καύχημα πιστῶν, ἐν πύλαις ἀνακτόρων.

This inscription contains a strange expression which is not rendered faithfully either by S. Gero, or Ch. Schönborn: ταῖς γραφαῖς πατουμένῃ, that was translated by "trampled down by the Scriptures" here. Gero translates it by "condemned by Scriptures,"[100] and Schönborn by "méprisée dans les Ecritures."[101] The problem with these translations is not only that πατέω does not mean either "condemn," or "despise," but also in the fact that matter is nowhere explicitly condemned or despised in the Scriptures. This riddle can, however, be solved by comparing this text to the Easter Troparion of the Byzantine Church:

> Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death,
> And upon those in the tombs bestowing life

[99]The idea of the following argument and the translation of the inscription are kindly provided by Prof. István Perczel.

[100]S. Gero, *Leo III*, 114.

[101]Christoph Schönborn, *L'icône du Christ: Fondaments théologiques* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1986), 159.

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν θανάτῳ θάνατον πατήσας
Καὶ τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι ζωὴν χαρισάμενος

In fact, the two texts have a parallel structure centred around the same verb πατέω: "to trample down:" Christ trampled down death by death, and earthly matter is trampled down by the Scriptures. If we are allowed to infer that the author of the epigram had in mind the Easter Troparion when he composed this verse, we can propose, as a probable interpretation, that the epigram has a double meaning, containing a clearly defined Christological doctrine: "earthly matter" which is death for the incarnate soul, is "trampled down" by the Scriptures, representing the Incarnation of Christ which itself is considered as his death, the *kenosis,* There is, moreover, the correspondence between γράφεσθαι, "described," and ταῖς γραφαῖς, "the Scriptures." According to the epigram, it is not allowed to describe Christ by earthly matter because his circumscribed material and corporeal existence has been "trampled down," that is, abolished by His death and resurrection.

The image of Christ as Scripture is, in fact, very archaic. Under this image, Christ is presented in the book of Gospels which is kept on the Holy Table in the altar and is replaced by the antemension with the Holy Gifts only during the Liturgy. The Little Entrance with the book of Gospels in the Liturgy of Catechumens (second part of the Liturgy, after the Proskomidia and before the Liturgy of the Faithful) is paralleled by the Great Entrance with the Offered Gifts preceding the Anaphora in the Liturgy of the Faithful. Even the early Christian iconography of the Holy Trinity also equates the book of Gospels to Christ.[102]

The excerpt of the *Acts of the Iconoclastic Council* in Hiereia (754) quoted in the *Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council* in Nicaea, the source of official

[102]On the triumphal arch of S. Maria Maggiore (soon after 430) the empty throne signifies God the Father, and the book of Gospels on the Throne signifies the Son. The same image of the Trinity in S. Prisca, at Capua Vetere (beginning of the fifth century) has a dove, signifying the Holy Spirit on the book of Gospels (A. Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of Its Origins* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 115).

Iconoclastic theology, contains some hints pointing in the same direction. The question is whether we can take this excerpt as a source of information about the earlier stage of the debate. It seems that the views and principal arguments of the iconoclasts had not changed radically since the time of John of Damascus's *Apologies* but had only gained a theologically more elaborate form. The commonly accepted opinion ascribes the invention of the Iconoclastic theology to Constantine V. Thus, J. Meyendorff states: "It was in the reign of Constantine V, Copronymus (742-775), that the iconoclastic party was given a theology that contemporaries attributed to the Emperor himself, and which some modern authors consider a work of genius."[103] Christoph Schönborn repeats this opinion: "Il est hors de doute que c'est Constantin V qui a hissé le débat sur les images sacrées au niveau explicitment christologique."[104] However, first, our interpretation of the Chalce inscription seems to contradict this thesis. And secondly, the comparison of John's Christological argument from the first *Apology,*[105] with the Christological argument of the *Acts* of Hiereia (attributed to Constantine V), suggests that such argument existed already in the 730s, that is, about ten years before Constantine's birth. The *Acts* stated about the icons: "Double blasphemy—the one is making an image of the Godhead, and the other by mingling the Godhead and manhood." They also accused the Iconodules of falling into "the abyss of impiety, since they separate the flesh from the Godhead, ...and thus introduce a fourth person into the Trinity." Thus, in condemning the Iconodulic views as introducing a fourth Person into the Trinity, the *Acts* reiterated on the positions which John had refuted in his *Apologies* thirty years earlier. Therefore, the Iconoclasts either did not know about John's

[103] J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Theological Thought,* 180

[104] Ch. Schönborn, *L'icône du Christ,* 170.

[105] "Together with the King and God I worship the purple of his Body, not as a garment or a fourth Person... but as being itself called God, and having become without any change that what its Anointer was... This is why I depict with confidence the invisible God, not as invisible, but as having become visible for our sake through His participation in flesh and blood" (*Apology I,* 4. 62-85). "I do not portray the invisible Divinity but I portray the visible flesh of God" (Apology I, 4, 82).

arguments or simply ignored them. The latter is more probable because of the special hatred to John of Damascus expressed in *two anathemas* pronounced against him by the Iconoclastic Council of Hiereia, as opposed to one *anathema* to other Iconodulic champions, like Patriarch Germanus, or George of Cyprus.

The Iconoclastic attitude toward matter is also reflected in the *Acts,* although not in such obvious way as in the Chalce inscription. But we must not forget that the *Acts* were the decrees of an official Council, and thus might have "corrected" too sharp opinions of the Emperor.[106] The *Acts* ascribe to Satan the name *Demiurge of evil,* a term that could barely be used by the Orthodox. A good basis for comparison is provided by some later texts by St. Symeon the New Theologian, whom Nina Garsoïan, in her article quoted above connected and not without foundation to the Paulicians and the Iconoclasts. Symeon, however, remains within the borders of Orthodoxy,[107] and would never call Satan a "demiurge of evil." Instead he speaks about him as "the wise thinker of evil" (σοφίστης κακίας)[108] or "inventor of evil" (ὁ κακίας εὑρετής):[109] Satan "invented" or "put together in thought" the evil, which has no ontological reality according to the Orthodox doctrine.

In the same way, when John of Damascus in Chapter 16, says: "I do not worship matter, but I worship the Demiurge of matter" (οὐ προσκυνῶ τῇ ὕλῃ, προσκυνῶ δὲ τὸν τῆς ὕλης δημιουργόν),[110] this seems to be a reply to a possible statement analogous to that made at Hiereia. In fact, John of Damascus in

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[106]N. Garsoïan, "Heresy," 100.

[107]It is also rightly stated by Nina Garsoïan, cf. "It would be an oversimplification and a distortion to turn Symeon the New Theologian into an Iconoclast, although his defence of orthodox images in his quarrel with Stephen of Nicomedia is hardly reconcilable with his systematic denigration of the visible and material world, nor should he be turned into a Paulician..." (N. Garsoïan, "Heresy," 106).

[108]Hymn XXIV, line 147 (Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, *Hymnes 16-40. Text critique, introduction, et traduction*, ed. Johannes Koder, vol. 2, Sources Chrétienne 174 (Paris, 1971)).

[109]*Ibid.*, line 159.

[110]*Apology I*, 16, 4-6.

the same chapter of his first *Apology*, after the statement on honouring matter, goes on and says: "the only blameworthy thing is what does not have its cause from God but is our invention due to the fact that we freely turn away our will from what is according to nature, and direct it to what is contrary to nature, that is, sin."[111]

This Demiurge could not stand the decoration of the Church with "glorious doctrines" and brought back idolatry, i. e. veneration of material images. It is also stated about icons that the "deceitful colouring of pictures ...draws down the spirit of man from the lofty adoration of God to low and material adoration of creature." The act of the material creation of an icon the Iconoclasts considered as: "the painter with his polluted hands tries to fashion that which should only be believed in heart and confessed with the mouth."[112] Their negative attitude toward matter is explicitly stated in the following quotation: "It is not permitted to Christians ... to insult the Saints, who shine in so great glory, by common dead matter."

In the same Chapter 16 of the first *Apology,* John seems to polemicise both with the doctrine of the Chalce inscription, and a possible precursor of the Iconoclastic doctrine formulated in Hiereia according to which, Satan is the Demiurge of evil, that is, perhaps, of matter. In fact, when John puts the seemingly rhetorical question: "Is not matter the trice-blessed and trice-praiseworthy wood of the Cross?"(Ἦ οὐχ ὕλη τὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ ξύλον τὸ τρισόλβιον καὶ τρισμακάριστον),[113] he seems to refer directly, or at least not to ignore, the "trice-blessed representation of the Cross" (σταυροῦ... τὸν τρισόλβιον τύπον) in the Chalce inscription.

Thus, John precisely determined the core of the Controversy in discarding

[111]*Ibid.*,16, 35-38. In his second *Apology* the emphasis on the non-existence of evil is even stronger (*Apology II,* 3, 7-15).

[112]Every time when the authors of the definition of Hierea use the word art, it bears a distinctively negative connotation: *dead art, evil art, heathenish art.* However, the Iconoclastic Emperors were concerned *only* with the religious art: "The great inconsistency of the Iconoclasts was that they do not really follow the Old Testament commandment to which they refer, namely not to represent in images and not to adore anything in heaven or earth, but that they felt concerned only with religious art. (G. Ladner, "Origin and Significance," 136).

[113]*Apology I,* 16, 17-18.

matter, and, in this way, undermining the doctrine of Incarnation. His *Apologies* might be regarded as a valuable historical source on the theology of early Iconoclasm. The later stage, marked by the attempt to approve Iconoclastic ideology as a canonically accepted doctrine, seem to be a logical continuation of very archaic doctrines deeply rooted in the Early Christian time both in terms of Christology, and despising of the material.

Structure and Arguments of the Second *Apology*

Having started from similar positions in the introduction to the second *Apology*, John of Damascus points out the fact that the first *Apology* was not sufficiently clear for all, and that urged him to write his second treatise. He mainly repeats the structure of the first *Apology*, however, he stresses the rhetorical style and omits the system of images and worship, theologically elaborated in the first *Apology*. He portrays the devil's various tactics of leading man astray from God, and the history of temptations from the first Fall through idolatry. Then the devil taught some that "evil is without a principle just like God, and taught others to confess that God Who is Good by nature, is the cause of evil."[114] In the first group mentioned we recognise the dualist doctrine of the Evil Principle. It is difficult to identify the second group. "Some were deluded to say that in the Godhead there is one nature and one person" (Jews and Moslems), "others venerate in an illegitimate way three natures and three persons" (Arians); "some glorify one nature and one person of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Monophysites); "some—two natures and two persons" (Nestorians).

With the preface that "the truth goes the middle way,"[115] John exposes two main doctrines of faith. It is significant that, along with the Orthodox confession of the two natures and one person in Christ, John again declares the ontological non-

[114] *Apology II*, 2, 20-22.

[115] *Ibid*, 3, 1-2.

existence of evil: "[it] is not a substance but something accidental, some thought and word and action against the Law of God. It has its very existence in being thought, and being said, and being done, and as soon as we cease acting so, it vanishes."

Further on, John changes the pattern of polemics, concentrating not on the theological appropriateness of images and image-veneration, but rather on the "psychological" argument on the part of the devil, who "does not want his defeat and shame be exposed in public, now that the glory of God, and His saints be described."[116]

"It is not the kings' duty to give laws to the Church." By quoting Christ's words "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's" (Matt 22, 21),[117] John exposes the old dichotomy between secular and religious powers against caesaropapism,[118] an attempt to submit the Church to imperial power. Explaining the origins of the Iconoclastic controversy, Ladner states: "Emperors certainly believed in the Incarnation of Christ, but the Church's dominance in the spiritual realm and the earthly representation of the divine world by means of Christian images was not accepted by them."[119] The Iconoclastic debate from a question concerning an aspect of the Church's practice, grew into a fundamental conflict between Church and State, the latter being represented by the Emperor. Ladner goes on to state that "the truth is that iconoclasm was from its beginning an attack upon the visible representation of the

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[116] *Ibid.*, 4, 16-18.

[117] *Ibid.*, 12, 37.

[118] On the term, certainly not reflecting all the complexity of relations between the Church and the State, and its limitations, see Adolph Ziegler, Die byzantinische Religionspolitik und der sog. Cäsaropapismus," in *Münchener Beiträge zur Slavenkunde: Festgabe für Paul Diels*, eds. Erwin Koschneider and Alois Schmaus, (Munich: Veröffenlichungen des Osteuropa Instituts, 1953); F. Dölger, "Die Kaiserurkunde der Byzantiner als Ausdruck ihrer politischen Anschauungen," *Historische Zeitschrift* 159 (1938/39): 229-50; F. Dvornik, "Emperors, Popes and General Councils," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 6 (1951): 1-23.

[119] G. Ladner, "Origin and Significance," 134

civitas Dei on this earth."[120] The Byzantine Emperors' wish was to be the Christian, the sacred Emperors, even to a higher degree than most of the Western emperors or any of the earlier emperors of Byzantium. Leo III followed this view when he wrote to Pope Gregory II: "I am King and Priest."[121] He understood this in such a way that only their sacred empire was to be the visible form of Christendom in this world; whereas the Church would be only the liturgical function of the Empire. "The heavenly world and Christ Himself should remain abstract and could in no way be represented in visible images."[122] By replacing the religious scenes on the walls of the churches by secular scenes of horse races and gardens, Iconoclastic Emperors not only wanted to remove any spiritual representations, but also aimed at promoting their ideas about the supremacy of the Empire over the Church. Even the fact that the Iconoclastic Emperors emphasised the artistic representation of the Cross, does not point toward their inclination to see the *image* in it, but partly because the Cross was a symbol and palladium of the Byzantine Empire since the time of Constantine the Great.[123]

This attempt was successful in terms of the non-monastic clergy, the larger part of the bishops and army, but found a steadfast resistance on the part of monasticism, the movement which was dedicated to icon-veneration to the utmost degree, and constituted the segment of Byzantine society which remained the most independent from the Imperial power. That is why the Iconoclastic Emperors predominantly directed most of their struggle against the monks for the sake of "cleansing" the Church from images.

John literally repeats the arguments from the first *Apology* on honouring

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[120] *Ibid.*

[121] "Βασιλεὺς καὶ ἱερεύς εἰμι " (Quoted in the second letter of Pope Gregory to Leo III. Jaffè, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, ed. Wattenbach, Nr. 2180).

[122] G. Ladner, "Origin and Significance," 135.

[123] A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin: Recherches sur l'art officiel de l'Empire d'Orient* (Paris: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg, 1936) 170.; G. Millet. "Les iconoclastes et la croix" (*Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 34 (1910)), 96 ff.; quoted in G. Ladner, "Origin and Significance," 138.

matter against Manichaen opinion, on the saints, and on the tradition of the Church, which is governed "not by the kings' decrees but according to the traditions of the Fathers."[124]

The second *Apology* by John of Damascus reiterates the main arguments of the first *Apology* in a simplified and rhetorically reinforced manner. He focuses his speech on four main points. Firstly, he provides an explanation for the context of the Second Commandment, which had a relative meaning of preventing the worship of idols and cannot be applied to icons, which are the opposite of idols. Secondly, he notes that honouring matter is appropriate for providing the means of salvation but not for its own sake (for the wood of destroyed crosses and icons is burnt in Church practice). Thirdly, John states that the unwritten tradition of the Church is of immense importance besides the Scripture alone. And fourthly, he emphasises the refusal of the secular powers' intervention in church affairs, which he simply calls 'piracy'. This point is only implicitly touched upon in the first *Apology* but is elaborated in the second one. This is the only position which does not overlap with the arguments of the former.

John not only refutes the charge of image-veneration as constituting idolatry, and approves it as ordered by God Himself in the Old Testament; but he also elaborates a system of images (natural, scriptural and artificial), and a system of worship consistently using the word *icon* (Greek εἰκων) in its application to all images he describes. Having connected this system with his conception of the dignity of matter, John draws the clear conclusion that the Incarnation of the Word of God, the natural icon of the Father, constitutes a change. Icon-veneration, therefore, is not only permitted for, but even required of all Christians.

[124] *Apology II*, 16, 77-81.

CHAPTER 3

BETWEEN BYZANTINE ICONOCLASM AND REFORMATION

Church and State: Byzantine Iconoclasm and Reformation

Iconoclasm was not an invention of the Byzantine Emperors of the eighth century. In a wider sense iconoclasm as a destruction of the symbols of established order was well known even in ancient times.[125] The Iconoclasm in which both of our sources are involved, is based on religious feelings rather than on political rage. According to Gero's analysis, the main distinction is between "the destruction of images of that which is deemed an alien religion and the selective obliteration of symbols of the iconoclasts' own faith."[126] It is, thus, possible to see a specific relationship between Byzantine and Northern Protestant iconoclasm, which has always been recognised by Protestants. "In both cases we find a refusal to venerate God under visible forms," or to limit "the sacramental order of the world, also the view that the State is the highest visible form of life on the earth."[127] However, as opposed to the Byzantine Iconoclasm of the eighth and ninth centuries with the question of image at the core of the controversy, the leaders of the Reformation executed the Iconoclastic measures as a facet in a "larger program of a radical renewal of Christian life."[128]

The victory of the Reformation brought about a change in the relationship between Church and State. This factor certainly contributed to the development of Western Europe in a later period. The defeat of Byzantine Iconoclasm is a possible

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[125] S. Gero, "Byzantine Iconoclasm and The Failure of a Medieval Reformation" in *The Image and the Word: Confrontations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam,* ed. Joseph Gutmann (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the American Academy of Religion, 1977), 49.

[126] *Ibid.*

[127] G. Ladner, "Origin and Significance," 136.

[128] S. Gero, "Reformation," 51; H. von Campenhausen. "Die Bilderfrage in der Reformation" *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 78 (1957): 96-128.

reason for the preservation of a heritage of the past and a resistance to intellectual change which continued to be a characteristic of Byzantium,[129] and later of Russia, which saw Byzantium as the model of its own cultural and religious life.

We can discern different approaches to the problem of the coexistence between Church and State. The Byzantine Iconoclastic Emperors introduced themselves into the sacred realm of the Church as "sacred Emperors, equal to the Apostles,"[130] keepers of the Orthodox faith. Peter the Great, following the example of the Western European rulers of Reformation, incorporated the Church into the realm of the secular, civil administration. He was more concerned with the commerce and prosperity of Russia than with religious doctrines and interpretations of Scripture; not a single war that he fought had religion as a cause. Peter believed that his prime duty as a monarch was to serve God through working for the power and prosperity of Russia.[131] The mouthpiece of the Petrine ecclesiastical reform, Feofan Prokopovich, stated that: "the clergy, like the army, the civil administration, doctors and artisans, is subject to the state. The clergy is another order of rank of the people and not a separate state."[132]

Iconoclasm and Apology for Images in the West

We can distinguish between two main trends of religious attitude that have existed throughout the whole history of Christianity. The first is a 'spiritualisation,' with the accompanying notion of a dichotomy between spiritual and material, and with a perception of God as the First Principle and the Universal Spirit. The second is personal, and devotional, with the belief in the possibility of a deification of the material being and the recognition of God primarily as a Person. The first attitude is

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[129]R. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and Its Icons* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 140.

[130]Cf., for example, with the Preface to the *Eclogue* by Leo III, or the *Acts* of Hiereia.

131R. Massig, *Peter the Great: His Life and World* (London: Abacus, 1982), 783.

[132]*Ibid.*, 791

marked by the attempt to separate the earthly realm from the heavenly; the second—with that of uniting them. We observed their conflict during the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy. But even if there exist several more or less plausible hypotheses regarding the origins of Byzantine Iconoclasm, the origins of Western Iconoclasm still remain obscure. It will be proposed that the reason for the Iconoclasm of Reformation can be the attitude toward images as purely material entities, that was preserved in the West from the time of *Libri Carolini.*

After the death of Constantine V in 775, the history of Europe was determined by the interaction of three main forces: Constantinople, Rome and the Frankish Empire.[133] At the end of the Iconoclastic dispute, the Pope officially supported the Orthodox of the Empire, but in reality he endorsed the heterodox Franks.[134] Only two papal representatives took part in the Council of Nicaea, mostly interested in political issues (such as regaining the Diocese of Illyricum) and there was not a single representative from the Franks. E. J. Martin in his work on the origins of Iconoclasm points out that this topic was not of particular interest in the West.[135] The Carolingians were vehemently opposed to the Iconodulic Empress Irene and denounced the Acts of the Second Council in Nicaea, by this fact introducing a formal reason to show their superiority and to break with the Greeks.[136] Charlemagne proclaimed in the Preface to the *Libri Carolini,*[137] that the images should be neither destroyed as Hiereia proclaimed, nor worshipped as was announced in Nicaea, but allowed to be used in churches as decoration or commemoration. He also stated, that "the fear of God is shown not in the

[133]E. J. Martin, *A History of the Iconoclast Controversy* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930), 222.

[134]*Ibid.*

[135]*Ibid.*, 223.

[136]Celia M. Chazelle, "Images, Scripture, the Church, and the *Libri Carolini*" *Proceedings of the PMR Conference* 16/17 (1992-93), 53.

[137]Hubert Bagsten, ed., *Libri Carolini sive Carolini Magni capitulare de imaginibus*: Monumenta Germanica Historia, Legum sectio 3, Concilia 2, Supplementum (Hannover, 1924).

veneration and worship of images but in the will and pursuit of the commands of God,"[138]—a phrase which could sound natural off the lips of any leader of the Reformation.

The *Libri Carolini* were written in 790-93 by Theodulf of Orléans and were revised with the help of several other theologians.[139] They constitute the official response of Charlemagne and his court to the Decrees of icon-veneration, announced by the Second Council of Nicaea (787), which reached the Carolingians in a very distorted translation. This translation was done in Rome; however, it was believed to have been produced in Byzantium. According to this translation, the champions of icon-veneration believed that the images should be *adored* and not *worshipped.*[140] The *Libri Carolini* is the only surviving source from Charlemagne's time that elaborates on the nature and purpose of the artistic image.

The goal of the *Libri Carolini*[141] is not only to present the Greek errors concerning the question of artistic images, but also to prove that the Byzantines distorted the true comprehension of the matter-spirit relationship. This notion,

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[138]*Libri Carolini*, book 3, 28.

[139]On the authorship see: Ann Freeman."Theodulf of Orleans and the *Libri Carolini*" (*Speculum* 32 (1957): 663-705); by the same author "Further Studies in the *Libri Carolini* I and II" (*Speculum* 40 (1965): 203-89); "Further Studies in the *Libri Carolini* III" (*Speculum* 46 (1971): 597-612);"Carolingian Orthodoxy and the Fate of *Libri Carolini*" (*Viator* 16 (1985): 65-108); Luitpold Wallach. "The *Libri Carolini* and the Patristics, Latin and Greek" in *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honour of Harry Caplan,* ed. L. Wallach (Ithaca, NY, 1966),451-98; C. M. Chazelle." Matter, Spirit, and Image in the *Libri Carolini*" (*Recherches Augustiniennes* 21 (1986): 163-84).

[140]For example in the Acts, the Greek word προσκύνησις (veneration) is consistently translated as *adoratio* (adoration).

[141]The whole structure of the *Libri Carolini* as a response to the Acts of Nicaea is thoroughly designed concerning both the chronology and the presented topics. The critiques referring to the biblical passages are mainly carried out in Books I and II of the *Libri Carolini*, and they are organised so that biblical citations go on from Genesis through the whole Old Testament to the New Testament. Book II also treats the Byzantine interpretation of the Church Fathers, and the Book III reviles Nicene Christology and Trinitarian teaching. Book IV systematically denounces the Nicene doctrine on the images and rejects the claim of the Council of Nicaea to be Ecumenical. Each of the four books was originally organised to embody the same amount of chapters. The *Libri Carolini* were aimed not simply to attack the Council, but to manifest by their thorough organisation a sharp contrast to the disorder, which the Carolingians saw in the Acts of Nicaea. (cf. *Libri Carolini*, I. 5. 19). The organisation of the *Libri Carolini* is examined in Thomas Noble, "From Brigandage to Justice: Charlemagne 785-794," in *Literacy, Politics and Artistic Innovation in the Early Medieval West,* ed. Celia M. Chazelle (Lanham, MD, 1992), 49-75, at 61-6 (C. Chazelle, "Images, Scripture," n 13, p 68.).

according to the *Libri*, conditioned all the other delusions of the Greeks. This way, Carolingian theology claimed to be superior to the Greek.[142] Celia Chazelle argues that the anti-Iconodulic doctrine of the *Libri Carolini* is based on the concept of the opposition between the spiritual and the material realms, "so that the mortal who wants to approach God must finally turn away from material things in order to direct his or her attention completely towards the spiritual."[143] She also considers the position of Theodulf, though supported by quotations from the writings attributed to Augustine, as exaggerating Augustine's views on the relation between the realms of the spiritual and the material.[144] The entirely coherent system of thought is derived from this concept.

The central supposition upon which the *Libri* embark is that both attitudes present in the Eastern Church, namely, the destruction of images according to the Iconoclastic Heireia, and the improper adoration of images promoted by the Iconodulic Nicaea are heretical.[145] This tradition was outlined in the two letters of Pope Gregory to the iconoclastic bishop Severus of Marseilles,[146] where Gregory called for neither the destruction nor the adoration of images. However, the important notion of the usefulness of images for didactic purposes, that was stressed by Gregory, is completely omitted in the *Libri*. [147]

The *Libri Carolini* wanted to show that as opposed to the Iconoclastic Greeks, the Carolingians did not reject the material world as evil; however, this

[142] C. Chazelle, "Images, Scripture, the Church, and the *Libri Carolini*" (*Proceedings of the PMR Conference* 16/17 (1992-93), 55.

[143] *Ibid.*, 54.

[144] *Ibid.*

[145] *Ibid.*, 56.

[146] Parts of the second one is quoted in *Libri Carolini*, (II, 23 81f).

[147] This doctrine of St. Gregory was not new, it was first expressed in the second half of the fourth century by the Greek Fathers, but "its restatement and authentication was well suited to the needs of a missionary church. (William R. Jones, "Art and Christian Piety: Iconoclasm in Medieval Europe," in *The Image and the Word: Confrontations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam,* ed. Joseph Gutmann (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the American Academy of Religion, 1977), 79).

world was separated from God and the heavenly realm.[148] The *Libri* also stand on the position that "worship should never be bestowed on a purely material object such as an artistic image, since such a thing cannot bring a mortal closer to the divine."[149] Essentially, the mild Iconoclastic position of the *Libri Carolini* is supported by the Council of Paris (825) in two main principles which would have an impact for further Western attitude toward religious art, namely, that although the images should not be attacked, it is improper to worship them.[150] These principles are elaborated in a manner quite different from the controversial method of the Byzantine Councils. For instance, Augustine is quoted saying that all that is made by man is mortal and not immortal like the creation of God. This citation is used against the Nicene doctrine on the necessity of the man-made images.[151]

In the Latin West there has never been an issue out of the need of images as testimonies of Christ's Incarnation, or even any attempt to theologically elaborate the connection between image and prototype. The theological response to the occasional attacks upon artistic images, in general reflected Patristic and Byzantine formulations of the late period[152] except, perhaps, only in the *Libri Carolini*. In the Eastern theological tradition, the worship of images was based on Christology, while in the West it was included into the complex of patrons and protectors.[153] These differences of approach toward the artistic images of East and West may be explained through their differences of approach regarding the relationship between

[148]cf. *Libri Carolini*, 1. 7. 23

[149]C. Chazelle, "Images, Scripture," 56. Cf. Libri Carolini, 3.15.135.

[150]E. Martin, *Iconoclastic Controversy*, 257.

[151]*Ibid.*, 258.

[152]S. Gero, "Reformation," 51.

[153]A. Harnack, *History of Dogma* (Glouchester, MA: Deter Smith, 1961), vol. 5, 308; quoted in E. Martin, *Iconoclastic Controversy*, 225. W. Jones adds to this: "The closest approximation in the West to eastern Christian icon-worship was probably devotion to the cross, although even this was rivalled during the later Middle Ages by the adoration of the Eucharist," notably, the only *images*, accepted by the Iconoclasts in the time of Constantine Copronymus (W. R. Jones, "Art and Christian Piety; Iconoclasm in Medieval Europe," in *The Image and the Word: Confrontations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. Joseph Gutmann (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the American Academy of Religion, 1977), 83).

matter and spirit. The Western perception of the earthly and the heavenly was mainly grounded on Augustine's writings, who based his views about the material on the fact of the *Creation*, whereas John of Damascus stressed the *Incarnation* in his appeal for the possibility of the deification of matter.[154] Possibly, the still existing clash between the created and the Creator in Augustine, determined a sharper contrast between the material and the spiritual for Augustine and the West as a whole. Thus, artistic images which constituted a purely material entity for the West could not and had not been accepted as mediation between the earthly and the heavenly world, nor as manifestations of the heavenly world in the earthly. The official position of the Western Church "tended to perpetuate the Gregorian characterisation of images as the 'Bible of the unlearned' and to insist that their proper use was to memorialise the great events of Christian history and legend and to serve as aids to reflection."[155] The greatest stage of appreciation was to accept images either as "books for the illiterate,"[156] or auxiliary aid for meditation,[157]

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[154]Significantly, Augustine was deeply concerned rather with the question of Creation and not with Incarnation. A great number of his writings are dedicated to the Creation: *De Genesi contra Manichaeos, De Genesi ad litteram, imp., De Genesi ad litteram. Confessiones XI- XIII*, also deal with the exegesis of Hexaemeron. Such is the case with *De civitate Dei,* and *De Trinitate*, where Augustine elaborates upon the doctrine of Creation, but pays no serious attention to the doctrine of Incarnation. I am very grateful to György Heidl for this information.

[155]W. Jones, "Art and Christian Piety," 83.

[156]For example, Bonaventure expanded the value of images as aids for education (*propter simplicium ruditatem*), for inspiration (*propter affectuum tarditatem*), and for commemoration (*propter memoriae labilitatem*). (Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae, *Opera Theologica Selecta*, eds., L. M. Bello, and P. M. Perantoni (Florence, 1934-1949), 3, 194. Quoted in W. Jones, "Art and Christian Piety," 84).

[157]This "psychological" attitude towards images was outlined in the so-called "Gregorian tradition," however, omitted in the *Libri Carolini*. Cf. the apocryphal letter (of most probably the eighth century) of Gregory the Great to hermit Secundinus: "Ex visione rei gestae ardorem compunctionis percipiant et in adoratione solius omnipotentis sanctae trinitatis humiliter prosternantur" (PL 77, 1128-1130). The notion of *compunctio* is referred to both on the East (Theodore Studite, cf. "L'icône peinte est pour nous une sainte lumière, un souvenir salutaire puisqu'elle nous montre le Christ né, baptisé, accomplissant des miracles, crucifé, enseveli, ressuscité, montant au ciel. En tout cela nous ne nous trompons pas, comme si cela n'avait pas eu lieu, car la vision s'ajoute á la contemplation intellegible (συντρεχώσης τῆς ὄψεως τῇ τοῦ νοῦ θεωρία), et par les deux notre foi en le mystère de l'Economie se trouve grandement affermie, elle en tire un grand profit et une conponction profonde" PG 99, 456 BC, quoted in C. Schönborn, *L'icône du Christ,* 230; also PG 99, 1213 CD), and in the West in connection with images. However, in later Western tradition, it was substituted by the term *devotio,* as we can see in the image doctrine of Thomas Aquinas: "Fuit autem triplex ratio institutionis imaginum in

whereas the "pure" spiritual contemplation remained the primary goal.

When the first "need" was proclaimed invalid in the time of the Reformation, there remained nothing to oppose regarding the second one; why have images since we are no longer illiterate and since pure knowledge can be learned from the Gospels without the "fairy tales" of the Dormition, of St. George killing the Dragon, or the Nativity of the Virgin.

The West was not "immunised" against Iconoclasm, although the *Libri Carolini* were soon forgotten and were recovered only in the sixteenth century, to be listed in the Index of the prohibited books.[158] It seems, however, that something remained there of the spiritualising Iconoclasm of Constantine Copronymus, with the Eucharist as the only proper "image" of Christ.[159] This may be one of the reasons why there could be no valid theological answer in the West to Protestant Iconoclastic accusations.[160]

The Council of Trent in 1563, reacting to the Reformation, stated the following about church decoration: "The Holy Council forbids any image to be exhibited in churches which represents false doctrines and might be the occasion of grave error to the uneducated; it earnestly desires that all lasciviousness be avoided and that images not be adorned with seductive charms."[161]

Ecclesia. Primo ad instructionem rudium qui eis quasi quibusdam libris edocentur. Secundo ut incarnationis mysterium et sanctorum exempla magis in memoria nostra essent, dum quotidie oculis repraesentantur. Tertio ad excitandum devotionis affectum qui ex visis efficacius incitantur quam ex auditis" Sententiarum III, IX, 1, 2, 7. Quoted in J. C. Schmitt, "L'Occident, Nicée II, et les images du VIIIe au XIIIe siècle," in *Nicée II,* ed. F. Boespflug, and N. Lossky (Paris: n. p. h., 1987), 296.

[158]W. Jones, "Art and Christian Piety," 83.

[159]In fact, the act of adoration of the sacraments is a symbolic expression of this attitude. It is a telling fact that such spirituality never developed in the East.

[160]On the medieval theology of art see: W. R. Jones, "Art and Christian Piety; Iconoclasm in Medieval Europe," in *The Image and the Word: Confrontations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, ed. Joseph Gutmann* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press for the American Academy of Religion, 1977), 75-105.; J, Kollwitz, "Bild und Bildertheologie im Mittelalter," in *Das Gottesbild im Abendland,* ed. G. Howe (Witten and Berlin, 1959), 139-72.

[161]Quoted in E. Male, *Religious Art in France: The Late Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 443.

The Church wanted to keep art but to justify it from the Protestant accusations.[162] For the purpose of a wider view, it is perhaps interesting to look at the polemics in defence of images developed in the West as a reaction to Protestantism.

In 1568 Jean Molanus, a scholar from the famous Louvain University, the stronghold of Catholicism in the Northern countries, gave lectures on the usefulness of Christian art against the Iconoclastic doctrines. These lectures became the book *De picturis et imaginibus sacris liber unus.*[163] The real subject of Molanus's book, in addition to denying the Christian art as a form of idolatry, is a thorough examination of traditional iconographic scenes and types. This approach is very interesting, because it reveals the process of destruction of medieval iconography by reason, similarly to the destruction of the system of medieval Orthodox theology in the polemics of Stefan Yavorsky.

E. Male argues that the deep symbolism of medieval art was alien to Molanus.[164] The clear indication of that is that he says very little about the hierarchy, the essence of the works of the past. In the writing of Molanus one can observe the old symbols losing their meaning and dying. The traditions of the past which fertilised religious art for centuries had to be revised and prove their right to exist having been checked by reason

Molanus knew very well the positions of his adversaries; he also knew that the Golden Legend version of the Lives of Apostles could not be trusted anymore. Without mercy he denounced the legends which had inspired the artists for so many centuries. Molanus criticised the artists for their representations of Mary's Life.[165] The faithful might believe in the story of Her childhood, Her service in the Temple, but it could not be represented as credible truth anymore. He did not go so

[162]E. Male, *Religious Art,* 447.

[163]J. Molanus, *De picturis et imaginibus sacris liber unus* (Louvain, 1570).

[164]E. Male, *Religious Art,* 448ff.

[165]*Ibid.*, 449.

far as to call for the destruction of the numerous pertinent works but claimed that now the Church had to educate the flock "so that they could know in what spirit to look at these works."[166] The scenes not portrayed in the Gospels had to be considered now to be nothing more than a poetry, not supported by history.[167] After such a statement it was even easier for Molanus to doubt some legendary parts in the Lives of the Saints. This way common sense overcame the poetry of art. Unfortunately, artists or theologians have never been moved by pure reason. Male sums up his argument by stating that: "the art of the Middle Ages was doomed...It resembled the Medieval Church itself—a faith that did not argue but sang...The artist who examines, judges, criticises, doubts, and conciliates, has already lost half of his creative force."[168]

[166]J. Molanus, *De historia sanctarum imaginum,* ed. Paquot (Louvain, 1771), 134, quoted in E. Male, *Religious Art*, 449.

[167]E. Male, *Religious Art,* 449

[168]*Ibid.*, 452.

CHAPTER 4

STEFAN YAVORSKY AND *THE STONE OF FAITH*

May our sovereign never allow any Orthodox Christians in their realm to entertain any close friendly relations with heretics and dissenters--with the Latins, Lutherans, Calvinists, and godless Tatars...; but let them be avoided as enemies of God and defamers of the church. May they command by their tsarist decree that men of foreign creeds who come here to this pious realm shall under no circumstances preach their religion, disparage our faith in any conversations, or introduce their alien customs derived from their heresies for the temptation of Christians; they should be strictly forbidden to do all this on pain of severe punishment.

From the testament of Patriarch Joachim to the co-tsars Ivan V and Peter

I well know that the favour I am obliged to grant them publicly does not please all my subjects: but I have two kinds of subjects; I have intelligent and well-meaning ones, who see very plainly that if I endeavour to retain foreigners in my dominions, it is only for the instruction of my people, and consequently for the good of my empire. I have others who have neither sufficient discernment to perceive my good intentions, nor candour to acknowledge, and cheerfully to comply with them; who, in short, from want of reflection, despise all that appears new, feel regret on seeing us emerge from our ancient state of sloth and barbarism and would hold us down, if it were in their power. Let them reflect a little what we were before I had acquired knowledge in foreign countries, and had invited well-informed men to my dominions: let them consider how I should have succeeded in my enterprises and made head against the powerful enemies I have had to encounter, without their assistance!

From Peter's conversation with Russian nobles about the foreigners.

The Russian Orthodox Church and Protestantism

The relations between Protestantism and Orthodoxy represent an encounter of two different cultural systems, developing at a different pace. The fast development of Protestantism contrasted with the static continuity of Eastern Orthodoxy. The reforms of Peter the Great were a specific turn in the history of Russian Orthodoxy. However these reforms were not very profound and did not interrupt the main

trends of its development.[169] The most striking feature of Peter's ecclesiastical reform was that it was not challenged by direct opposition, neither from the Church, nor from the people. In fact, Peter was interested in the organisational structure of the Church and its function within the State, and not as much in doctrinal teaching.[170]

Yavorsky, certainly was not the first one in Russia to meet and polemicise with Protestants.[171] As we shall see, he presented already a fully developed complex of arguments against Protestant views on images and image-veneration. Already during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, many Protestants came to settle in Russia. They received more privileges than the few Catholics. In spite of this, the tsar was very sensitive about the question of images. In many of his speeches, he comments on and on about the necessity to honour the holy icons. Then the tsar himself initiated a dispute by asking the Protestant Ivan Rokita to explain the doctrines of his faith, guaranteeing him full immunity. Rokita's treatise witnesses: first, the views of a certain group of Protestants on the subject of religious art and, second, the position held by the Russian Orthodox on the images.

The famous dispute of the tsar with Ivan Rokita took place in the spring of 1570, in Moscow. The tsar began the debate by stating that "through the bizarre words of your teachers—Luther's and Hus's ancient heresies had revived that had

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[169] S. Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts: The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1993), 99.

[170] "In large part it was because Peter had not tempered with the elements which mattered most in the Russian church, the sacred ritual and dogma. Who administrated the church was of overriding concern to Peter; the form of the liturgy and sacraments did not interest him." (R. Massig, *Peter the Great,* 793).

[171] For example, the preceding polemics in defence of icons by starets Artemij (*Drevne-russkie polemicheskie sochineniya protiv protestantov*[Old Russian polemical writings against the Protestants], 4 vols. (Moscow: Chteniya Imperatorskogo Obshchestva Istorii i Drevnostei Rossiiskikh pri Moscovskom Universitete, 1878, vol. 4), 1243) focused on three main points. First, that the icons are not idols. Second, that the icons are the depictions of real persons while the idols are just a fantasy. Third, that the icons are confirmed by the miracles. Apparently the Protestants felt this weak point in their apologetics and promoted the counter-argument that those miracles were not needed at all. Thus whole chapter of Yavorsky's *The Stone of Faith* is dedicated to the explanation of the necessity of icon-veneration because of "miracles which happen through the icons." On the history of the polemics between the Eastern Orthodox and Protestants on the image question see: S. Michalski, *Reformation and the Visual Arts,* 99-155.

been condemned many times by church councils."[172] In the tsar's opinion, the Protestants never confirmed their faith by miracles. Then the tsar accused Protestants of abusing the saints in destroying their churches and images, and said that for this God punished them with "irreconcilable sects and divisions."[173] This argument was repeated by Yavorsky in the introduction of his *The Stone of Faith.* The tsar posed ten questions, one of which concerned the problem of the images.

Rokita, showing a mixture of mostly Lutheran, and partly Calvinist beliefs, nonetheless showed an extremely uncompromising position on all visual representations. He rejected all miracles through images, claiming that Protestants' faith was strong enough without miracles. He also stated that images did not deserve veneration because they could not hear nor feel. Attacking some superstitious practices, Rokita stressed that the Orthodox practises did not make a distinction "between the image and the material," and this testified that the Orthodox appeal to "inanimate idols."[174] Rokita continually brings up the opposition of "dead matter" and the "principle of life" from the Bible. He totally denies the role of art as a means of transmitting religious meaning on the basis of the Protestant doctrines of the "hidden God," and of "faith from hearing."[175] He also believed that images were non-existent in the Apostolic and early Christian times.

In the seventeenth century, the issue of icons arose again in the Orthodox-Protestant polemics in the Eastern regions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Michalski showed that the converting efforts of the Reformation were not successful because Orthodoxy was mainly a faith of peasants.[176] However, these efforts provoked a great polemical reaction on the part of the

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[172] *Ibid.*, 139.

[173] *Ibid.*

[174] *Ibid.*, 140.

[175] *Ibid.*, 141.

[176] *Ibid.*, 143.

Orthodox in writing. Many of these texts travelled around Russia and thus, delineated the Orthodox teaching.[177]

The Orthodox author of the theological treatise *On the One Orthodox Church,* which appeared in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1588, clearly stated that because of the Protestants' position concerning images, those Orthodox Ruthenians who attempt to find in them associates in their fight with the Catholics are wrong.[178] However, the traditional line of Orthodox criticism of Protestantsism ended with the reign of Peter the Great.

Stefan Yavorsky and Peter the Great

Tsar Peter the Great and his reforms played a crucial role in Russian history. The turbulent clashes of policies, beliefs, and influences had rarely occurred before in such a complex manner. The compelling integrity of Peter the Great as a person and a ruler has often pushed many other interesting aspects and persons of this complicated epoch into the background.

On the one hand, the initiatives of Peter the Great are considered progressive and positive in spite of the means by which "European Russia" was forcefully accomplished. On the other hand, the Peter's reforms led to further divisions within Russian society, already split by the Old Believers' schism of 1666-67. The lack of congruency between the modern goals and the traditional means used by Peter to attain these goals,[179] created an unresolved split and contradiction in society. The figure of Metropolitan Stefan Yavorsky, the Vicar of the Patriarchal Throne and first president of the newly organised Holy Synod, illustrates the complexity of how Peter's inner circle perceived his innovations.

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[177]Ibid., 147

[178]*Ibid.*

[179]For am interesting approach to this topic, showing Peter's 'traditionalism' in many points as a basis of his actions, see B. A. Uspensky, *Izbrannye trudy* [Selected works], vol. 1, *Semiotika istorii, Semiotika kultury* [Semiotics of history, Semiotics of culture] (Moscow: Gnozis, 1994).

Stefan Yavorsky was born in 1658 in Yavor,[180] on the right bank of the Dnieper, which became Polish territory after the Andrus Treaty of 1667. His parents left this area and moved to the left bank, within Muscovy. Stefan joined the Kiev Mohila Academy and was later sent to Jesuit collegiums in Poland and Lithuania in order to continue his education. He accepted Unia for his studies, as it was required for Orthodox from Russia studying in the West, but denied it when he came back to Kiev. Soon, he became a professor of philosophy and theology at the Kiev Mohila Academy. In 1700 the Kiev Metropolitan sent him and another abbot to Moscow, with a letter asking Patriarch Adrian to establish the Pereyaslav bishopric, and to consecrate one of the abbots as bishop. On the occasion of the death of boyar Sheinin, Stefan delivered a sermon and was noticed by Tsar Peter, who immediately ordered the Patriarch to have abbot Stefan consecrated at some cathedra near Moscow, and thus Stefan became Metropolitan of Ryazan' and Murom.

After the death of Patriarch Adrian the same year, Peter decided not to appoint a new patriarch, but to promote Stefan, a person alien to Moscow, to be Vicar of the Patriarchal Throne. First, Stefan praised Peter's military successes, but later he began to realise, that his title was nothing more than a decoration used by secular powers to accomplish their goals.[181] He gradually began to understand that Peter did not care about the Church; moreover, he started to view Peter as a friend of the Protestants, whom he disliked since the time of his studies in the West. In his sermons the Metropolitan frequently hinted at his opinion regarding contemporaneous persons and events, and he constantly but unsuccessfully asked

[180]Materials on the biography of Stefan Yavorsky are presented in a recent book by I. S. Zakhara, *Stefan Yavorskij* (Lviv: Kameniar, 1992).

[181]"He was not so unmindful that he could forget that he was placed in office by the grace of God and not by the 'sovereign Monarch,' thereby considering himself to be no more than a government clerk or state servitor. In any case, Stefan opposed and quarrelled with Feofan [Prokopovich] and with the tsar not out of partiality for the Muscovite past or because of a servile devotion to 'papist' models. No champion of the past, Stefan favoured the Reform. But he sided with the church against the 'Reformation.'" (G. Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology,* vol. 5, in *Collected Works of George Florovsky* (Belton, Mass: Nordland, 1979), 121).

Peter to permit him to retire to a monastery.

In fact, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in Russia there existed several ideological attitudes, several trends of thought. The conservative tradition was represented by the schismatics (raskol'niki), rigorously adhering to old ways, and the "moderate champions of the past, who represented the official state and church policy of the times of Tsar Alexis after the removal of Patriarch Nikon."[182] On the other side stood the enthusiastic champions of an utter europeisation of the country such as Feofan Prokopovich. The group of White Russians and Ukrainians, such as Simeon Polotsky, Dmitry Tuptalo (Rostovsky), and Stefan Yavorsky, welcomed to a certain degree Peter's state and educational policy, but protested against Peter's interference in the realm of Church power and organisation.

The Stone of Faith

Eight years before his death in 1722, Stefan Yavorsky completed his most important theological and literary work *The Stone of Faith*: a systematic description of Orthodox teachings, especially in the points which differed from Protestant views, such as icons, relics, the Eucharist, Saints, and Orthodox attitudes towards tradition.[183]

The Slavic word *kamen'* in the title (which in Slavonic bears both meanings of "stone" and "rock"), may be related to the Gospels' "rock;"[184] but here it refers specifically to the word "stone," since Yavorsky exploits the two fold meaning of the "cornerstone," upon which the whole building is based, and against which the

[182]Yu. Šerech, "Stefan Yavorsky and the Conflict of Ideologies in the Age of Peter I," *Slavic and East European Studies* 30 (1951), 42.

[183]The treatises of *The Stone of Faith* are dedicated to the holy icons, the holy Cross, the relics of the saints, the Eucharist, the prayers to the saints, the souls of the saints, the aid to the deceased, the Church tradition, the Divine Liturgy, the holy fasts, good deeds, and the punishment of the heretics, respectively.

[184]"...thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church" (Matt 16, 18).

deluded people are smashed.[185] The structure of Yavorsky's *The Stone of Faith* in its expositional and controversal parts reflects this Gospel image of Christ, as a cornerstone who supports the Orthodox in their faith but denounces the impiety of the Protestants.

Yavorsky was often accused by his enemies of being not entirely Orthodox; that he assimilated Catholic views during his education in Jesuit collegiums. However, the Jesuits noted in their reports of the time of Yavorsky's Vicary, that Kievans had founded Gymnasiums and challenged them to struggle in disputes.[186] Under the threat of anathema, Yavorsky forbade children to attend the Catholic elementary schools and the Jesuit school was closed.[187] Yavorsky must have been conscious about his own Catholic educational background, when he wrote down in the first page of his manuscript of *The Stone of Faith:*[188]. "If there is anything found here that would contradict the Orthodox dogmas, I ask for corrections and for forgiveness."[189]

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[185]In his short introduction to the polemical part, he writes: "We have seen in the first part, the STONE of the affirmation of the Orthodox faith... Here, in the second part we will see the STONE OF STUMBLING AND OFFENCE: upon which the adversaries stumble and AGAINST which they are offenced. For Christ Himself was the Stone of the affirmation for the faithful, and the Stone of stumbling for the unfaithful..." *The Stone of Faith*, 93. Cf. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same was made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence..." (1 Pet. 2, 7-8).

[186]*Pis'ma i doneseniya iezuitov o Rossii kontsa XVII-nachala XVIII v* [Letters and reports of Jesuits about Russia at the end of the seventeenth, and at the beginning of the eighteenth centuries] (St. Petersburg, 1904), 72.

[187]*Ibid.*, 75.

[188]This version of the manuscript was kept in the Ryazan' Seminary.

[189]Notably, Yavorsky chose the word "Orhtodox dogmas" [dogmatam Pravoslavnym], traditional *topos* would be to apologise for mistakes or lack of attention. Cf: да аще и согрѣши^{х} въ коемь либо чт҃ни или главизнѣ или съ дрⷭгъı гл҃ѧ. или въ помъıслѣ^{х} . въсе оугодно бѫди твоемⷭ чл҃колюбию г҃и. а въсѣкъ чътъıи гржбости испрадлеи а не клъните [If I sinned in some reading, or chapter, or while speaking with my friends, or in my thoughts, Oh, Lord, let everything be at your mercy! And you, the reader, correct the rough places and do not curse me]. Taken from the Vyssarion Patericon, addition from 1346. (Ivan Duichev, *Iz starata b'lgarska knizhnina* [Old Bulgarian book], vol. 2 (Sofia: Khenus, 1944), 128. Cf. also: до кого доидоуть книги сиѥ. чт҃ѣте испрадлѣюще. а мене гр҃ѣшнаго не злословите. нь паче бл҃вте [Those, whom these books reach, read them correcting, and not berating me]. Taken from the addition on top of the Svrlish Gospels (1278/9) (*Ibid.*, 65). I am grateful to Maya Petrova for providing me with these texts.

As far as the treatise on holy icons in *The Stone of Faith* is concerned, Catholic theological literature influenced only its external side, namely, the structure of the text; the borrowings of the arguments from Catholic sources are less than in the other treatises of *The Stone of Faith.*[190] This is natural since, as we have seen, that part of the dogma was not theologically developed in the West. Thus, in his apology for icons, Yavorsky urges the readers to turn to the early theological treatises on icons.[191]

The reason for the writing of the book was, as stated in the Preface "the turning away from the Orthodoxy of some Russians." *The Stone of Faith* was published first only in 1728, fourteen years after it had been finished and after the death of both Yavorsky and Peter. Michalski states that Peter made Yavorsky do constant corrections to soften the sharp style of the book concerning the Protestants,[192] although Peter himself seemed not to be against the book itself. Thus, he wrote about *The Stone of Faith* in his letter of January 17, 1714 to Stefan Yavorsky, stating that the book was useful as a "moral to the simpletons about the holy icons so that they know how to honour them according to Church regulations...to remove the abasement of our adversaries from us."[193]

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[190]I. Morev, *'Kamen very,'* 274.

[191]Yavorsky writes in the end of the first part of the treatise in defence of icons: "Who is willing to be more affirmed in the veneration of the Holy icons, let him read the book called the *Selection*, printed in Moscow, and in it the Treatise of the Holy Father Gregory Dialogos, the Pope of Rome. And again the Treatise on the honourable Icons by our Holy Father German, the Patriarch of Constantinople, in the same book. And again, the Treatise on the holy Icons by Saint John of Damascus in the same first week of the Lent. And again, on the Monday of the second week of the Lent, the marvellous story about the icon of the Most Pure Virgin and Mother of God. We have not written those here so that this book not grow immensely and not bring shame to the reader." Probably he mentions the Sbornik o pochitanii ikon (v 12 slovakh) [Selected Writings on icon-veneration in 12 treatises] (Moscow, 1642). It has not been reprinted ever since, and I did not have access to it.

[192]S. Michalski, *Reformation and the Visual Arts,* 157.

[193]*Opisanie dokumentov i del, khranyashchikhsya v arkhive Svyateishego pravitel'stvennogo Sinoda* [The description of the documents and acts, kept in the archive of the Holy Synod], vol. 1, Appendix 1 (St. Petersburg, 1868.), 4-5.

The Structure and the Contents of *The Stone of Faith*

The treatise on the holy icons which constitutes the first part of *The Stone of Faith,* consists of two parts, expositional, and polemical. The chapters from the expositional part correspond symmetrically to the chapters from the controversial part. However, both parts are involved in polemics: in the first part the argument is initiated from the Orthodox position, in the second, more detailed part, from the position of a Protestant.

In the beginning of his treatise on holy icons which precedes the main body of the text, Yavorsky introduces the "Dogma on the Holy Images."[194] Since Protestants do not subordinate reason to faith, but rather "enslave faith to reason," Yavorsky sarcastically proposes "to condescend to their high-intellectuality and...to put our hope not in reason but in truth."[195] In this introductory part, Yavorsky presents the main characteristics of icons according to Damascene's third *Apology*.

Part 1 (Expositional)

The Stone of the Holy Orthodox Eastern Catholic Faith

Chapter 1: Firmness of the Stone of Faith from the Holy Scripture

Yavorsky states that all symbols and images from the Old Testament such as angels in human form, can be depicted,[196] and lists a long set of passages from the Old Testament which described God, revealed in some image. **Conclusion 1**. He sets out the principal difference between idols and icons: an idol is an image of god that is not God, an icon is an image of the true God.[197] **Conclusion 2.** It was God's command to create material images, how can it be sinful? **Conclusion 3.** To the Protestant question of who ordered the Orthodox to create icons, Yavorsky responds, that since icons are not idols, equally, nobody forbade it. Moreover,

[194] *The Stone of Faith,* 1.

[195] *Ibid.*, 2.

[196] *Apology III,* 21, 4.

[197] *The Stone of Faith,* 4B.

God Himself made the first icon on the towel. Regarding the literal understanding of the Second Commandment, Yavorsky explains that there are three types of commandments: spiritual or divine, carnal or ritual, and civil. Only the legal commandments are discarded in the New Testament, the rest must be kept.[198] A further point of Protestant weakness according to Yavorsky, is that they do not share the same opinions between each other: the Calvinist Beza hates all images, Luther accepts some but not for veneration, and considers Calvinists as heretics.

Chapter 2. Also entitled Firmness of the Stone of Faith from the Holy Scripture

When Abraham prostrated before the angels at the oak, it was not the essence of the Holy Trinity, but the Trinity in angelic form that he saw. The Orthodox venerate images the same way: not the manifestation itself [presechne sobstvenne], but venerate the manifestation anagogically and symbolically [voskhoditel'ne i pripokazatel'ne], because the visible manifestation prefigures the invisible.[199] In the same way the Orthodox venerate the manifestations made by human hands. Yavorsky cites images from Scripture like the Lamb of the Revelation, and the veneration paid to him. **Conclusion 1.** In the Old Testament, things were venerated inasmuch as they had relation and reference to God. **Conclusion 2.** It is said about David who danced in front of the Ark, that he danced in front of God. Michal who rebuked him, was punished by barrenness. In the same way the Protestants who rebuke the icon-venerators, are punished by spiritual barrenness. **Conclusion 3.** There is a great use in looking at pictures: St. Vladimir, when he saw the Great Judgement on the embroidered cloth, converted.

Chapter 3. Firmness of the Stone of Faith from the Ecumenical Councils

It was usual for Ecumenical Councils to gather in churches adorned with icons.[200] The Sixth Ecumenical. Council accepted and approved the icons. "But Satan

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[198] *Ibid.*, 6A.

[199] *Ibid.*, 9A.

[200] *The Stone of Faith*, 18B. Parallel to John's argument on the icons present in St. Epiphanius's church (*Apology I*, 25, 28-31).

envied this and arose a storm from hell."[201] Leo the Isaurian began to tear the garment of the Church, the Bride of Christ. After this evil storm, "good weather" shone over the Church in the year 787, in Nicaea. **Conclusion. 1.** The Ecumenical Councils must be obeyed; if the Protestants obey the first Council of Nicaea, so must they obey the second one. **Conclusion 2.** The only difference between this conclusion and the previous one is in the set of quotations from the New Testament where the word "Church" appears instead of "Council." **Conclusion 3.** To the Protestants' claims that the Iconoclastic Council was the Seventh Ecumenical, Yavorsky responds, that it was neither the Ecumenical, nor the Council, nor the Seventh. But even if the Protestants consider this Council as Holy and Ecumenical, they do not follow its decrees. This Council paid honour to the Mother of God; it appealed to the saints, and it accepted traditions.

Chapter 4. Firmness of the Stone of Faith Based on the Pious Teaching of the Holy Fathers on Ancient Use of Icons and Their Veneration

Citing the Patristic evidence taken from the *florilegium* of St. John's *Apologies*, Yavorsky draws three conclusions. **Conclusion 1.** If the Protestants believe like the Orthodox that the honour of image ascends to the prototype, they should honour the holy icons and in them the Prototype. If not, then let them learn this wisdom from their chief Copronymus: "The dishonour of the image ascends to the prototype." Yavorsky describes here the episode from the Life of Stephen the Younger who mocked a coin with the portrait of Copronymus, that made furious the Iconoclastic Emperor. **Conclusion. 2** Iconoclastic teaching is a new one appearing only in the eighth century. Some of the Protestants do not accept icons at all, like Calvin. Others accept some icons, but teach people not to venerate them; others accept only the icons of the Crucifixion and of the Last Supper. Thus their teachings are strange and divers (Heb 13, 9), and the Apostle urges the faithful not to follow them. **Conclusion. 3.** Scripture also says to not remove the ancient

[201] *Ibid.*, 19B.

landmarks that the fathers established (Prv 22, 28). But Luther and Calvin proclaimed that those fathers were astray and wandered in darkness. Yavorsky dismisses these arguments as not worth considering.

Chapter 5. Firmness of the Stone of Faith from the Church Histories and from the Miracles Brought about by Icons

Yavorsky lists miraculous events, in which depictions were involved starting from the image of Christ-not-made-by-hands. **Conclusion 1**. True miracles (real and not phantasmal) cannot testify the wrong faith, otherwise God would be the testifier of lies. **Conclusion 2.** In the same way Yavorsky argues, now using the *topos* of the tsar. Can the earthly tsar verify and put his seal to false charters? He cannot, if he is a truth-loving tsar. But the miracles from God are the sign and seal of God to strengthen the faithful. Thus, if God works miracles through icons, this dogma can not be false.

Chapter 6. Firmness of the Stone of Faith from the Logical Demonstration Based on the Holy Scripture

This very long chapter is based on syllogistic argumentation. **Demonstration 1.** Christians should obey the true Church of Christ and the Apostles. But the Protestants' church is not like this, and Yavorsky suggests to prove this statement by the following arguments: **Argument 1**. The true church is old and the gates of hell cannot overcome it. But Luther's church is one thousand five hundred years from Christ, Calvin's even later, and from those [two] innumerable splits have grown. If the Protestants say that their church existed in the times of Christ and Apostles, was it the same till the times of Luther or it had a break? If it had, it is not the church founded on the rock. If, though, it remained whole and intact, the Protestants boast in vain to be the renovators of the fallen church. If the Protestant church was hidden, it was then not a Church of Christ, for the Church of Christ is always clearly manifested. **Argument 2.** Can the true church of Christ wane and die? If it cannot, then the Orthodox Church, which the Protestants say used to be a true church, is now the same and unchangeable. If the true Church can have an

end, then any church can have an end, including Luther's and Calvin's. And then the words of Christ are wrong. **Argument 3.** The Protestants state that the Church may not go astray only if it is based solely on Scripture, and since the Orthodox Church follows not only Scripture but also traditions, it is astray. Yavorsky responds, that the same importance have the written and spoken words of the tsar. So the Orthodox Church is even stronger being based on two rocks. **Argument 4.** If Luther's or Calvin's church existed in the world before Luther, was it visible or invisible? If Protestants say that it was visible, who testified it and when? If it was invisible, this is the same as the Moslems say about their congregations. **Argument 5.** Did Christ our God create his house, his Church, on the sand or on the rock? If on the rock, he was a wise man. But if it fell after five hundred years as Protestants teach, the founder is like a foolish man. Orthodox teaching is that the Church of Christ and Councils has not fallen and remain to this day whole and untouched. Protestants pose the argument in support of the invisibility of their church in the old times: Scripture likens the church to the moon, sometimes visible and sometimes invisible. Yavorsky objects, that the Church resembles the moon in other aspects, but it never wanes. **Argument 6.** If the Church was a Bride only the first five hundred years, and then got corrupted, the words of the Prophets are wrong, and there is no difference between the Church and the Synagogue, for both are adulteries. So for one thousand years, Christ had not had the Bride, but the adulterer; and the renovators Calvin and Luther were born themselves from an adulterer. **Argument 7.** Protestant teachings are a composition of old heresies. **Argument 8.** All Protestant views regarding their church as "true," "Christ's," and "Apostolic" are errors. The true Church of Christ and the Apostles originated from Christ and the Apostles without interruption. Luther's and Calvin's church cannot present such an origin, and the Protestant hierarchy is false. **Demonstration 2.** Yavorsky touches upon the question of Biblical translations and their validity: the Bible says nothing about the trust-worthiness of the translation which the Protestants follow. **Demonstration 3.** Yavorsky inverts the New Testament

quotation, by stating that one can see what the fruits are according to the root of the tree they came from.[202] Protestantism originated from Martin Luther. A person sent from God to renew the whole Church from millennium of delusion, should have been greater than Moses who merely gave the Law to the chosen nation and Elijah who was chosen to keep the faithful from idolatry. Luther made no miracles. Instead, his life itself was like a miracle: being a priest he escaped from the monastery, and as a helper in the "renovation of the fallen Church," chose to marry a nun stolen from the monastery sacrilegiously. "I do not want to tell many words about it, but such unlawfulness deserves more than hallows." **Demonstration 4.** If Protestants accept signs from the weather and traces of wild animals, why do they reject the signs from icons? "Looking at the rainbow, do you remember the Testament of the Lord, or you foretell the future dry weather? Why do you not want to look at the depiction of Crucified Christ like at the rainbow, adorned with purple and blue, and from that to discern the Testament of peace, and the "dry weather" of salvation?" **Demonstration 5.** Moral argument: "the things which have some force, inspiring to good, should not be denied," and the icons have such force. Yavorsky sharply criticises Protestant artistic imagery which depicts "naked persons on the icons, instead of naked Christ on the Cross." He presents examples of Protestant iconography, such as Bathsheba taking bath, naked Susanna, "and other naked persons from the Ovid's poems." Also, the depictions of relatives, friends and teachers, the Protestants keep in their homes, and sometimes wear on their chests, "as I happened to see in the Czech land, where many people wore the depiction of the burnt Jan Hus." **Demonstration 6.** Calvinists believe the Holy Gifts to be images of Christ's Body and Blood. Thus, they contradict themselves, since they accept an imaginary image of Christ, but sweep away the hand-painted images. **Demonstration 7.** Psychological argument. Word has two-fold meaning:

[202]Cf. "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matt 7, 16)

"one word is within mind, the other can be revealed for listening." Image is also two-fold, inner and outer. The inner one is within reason (like a draft of a house), or within memory. "You reveal the inner word by your tongue or by writing, then why do you forbid the inner image to be revealed through depiction? And if you venerate Christ imagined in your mind, why do you not venerate Him, depicted on board?" **Demonstration 8.** Argument of Love. "The presence of the beloved is always pleasant, if not in person, then in image, or in some commemorative sign. Our Church, the Bride of Christ, after her husband has left, puts his image in unforgettable memory and looking at it, ascends the mind to the prototype." **Demonstration 9.** Scholastic argument from senses: Everything which is in mind, first has to be in some sense, either seeing, or hearing, or touching, or taste, or smell. If you want to have Christ in your mind, why do you banish Him from your sight, not willing to look at His icon? For seeing is better than hearing. **Demonstration 10.** Icons must have the same honour as the books of Scripture, which Protestants call Holy. **Demonstration 11.** Fathers destroyed the pagan temples, and put icons in the place of idols. If the first is good, also good is the second. **Demonstration 12.** Besides being "books for the illiterate," icons help in: kindling of love to God, expressing honour to God and to the saints, imitating the lives of saints, decorating God's churches: "if you enter into the iconoclastic temples...you will find such a distance from the Orthodox churches, as differs a byre or a cattle-stall from a king's chamber." **Demonstration 13.** Yavorsky refutes the Protestants' argument, that kings' interference with Church affairs is justified, since kings received their power from above.

The first part is supplemented by the "Dispute of St. Gregory, Bishop of Omiritus (?) with Erbanus the Jew about the Holy Icons."

Part 2 (polemical). The Stone of Stumbling and Offence

Chapter 1. Stumbling on the Stone of the Holy Scriptures, which are about the Lord's Commandments

Yavorsky presents here two versions of the Second Commandment (Exodus 20, 4-

6, and Deuteronomy 5, 8). **Correction 1.** Yavorsky accuses Protestants of presenting only a part of the Commandment, the same way the devil tempted the Lord by citing Scripture out of context. Then Yavorsky splits it into three statements. God ordered people not to: 1. make any graven image or idol, 2. make any likeness or image, 3. worship or serve it. Following the sequence of these statements, he refutes the charges concerning all the three aspects of the Commandment. **Correction 2.** Scripture interprets its own meaning in different places. First, God said not to create any image, then He ordered to create the Ark. God accepts images which are for His glory. Yavorsky wants to show that there were many images in the Old Testament created without the *direct* order of God. Moreover, the images in the New Testament time were introduced by Christ who made the image of His face on a towel. **Correction 3.** Yavorsky quotes a long passage from John of Damascus (*Apology II*, 20-23). **Correction 4.** Yavorsky uses a quote from the life of Theodore Studite. **Correction 5**. Yavorsky quotes a passage from John of Damascus (*Apology III*, 4-9). **Conclusion.** Yavorsky appeals against the literal following the Commandments. If one literally follows the Commandment which forbids murder, legal power will be discarded. The same way, the Second Commandment demands the right interpretation.

Chapter 2. Stumbling on the Stone of the Holy Scriptures, which are about Worship

Yavorsky cites Scriptural passages about the necessity to direct worship solely toward God. **Correction.** The passage from John of Damascus on worship (summarised text of *Apology III*, 33-39).[203] According to Yavorsky, the Protestants do not accept the second image of worship (material thing through which God brought salvation such as the Cross and the Sepulchre), the third (material things consecrated to God such as book of Gospel or holy vessels), and

[203]Yavorsky adds to John's seveth type of worship honour to parents paid by their children.

the fourth (material images of the Old Testament which prefigured the New Testament mysteries such as Aaron's rod and the Ark of Covenant). Yavorsky presents the following arguments on worship: **Argument 1.** All holy things deserve honour and veneration. The Old Testament cites the holiness of Mount Sinai, and the place where the angel appeared to Jacob? How much more holy are the places sanctified by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, thus, how much more honour they deserve! **Argument 2.** Israelites who were far from Judea in the Babylon captivity, prayed and prostrated to Judaic towns expecting help from God. The Orthodox also venerate images expecting God's help. **Argument 3.** Due to their relation to God, "it is worthwhile to believe the things that God revealed. It is also worthwhile to venerate the things that God sanctified." Thus the Orthodox believe the Scriptures because of God's revelation, they also venerate some places and things because God sanctified them. **Argument 4**. The towels and handkerchiefs of Apostle Paul had healing power, because they touched his body and soaked his sweat. Those places which were touched by Christ's divine flesh have much more power and honour. To the Protestant argument that any touching then must have a healing effect, even that of Judas' kiss, Yavorsky responds that the touching must be good-natured, not out of accident, either of Christ's own will, or of those who have faith. Protestants continue that in such a case, the ass on which Christ entered into Jerusalem, must also be venerated. Yavorsky responds that since the colt symbolised the heathens, and the ass symbolised the Jewish nation, in this meaning they do not deserve veneration.

Chapter 3. Stumble on the Stone of the Holy Scriptures, where it Speaks about the Destruction of the Copper Snake

The copper snake in the desert was the image of Christ, and King Hezekiah who destroyed it, was praised. The same way the Protestants praise all those, who destroy images. Yavorsky argues on three points. **1.** The copper snake was honoured by David and Solomon, the great kings of Israel. **2.** Yavorsky uses the image of a doctor: each remedy is prescribed for a certain sickness, is kept only

until it is needed. So it was with the snake. Third, when the snake was destroyed, it was not already the image of Christ, but an idol, which the Israelites worshipped ascribing the healing power to its matter and not to God.

Chapter 4. Stumbling on the Stone of the Holy Scriptures from Isaiah the Prophet and from the Acts of the Apostles on the Likeness

This argument is introduced by the passage on the impossibility of the circumscription of God from Isaiah (Is, 40), and the passage forbidding the production of hand-made images from the Apostle (Acts, 16). **1.** When God created Man according to his image and likeness, how could the visible, mortal, and comprehensible be the image of the invisible, imperishable, and incomprehensible? If you respond that the image is imperfect and according to the flesh, I also say that the icon depicts Christ not according to his Divine essence, but according to visible flesh. **2.** According to John of Damascus, the Orthodox never dared to depict the uncircumscribable and incomprehensible greatness of Christ, but depicted him in human form.

Chapter 5. Stumble on the Stone of the Holy Scriptures Where They Say about the Pagan Idols

Having presented a long list of Old Testament passages mentioning idols, and idolatry, Yavorsky proceeds to the refutations. **Correction 1**. The Second Council of Nicaea anathematises those who use Scripture about idols on icons. In the same way Arians used Scripture on human nature of Christ against his divinity. **Correction 2**. The Scriptural passages which are quoted, could also be applied to the Old Testament images: the Ark, the cherubs, the rod of manna. **Correction 3**. Even if the good and the evil are very far from each other, they may have some outward resemblance. An angel and a demon are both immaterial spirits created by God. The same similarity we see in the "metaphysical stages" which are: *essence*, *substance*, *body*, *animated being* [odushevlennoe], *living being* [zhivotnoe], and *man*. Yavorsky presents illustrations of how different things, people, and even God may have common properties and qualities.

Chapter 6. Stumbling on the Stone of the Councils Against the Icons

In this chapter, Yavorsky intends to prove that no Ecumenical Council approved destruction of images. The Council of Hiereia was unjust because: 1. It was against Christ on His Icon. 2. The approval of its decrees was out of fear or expecting some profits. 3. This Council was administered by an illegitimate Patriarch. 4. No representatives were from other Churches. Concerning the Council of Elvira and the Council of Frankfurt, which, according to the Protestants denounced the decrees of Nicaea, Yavorsky states: "We, the sons of the Eastern Orthodox Church, do not know anything that happens in the Western Countries."

Chapter 7. Stumbling on the Stone of the Words of Some Fathers

Yavorsky refers to well-known arguments from the Nicene refutation of the Hiereia's florilegium containing the passages from Epiphanius of Cyprus, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Athanasius of Alexandria, and Amphilochius of Iconia. Yavorsky also refutes the Protestant reference to Augustine (who wrote about pagan idols and not about icons), and to Ephraim the Syrian (on inner "icon" of virtues).

Chapter 8. Stumbling on the Stone of the Miracles Happened Through Icons

Yavorsky presents different benefits of miracles: **1.** conversion of the heathens to the Christian faith. **2.** affirmation of the Orthodox. **3.** assurance that the Orthodox Church is the same one that was from the beginning glorified by miracles. **4.** a testimony of a special Divine aspect inherent to the Church. **5.** glorification of God and His saints. **6.** invoking in us the memory about God's goodness and hope for the future blessings. Then Yavorsky describes the difference between true and seductive, or false miracles, however, admitting, that a simple flock is sometimes inclined to see miracles, where there are none. But bishops and priests can judge the matter according to trustworthy testimonies.

Chapter 9. Stumble on the Stone of Their Own Vain Wisdom

Stumbling 1. Protestants liken the Orthodox to the Jews and the heathens in the manner of worshipping icons as idols. **Correction.** By quoting Old Testament

passages, Yavorsky intends to show that the Jews and the heathens adored idols and are, thus, different from the Orthodox who never paid to icons the adoration which only God deserved. **Stumbling 2.** One cannot find a mention on creation of icons and their veneration in Scripture. **Correction.** Yavorsky debates here around three points. First, the Old Testament speaks about the creation of the Ark, the Cherubs, and other images. Secondly, it does not speak about the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, or about one Person of Christ. Thirdly, Church tradition since Apostolic times legalised icon-veneration. **Stumbling 3.** In the early Church there were no icons from the time of Christ and Apostles, and for five hundred years. **Correction.** The early Church was not completely equal to the mature Church. The Christians did not have icons because they did not have churches and were persecuted. Moreover, images existed even in the Early Church. Yavorsky cites the evidence on images from the *florilegium* of John of Damascus. **Stumbling 4.** God is a Spirit: and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth (Io 4, 24) **Correction.** to the Scriptural passages on the incorporeality of God, Yavorsky juxtaposes the set of citations on the sensual comprehensibility of Christ's flesh. However, even the Orthodox sometimes during travel pray without icons. Yavorsky quotes the passage from the first *Apology* where John asks Iconoclasts to "condescend" to his corporeality (*Apology I*, 36, 7-11, 27-32). Moreover, Scriptural passages on "spiritual" worship relate to the Christian spiritual sacrifices as opposed to the corporeal sacrifices of Jews and Samaritans. **Stumbling 5**. Icons can mislead the uneducated to adoration and idolatry. **Correction.** All creation can lead to idolatry. A ship can be the cause of drowning, and philosophy can be the cause of heresy. The gilt is not in icons but in people. However, the Orthodox do not have a fear of idolatry by God's grace, and the Church has teachers: bishops and priest to teach the flock about the proper veneration of icons. **Stumbling 6.** If the Orthodox worship images, they should also worship all the Old Testament images such as manna, burning bush, the mountain from which the stone split apart. **Correction.** These images were not

images in a proper sense but foreshadowings, although even they deserve honour. Image and foreshadowing are different: foreshadowing leads not every person to the knowledge of what was foreshadowed, but only those who are well trained in the Scriptures. Icon leads all who see it to the knowledge of the prototype. **Stumbling** 7. If Orthodox worship icons for the sake of ascending to the prototype, why then do they have some icons in higher honour than the others? **Correction.** Yavorsky argues that although God is present in every place, He chose some places such as the Ark and the Temple for His special presence. The same way, every icon reveals the prototype, but miracles are performed not by all icons. **Stumbling 8.** Even if miracles happened from icons, the Orthodox should not worship icons for this only reason. Otherwise they should also worship the ass of Balaam miraculously spoken out, or the corpse of lion, from which honey miraculously came out to Samson. **Correction.** Yavorsky responds that the Orthodox venerate the miraculous icons not only for the miracles (sic!), but also for some likeness with the prototype. The above mentioned images do not have likeness, therefore the Orthodox do not venerate them. **Stumbling 9.** Christ cast out from the Temple all who were selling and buying. In this manner icons should also be cast out because priests have income from praying before them for money. **Correction.** In response to these charges, Yavorsky lists all the incomes of the priests in the Old Testament and concludes: "you see, the adversaries, all the incomes of the Old Testament priests. Do not then judge our priests who have never had such incomes. Those served to the symbols and had real incomes; these serve the Truth, and have symbolical incomes". **Stumbling 10.** In the Temple of Solomon there were images of lions and oaks. In the time of Antichrist, there will also be the image of the beast, which Orthodox should venerate too. **Correction.** Yavorsky dismisses the argument by saying that we speak about icons of Christ, the Mother of God and the saints. **Stumbling 11.** According to the Orthodox, they do not venerate the matter of icons, neither colours. But some of them do not venerate newly-painted icons, others honour old icons, decorated with silver or gold, more than the simple icons.

Correction. The Church is not deprived of holiness for the foolishness of some of its members. Yavorsky transfers this accusation on those who sympathised with the Old Believers' schism, and, thus preferred old-painted icons. **Stumbling 12.** According to the Gospels, it is a sin to offend weak people (cf. Matt 18, 7). Icon-venerators offend people by: 1. putting icons in churches in the manner of heathen who put idols in their temples, 2. burning incense and putting candles to the icons, 3. bringing the icons to the markets, to travels, and to the military campaigns, 4. attributing miracle-working to them, and 5. subscribing the icons with inappropriate titles, such as "Christ," or "Lord Almighty." **Correction.** The Orthodox are not guilty for Protestants' temptations concerning icons. Theologians judge that any temptation is two-fold: offered and accepted. The Orthodox, however, do not offer any temptations; the Protestants should look at the Old Testament ceremonies to make certain that the worship was made in the same manner. The treatise in defence of icons is finished by the "Appeal to Russian Priests." Yavorsky reproaches the priests with their carelessness. They do not teach the simple flock not to adore icons, and, thus, give the reason for the heretics' accusations of idolatry.

Stefan Yavorsky and John of Damascus: Differences of Approaches

Stefan Yavorsky uses a particularly visual method of polemics. He first makes a statement, then presents relevant scriptural quotations, and transfers their literal meaning into the realm of daily life. In this manner, he tries to force his adversaries to look at their arguments not only from the intellectual and impersonal viewpoint, but from an unusually personal and thus, particularly sensitive angle. A typical example of this is the following argument concerning tradition which is based upon men's testimonies. Yavorsky introduces this argument by a Scriptural quotation: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established" (Matt 18, 16). He goes on and states: "you draw me into impatience, oh, adversary!...Forgive me, but I will expose you that you are not a son of legitimate marriage [syn chestnago

supruzheskogo lozha]. Tell me, how can I know that you are a legitimate son?" Yavorsky explains this charge by the fact that only God and one's mother know about the conception. "However, I call you a legitimate son because people tell this about you. If you do not believe people who tell about miracles which happened through icons, so I, too, do not have faith in those people who say that you are a legitimate son. You see how with your disbelief, you overthrow all faith, even concerning your birth."[204]

Writing on tradition as a basis of the Church's teachings, Yavorsky presents the Orthodox Church as based on two rocks, Scripture and Tradition. He separates the two, unlike John of Damascus who equates them as teachings coming from Christ and the Apostles but transmitted to us in different ways.[205] The rational element, the supremacy of the writer's thought over the material of the Scriptural and Patristic literature is a predominant feature of *The Stone of Faith.* Yavorsky reworks the set of Scriptural and Patristic passages which had already been selected by the preceding polemical tradition.[206] With a great skill Yavorsky exploits his beloved syllogistic method touching the same subject from different sides. Besides revealing the Protestant inconsistency in the denial of tradition, he uses different arguments from psychology (inner and outer images, and the role of senses), history, moral benefit, and educational usefulness of icons as a basis of icon-veneration.

Not sharing the exegetical tradition, associating Iconoclasm with Judaism, Yavorsky uses New Testament examples and citations to a much greater degree than does John of Damascus. It was indeed very difficult to draw a connection with Judaism in the case of Northern Protestantism which emerged, according to the Orthodox views, from an already "corrupted" Catholicism, and was seen as a

[204]*The Stone of Faith*, 46A.

[205]Compare with: "They transmitted the rules of the Church not only through letters, but also through some unwritten traditions" (*Apology I*, 23, 1-6).

[206]I. Morev, *Kamen' very*, 284

gradual loss of truth and *gradual* falling away from Orthodoxy, rather than a corruption of the true Orthodox teaching by infidel doctrines.[207] In the Protestant views regarding tradition, the Eucharist, icons, the deceased, etc., Yavorsky sees all the former heresies revived and combined together.[208]

Yavorsky's "Dogma on the Holy Images" is, basically, the familiar system of the hierarchy of images established by John of Damascus. However, it differs from that of John in several important points. Writing about different kinds of images, Yavorsky creates a separate group for icons (he certainly would not equate them with any sort of material reminder, as John suggested in his *Apologies*). This fact reveals that, perhaps, he did not appreciate the *Apologies*' main point. As we have seen, John attempted to unite all images by proving the legitimacy of hand-made icons as an integral part of a wider universal system of images. This system rises from artificial icons, equal to Scripture, through man and God's providential plan of creation, and, finally, through Christ, to God the Father as the first Source and the Archetype of all the hierarchy of images.

A second distinction of the "Dogma" from Damascene's system is that Yavorsky puts man (who is in the third place in John of Damascus' system, following the providential plan) in the second place. Instead of the providential plan Yavorsky puts in the fourth place "all the creation."[209] Perhaps, by this replacement, he tried to avoid the "problematic" Patristic notion of Damascene's "providential plan," as *logoi* of yet uncreated things, and replaced it with a "safe"

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[207]For example, we can read in the Mazurin Chronicle: "In the year 1517 there was in Catholic lands a cardinal of their celibate life and rule called Martin Luther, the son of Satan himself, who not only affronted the tradition of the Apostles and the teaching of the Fathers, but, thinking to reform his pernicious Catholic religion, destroyed whatever was left of it ..."I am grateful to Prof. Ralph Cleminson for the permission to use his translation.

[208]*The Stone of Faith*, 57 B.

[209]The system of Yavorsky is following: 1. the Son, 2. man, 3. Scripture, 4. all creation, 5. image-foreteller, 6. image-reminder: a. by means of words, b. by means of visible material things, c. embroidered, carved or painted icons (sic!). Compare with the system of John of Damascus: 1. the Son, 2. the providential plan of Creation, 3. man, 4. the images of Scripture, 5. image-foreteller, 6. image-reminder: by means of words, or by means of sensible contemplation which includes icons (*Apology III*, 28-33).

Scholastic notion of "all creation" leading men to the knowledge of God by means of analogy.

In his argument for an acceptance of the authority of the Ecumenical Councils, Yavorsky has much less "'polemical space," that is, doctrines shared by both sides to build his arguments upon them, than John of Damascus. Urging to obey the Second Council of Nicaea, Yavorsky draws the analogy: if the Protestants deny the second which proclaimed the icon-veneration, they also deny the first Council of Nicaea, and therefore are Arians. In fact, the Protestants always emphasised their "traditionalism," regarding the Trinitarian doctrine and their distance from radical reformers like Unitarians.

The chapter on miracles brought about by icons, is especially interesting because that argument had never been emphasised in the Eastern theological tradition, which firmly believed in the image-prototype connection without any external testimonies from miracles. Miracles were traditionally considered as a natural and somewhat necessary outcome of that connection. The continuous use of the argument "from miracles" in the sixteenth century may indicate the perception of image-prototype argument as losing its force. The miracle-working of images was emphasised as an important argument in Counter-Reformation. Yavorsky starts his list of miraculous events occurrences starts from the image of Christ not made by hands (although Damascene. mentioned it only in a comment to one of his *florilegium*'s items, and did not use it as an argument of justification in itself). As a source for this chapter, Yavorsky also extensively uses Damascene's *florilegium*, although giving references to the Lives of the mentioned saints, and to the Prologue.

Michalski provides the historical background for this. Peter who did not oppose himself openly against the icon cult, nevertheless encouraged his government to control the visible practices of icon-veneration. Small icons were forbidden to be kept in churches, and a special attention was paid to people's faith in miracles brought out by icons, "in some cases dead sentences were even meted out

to persons who claimed to have witnessed them."[210]

Yavorsky draws Damascene's argument on human love for explaining the need of icon-veneration: "the presence of the beloved is always pleasant, if not in person, then in image, or in some recollective sign [v nekoem znamenii vospominatel'nom]... In such a manner a wife, that loves her husband, when he is leaving for far countries, depicts the face of her husband, and beholds his image with tears as if himself... Our Church, the Bride of Christ, after her husband has left, puts his image in unforgettable memory and looking at it, ascends in mind to the prototype." It was always love that any Iconoclasts lacked when they strove for "purity," and "spiritual contemplation" forgetting that it is love, that God seeks in men. "Purity" of the teaching and precise following the Commandments of the Old Testament was much clearer a goal to reach through external means than to cultivate love within oneself through prayer and vision of sins. How, being both a spiritual and corporeal being, can one possibly express your overwhelming love to anybody or anything? How can one keep from sighs, and kisses, and touches of the beloved? This simple experience makes the same argument from Damascene's third *Apology* sound so strong: "Many times I saw that a lover, seeing the clothes of his beloved, kissed with his eyes and with his lips the cloth as if it was itself the beloved."[211]

The very sharp issue on the intervention of secular powers into the realm of Church laws is introduced by the careful statement: "This argument is from St. Damascene, from his Second Treatise on the Icons."[212] "You, adversaries, boast, that kings were the initiators of the throwing out the icons, and the kings were given power from God." However, God entrusted "the building of His Church, the regulations and the borders, especially concerning faith, not to the secular power,

[210] S. Michalski, *Reformation and the Visual Arts,* 160.

[211] *Apology III*, 10, 32-34.

[212] *The Stone of Faith,* 81 B

but to the religious." Since Leo, Constantine, and the others changed the 'ancient boundaries' of the icon-veneration and established the new ones, "for this destructive and not a creative, and unjust statute, one should not obey them...I know that there are many rules of many kings [in Church usage]. But on the civil courts and on the organisation of the Church order, and **not on the articles regarding the faith**" (bold in the text). This quite straightforward opinion concerning the king's prerogatives over the Church, might have sounded too actual, and this is why it is put in the mouth of John of Damascus. The reference is certainly not false: Yavorsky reiterates here John's argument from *Apology II,* 12. His sentences are, however, filled with personal passion. In fact, Yavorsky thought of Peter while writing those lines. Feeling that he has entered in a rather dangerous field, in the next paragraph he softens his too obvious parallel and remarks: "This way, our Most pious Monarch of All Russia Peter I, piously established some regulations, concerning the Church order and piety." And he finishes rather abruptly,: "But here we talk about the articles of faith, and not about Church piety."

A very distinctive feature of Yavorsky's polemics is the discrepancy between the arguments which he wants to promote and reality. This can be discerned in several places besides the argument on the secular and church power. When speaking about the impossibility of depicting the Divine, he starts the reference to John of Damascus: "I have already said from the teaching of St. Damascene, that we never dare to depict the uncircumscribable and incomprehensible greatness of Christ,.. but we depict him in a human form." However, the image of the invisible God the Father as the Ancient of Days, forbidden by the Great Council of Moscow (1666-1667),[213] became so widespread by that time that Yavorsky unwillingly had

[213]"To paint on icons the Lord Sabaoth (that is, the Father) with a white beard, holding the only-begotten Son in his lap with a dove between them is altogether absurd and improper, for no one has ever seen the Father in His divinity... St. John of Damascus likewise says: 'Who can make an imitation of Gad the invisible, the incorporeal, the indescribable, and unimaginable?" (Acts of the Great Councils of Moscow 1666-1667 (Moscow, 1893), quoted in L. Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon*, vol. 2, (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992), 371).

to take the reality in account and try "to show the good face in a bad game": "icon-painters (for whom no law is prescribed) depict God the Father as an old man with white hair. He is not like this in His incomprehensible divinity, but was seen in this image by Prophet Daniel."[214]

Explaining the difference between idols and icons, Yavorsky uses the argument from Damascene's *Apology I*, 24, where John argues, that representations made by Christians and the heathens are, in fact, opposite things, although they may have some outward similarity. Yavorsky uses this argument to apply his philosophical knowledge, and provides for the explanation of this topic an Aristotelian system of categories within which, the subjects share some common properties. As an illustration of this idea, he provides a series of examples: on the stage of *essence*, all creations and the Creator Himself have common properties. All *substances* have something in common, as well as all having *bodies* (a man and a stone, a lion and a horse). The same happens at the stage of the *animated beings* where trees, grass, people, animals, fish and snakes have common characteristics. On the stage of *alive beings* all who can hear, see, touch, taste, and smell, have something in common. The same happens on the stage of *man* where all people, the Christians and the Moslems, people of noble and low origin, good men and evil, have common features. We can find this exact system of categories in Yavorsky's philosophical work, notably called "Competitions of Peripathetics. Chapters of Peripathetics of Aristotle on the Arena of Orthodox-Russian Struggle," in the Dispute 16.[215]

Explaining the radical change from the Old Testament prohibition of images to the New Testament's necessity, John operated with very deep theological parallels and juxtapositions of Old Testament and New Testament passages,

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[214]*The Stone of Faith*, 119 A.

[215]Stefan Yavorsky. *Filosofs'ki tvori*, [Philosophical works], vol. 1,. In *Pam'iatky filisofskoi kulturi ukrainskogo narodu.* [Literary monuments of the philosophical culture of the Ukrainian people], ed. I. S. Zakhara (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1992), 467.

concluding, that the very similarity between the revelations of God in the Old and in the New Testaments, determines the striking difference between the Invisible God of the Old Testament, and Visible God in the New Testament. Yavorsky, while responding to the same argument, uses his method of "bringing down" the theological notions. "By Divine grace we do not have the fear of idolatry... It is impossible to find a single person among us, who would venerate an icon as God. And every person, if you ask him, will tell you indignantly: How can be God the thing made by human hands! But I venerate (he would tell you) the icon of Christ, because I have Christ in my heart, and believe in him, and not in an icon."[216]

[216] *The Stone of Faith,* 149 B.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Although the Iconoclasm of the Reformation emerged from a different theological tradition and perception of artistic imagery than the Byzantine Iconoclasm of the eighth century, in the core of both Iconoclasms lied a fundamental similarity: both of them considered the material as the inherent property of the terrestrial realm, and the spiritual as the property of the heavenly. Both Iconoclasms separated earthly from heavenly, and this separation lied at the basis of their denial of images as material representations of the divine. Against this attitude, John of Damascus opposed the conception of deified matter based on the Incarnation of God the Word. Both sides involved in the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy operated in the same theological and cultural background. They perfectly understood all the week and the strong points of each other, and this stimulated the development of alive theological thought. Later Orthodox-Protestant polemics were marked not only by the theological but also by cultural differences, and maybe this was one of the reasons why these polemics did not yield any new theological insight. The sides involved did not understand each other. Notably, using the *Apologies* of John of Damascus in refuting the Protestant views toward images, Yavorsky did not use its main arguments, so strongly emphasised by St. John, namely, the Incarnation as a turning point from the Old Testament conception of artistic images to the New Testament revelation of the Divine on Earth, and Incarnation as justification of matter and material representations.

Thus, the opposition of matter and spirit as an obstacle for the necessary appreciation of icons, was resolved for Eastern Orthodoxy in the progress of Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy. On the West, however, it was conserved until the Reformation brought it to its extreme logical consequences. The disguised clash between the material and spiritual on the background of the Western medieval

image-theology, exposed the religious art undefendedwhen this clash was revealed in the most obvious way in Protestant doctrines.

In his polemics in defence of the icons, Yavorsky had to answer practically the same arguments which were raised by the Byzantine Iconoclasts in the eighth century. However, the arguments which have been repeated throughout the following millennium so often, by Yavorsky'd time seem to have lost all their spiritual force. They have turned into elements of religious self-identification, or in questions with "implied" answer to tempt the opposite side. Later many critics of icon veneration were popular writers and not necessarily clerics. Through such preachers the theological concepts "filtered down into popular imagination."[217]

John of Damascus responded to the spiritual challenge of the Iconoclasts by gathering together the arguments which had been developed by the Orthodox theologians before him. As a response to the particular theological challenge, he crystallised the scattered theological notions of image, and without a special intention to do so created as a "by-product" an entire theological system. This can be demonstrated when comparing his first *Apology*, which emerged as a spontaneous reaction to the outbreak of the Iconoclasm, with the most elaborate third Apology, which nevertheless follows the first in nearly all in its theological speculations. This system had such a strong spiritual underpinning that, like a seed, it grew out one hundred years later and overcame Iconoclasm. Since the Triumph of Orthodoxy in 843, the icons have always been the testimonies to the presence of the Incarnate God for the Eastern Orthodox. The foundation laid by John of Damascus, Patriarch Nicephorus, and Theodore Studite, connected unbreakably the image with the prototype, and ever since then for the Eastern Orthodox, any denial of the icons inevitably meant a denial of God himself. The Russians have inherited this conviction.

[217]D. Freedberg, "The structure of Byzantine and European Iconoclasm," in Iconoclasm, eds. A. Bryer, and J. Herrin (Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1977), 166.

The memory about the Byzantine Iconoclast Controversy also lasted through the Middle Ages because it was continuously reminded about in polemical writings and in rites composed to anathematise it. "The image controversy, that shook the foundations of the Byzantine Church in the eighth and ninth centuries entered in the tradition of the Eastern Church. Both under the Turkish yoke and in the powerful world of Russian Orthodoxy, every community, even the smallest one, celebrated annually the Holy Day of Orthodoxy to commemorate the final triumph over Iconoclasm."[218] The faithful perceived Iconoclasm, or even controlled reduction of the cult of images, as a challenge to the entire complex system of religious beliefs; of which the icons were the most visible part.

For Yavorsky, the challenge of his contemporary iconoclasts was already rather confessional than theological, and it was not his fault that he did not have the same enormous supply of spiritual enthusiasm as St. John Damascene. Yavorsky, as well as, John did not pretend to be original, though for different reasons: for him the universal power of logic and reason was a more efficacious tool than Damascene's appeal to the tradition. Stefan Yavorsky chose the well developed and popular Scholastic method, "cutting out" for himself the argument he needed from what was at hand. The result was a "handbook" of all possible arguments, pro and con, far from constituting an integral theological system as it was intended and announced in the title of his work.

Between the West, with its philosophy and scholastic theology, and the East, and with its sober belief in the impossibility of a final knowledge of the Divine, Yavorsky tried to solve the theological problems by philosophical, and often by purely polemical means. He was a man of the new generation, for whom reason was the real instrument of discernment. As far as the primacy of reason was concerned, Yavorsky had much more in common with Peter than he would have probably acknowledged himself. "Dialectics,"—he stated, "teaches us that the

[218] S. Michalski, *Reformation and the Visual Arts,* 100.

authority does not matter, if logic gives birth to some conclusion."[219] He also praised logic as a hammer in the hands of a smith.[220] Unlike John, Yavorsky perceived the tradition not as "the keel and the foundation of the argument,"[221] but rather as a "database" providing material for the exercise of reason.

Both authors were deeply concerned about the question of the place and the role of matter in the universe. However, John of Damascus, with his all-pervading emphasis on the Incarnation in the material body of the divine Word, considered matter in its relation of and in its union with the Spirit. Yavorsky, quite on the contrary, being a heir of Scholastic and Renaissance philosophy, considered matter in the context of hylomorphosis. Matter was thus regarded by him simply as auniversal matrice. In this context there remained no place for the theological idea of the spiritualisation of matter through the Incarnation.[222]

We should not forget that Yavorsky, like John of Damascus, was very much aware that "the word of King is powerful to make his subjects retreat."[223] But unlike John of Damascus, Yavorsky was not only the subject of the Empire, but also had to be in front of the eyes of the tsar, day and night, unable to go anywhere without Peter's permission. Many times, Yavorsky begged the tsar to release him from his duties. He wrote to Peter in 1712: "Where shall I go from your spirit and how shall I flee from your face?.. I will not go to a foreign realm, for your power is given to you by God. In Moscow or in Ryazan'—everywhere your sovereign

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[219]Yavorsky, *Filosofs'ke zmahan'ya*, 37, quoted in ed. I. Zakhara, *Filosof'ski tvori,* 26.

[220]*Ibid.*, 66.

[221]*Apology I,* 2, 1.

[222]Yavorsky says in the Preface to his Philosophical Competitions [Filosofski zmahan'ya], that "matter is the mother of forms, the subject of change, because all the earthly and material forms, subjectivised in it and adopted by it, are called mass, origin [proiskhozhdeniem], principle. Some people equate it with a mirror, since in the presence of an object, some natural force is reflected in it. Plato calls matter the place of acceptation of forms, the breasts, the nursing mother, the place of receiving a semen, for it accepts the seed of form, warms it up in itself. (Yavorsky, *Filosofs'ke zmahan'ya*, 196, quoted in ed. I Zakhara, *Filosof'ski tvori*, 28). "Matter is perfected by form, and not form by matter."(Yavorsky, *Filosofs'ke zmahan'ya,* 199, quoted in ed. I. Zakhara, *Filosof'ski tvori*, 30).

[223]*Apology I*, 1, 29.

power reigns over me. It is impossible to hide from it."[224] It was not clear, who were the allies, whereas the enemies were obvious. Having inherited a Church, split by the Raskol, Yavorsky could not lean upon the most devoted image-venerators, since the "right wing" of Old Believers was opposed to any official Church hierarchy.

Nonwithstanding its only too obvious intellectual flaws, the book of Stefan Yavorsky was very useful for its time. In the epoch of complicated interaction between Protestantism, Catholicism and Orthodoxy, it helped to define what the Orthodox views really consisted of. In its two parts, expositional and polemical, in its clear structure, for hundreds of priests and laymen all over Russia, *The Stone of Faith* delineated a clear border of what is Orthodox teaching as opposed to the non-Orthodox views in terms of dogmas, Church history and worship.[225] Although it has not deepened the theological understanding of images, it helped to conserve and preserve the Orthodox tradition of icon-veneration in the turbulent time of external and internal assaults on the Russian Church.

[224] Quoted in R. Massig, *Peter the Great*, 790.

[225] *The Stone of Faith* became so popular that it ran into two more editions (Moscow, 1729, and Kiev, 1730) immediately after the first edition (Moscow, 1728).

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