Rendering Unto the Tsar?
Church-State Relations and Confessional Party Formation in Post-Soviet Russia

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As long as Orthodox continue to render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, it should not matter whether Caesar is a hereditary monarch or a sovereign people, as long as Orthodox always remember that Caesar is not God, reserving to God those things that are his alone.

Nilolas K. Gvosdev, Emperors and Elections

Russia is huge, with a population of almost 150 thousand. More than half of her citizens identify with Orthodoxy, and yet no politicians have capitalized on this identity to form a political party as previous generations did under similar conditions in West Europe. Rather than seeking a solution for this anomaly in Russian exceptionalism, this paper uses a comparative framework to explain the lack of confessional party formation in Russia. I argue that the situation obtained in Russia can be explained on the basis of theories developed to explain party formation and church-state relations in other times and other places. One of the main causes for the lack of Christian democratic party formation in Russia has to do with the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church decided not to organize the laity at the grass-root before and during the Soviet period. This deprives contemporary Russian politicians of the resources that Christian politicians in Western Europe used as the bases for their own confessional parties. This paper describes this decision and its effects, especially in regard to confessional party formation. In addition to explaining political events in Russia, this allows us to find the limits and generalizability of preexisting theories, and gives our findings more scientific credibility.

Christian Democratic Party Formation in Theoretical Context

The absence of Catholic mass organization in France accounts cumulatively for the failure of a confessional party to emerge there. First, it impeded the emergence and neutralized the action of actors central in the process of confessional party formation. Second, it made the church politically ineffective. And third, it contributed to the successive electoral defeats of the right….The absence of the organizational strategy in France undermined the emergence and limited the influence of the two actors necessary for the formation of a confessional party: the militant lower clergy and the lay Catholic activists. Without mass organization, no distinct Catholic identity and no collective action based on this identity could emerge because the potential agents of this identity remained restrained and dispersed.

Stathis Kalyvas in <u>The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe</u>

The theoretical literature on Christian Democratic party formation is sparse, especially in comparison to that on left-wing or even environmental party formation. Recently, Stathis Kalyvas turned this situation to his advantage, applying a well-developed theory of Social Democratic party formation to confessional parties (1996).[1] Socialist parties performed several useful functions, to include socializing masses of potential revolutionaries to the norms of democracy and serving as very efficient vote-winning machines. They share much of the responsibility for the democratic consolidation of West Europe. The important thing to realize in terms of this analysis is that the organizational sub-structures of these parties – the thing that made them so valuable to politicians and democracy - were not created to win elections, but to advance the cause of the workers. Agitators had invested tremendous time and energy building up unions to serve as ideological "trenches" where they could protect the workers from capitalist hegemony, teach them their true interests, and forge within them a new political identity. Once the suffrage was extended to include workers, politicians realized that these large armies of workers could be used to great effect in electoral competition. The resulting success of the socialist parties fundamentally altered the political landscape in Europe. In countries where the workers were not so well organized and unions not so well established, the socialist parties did

not fare so well: without an army behind them, socialists in places like the United States could not compete. For socialist party formation and socialist party victories, it is not enough that a large segment of the population be comprised of working people. In order to get workers to vote for socialist parties, they must come to identify themselves politically as workers. Without the organizational trenches mentioned above, there is no space for this to happen and the votes and political identities of the workers get divided according to other interests.

Similarly, a large segment of confessors within the population is not enough to guarantee confessional party formation and success. In order to get believers to vote for religious parties, they must come to identify themselves politically with their religion. In a situation roughly analogous to socialism in the United States, Kalyvas uses the example of France, a country with a large Catholic population but no major Christian Democratic party, to show that a large Christian population does not guarantee the politicization of religious identity. The example of France demonstrates that the critical variable is whether or not secondary organizations have previously been formed around and in support of the religious identity under investigation. Kalyvas found that confessional parties- like their socialist protagonists- could not succeed without organizational support. Unfortunately for the socialist politicians in the United States and the conservative politicians in France, organizations are difficult to create and there is often only a small window of opportunity agitators and politicians have to make it happen.

Organizations, then, are the critical variable explaining the formation and non-formation of confessional parties. Before turning to the case of Russia, it is important that we understand why religious organizations formed in some places but not others.

In 19th century Europe the church had a couple of new enemies that threatened both its political power and its influence over their flocks. Long accustomed to being protected by a sympathetic state, the church found itself besieged by new and increasingly powerful set of politicians, the liberals. The liberals targeted the church and sought to decrease its influence of cultural and educational policy as they attempted to implement ideas from the enlightenment. And these attacks came at a time when the church most needed the states protection because at the same time it was under assault at the elite level it was being attacked on the ground by the socialists. As described above, socialist agitators and unionizers were trying to organize workers in order to mold them into a class. Unfortunately for the church, socialist class consciousness was atheist and anti-clerical. Both the church and its flock were in great danger. The church hierarchy had two possible strategies they could pursue in reaction to the attacks: either create grass-root organizations to counter the socialist threat or compromise with the authorities.[2]

Compromise was the least costly alternative, but involved some risk as its success was far from assured: conservative politicians, perhaps due to the increasing popularity of the liberals, were becoming less sympathetic to episcopal concerns. However, the conservative politicians might be inclined to protect the church from their common enemy, the socialists (and to a lesser extent, the liberals). This strategy also required some support from the liberals for it to be effective- a dubious proposition. However, there was the chance that compromising with the conservatives and liberals in authority might reduce the severity of anti-clerical attacks.

The more costly strategy would be to counter organize the laity. While there were few immediate risks, there were some costs that would be imposed by this situation. The two most important costs are that organizational effort expended would require the allocation of assets that might be better expended elsewhere, and that the creation of secondary organizations might reinforce the position of the laity and lower clergy running the organizations at the expense of the bishops. This strategy was also fairly time consuming to implement. Moreso, it had to be implemented before the socialists had already poached too many believers. The major benefit of this strategy was that its success was more certain than for the compromise strategy.

In most of the European countries in Kalyvas' study, the church allowed the laity and lower level clergy to create associations to protect the flock from socialists. However, in France, the church never blessed the creation of these organizations despite the attacks and inroads made by socialists, electing instead to compromise with the antipathetic authorities. This is because the bishops did not expect France's democracy to last and knew that they would enjoy a privileged position in the next regime. They also assumed that the authorities would help them protect Catholics from socialist propaganda. As a result, no confessional organizations were formed. As the regime consolidated its position and the probability of collapse decreased, the church tried to move from a strategy of compromise to one of organization. Unfortunately, it was too little too late.

Russia is theoretically analogous to the case of France. In Communist Russia, the episcopal representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate decided not to organize the laity in opposition to the propaganda of the increasingly antagonistic atheist state (and before that, the deteriorating tsarist

one), deciding instead to compromise with it[3]. As a result, no Orthodox organizations were available for co-optation by conservative politicians after Russia's eventual transition from communist rule. Instead of a single Orthodox Party, parties and politicians of various hues - even red- have sought to take advantage of the fact that Russian Orthodoxy has re-emerged as a facet of Russian identity by touting the cultural necessity of the Church. Before describing the choice to compromise and the failed attempts politicians have made to create Christian Democratic Parties, it is first necessary to determine whether or not the decision to work with the authorities was inevitable. In the following two sections, I offer two sets of evidence that the bishops' decision to work with the Soviet government was not predetermined. First, I counter the conventional wisdom- at least in the West- that Orthodox Christianity requires that the local churches such as the Russian Orthodox Church be subordinate to the state. Second, I provide a brief history of Russian church-state relations, showing that they have varies over time and that there was considerable pressure from within the Russian Orthodox Church to avoid any sort of relations with the Soviet state.

The Orthodox Understanding of Church–State Relations:
Challenging Conventional Assumptions

The basic doctrinal element in Orthodoxy is the creed of resignation…Lacking rules of practical conduct, the Russian church did not know how to adapt itself to its circumstances and still uphold, even if in an imperfect, compromised form what it regarded as its fundamental spiritual values. The result was that it placed itself more docilely than any other church at the disposal of the state, helping it to exploit and repress…Unlike the other churches, it failed to carve out for itself an autonomous sphere of activity.

Richard Pipes, Russia under the Old Regime [4]

The Eastern Orthodox Church has been estranged from the West for well over a thousand years. As such, it is not all that surprising that many Western scholars misunderstand or it. This is compounded by the ontological differences between Eastern and Western Christianity. Unfortunately, the resulting misunderstandings have lead to incorrect assumptions and biased analytical inferences. While there are many such misunderstandings, the relevant one for the present discussion has to do with church-state relations. The conventional wisdom in the West regarding church-state relations in Orthodox countries is summed up by the above quote from noted historian Richard Pipes, and by the following passage from Samuel Huntington's influential book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*[5] in which Huntington describes church-state relations within each of the major civilizations as follows:

> Throughout Western history first the Church and then many churches existed apart from the state. God and Caesar, church and state, spiritual authority and spiritual authority, have been a prevailing dualism in Western culture. Only in Hindu civilization were religion and politics so distinctly separated. In Islam, God is Caesar; in China and Japan, Caesar is God; in Orthodoxy, God is Caesar's junior partner. (70)

Huntington's description of the partnership between God and Caesar in Orthodox countries seems to be referring to the system of *symphonia* that is said to have prevailed for while in the Byzantine empire from the time of Constantinople's conversion. According to this corporate

system, the Emperor played an active role in the life of the church, most notably calling for the convocation of Church Councils and affecting the election of bishops, metropolitans and patriarchs. Francis Dvornik describes it as follows:

> The Emperor is appointed by God as master of the Universe, he represents Christ on earth, his duty is not only to take care of earthly things, but above all, of heavenly things…. As a representative of God, he has to take care of the Church, convoke the councils of bishops, confirm their decrees and enforce their application to the life of the faithful.[6]

Emperor Justinian described it in similar terms:

> There are two great gifts which God, in his love for man, has granted from on high: the priesthood and the imperial dignity. The first serves divine things, while the latter directs and administers human affairs; both, however, proceed from the same origin and adorn the life of mankind. Hence, nothing should be a source of care to the emperors as the dignity of the priests, since it is for their welfare that they constantly implore God. For if the priesthood is in every way free from blame and possesses access to God, and if the emperors administer equitably and judiciously the state entrusted to their care, general harmony will result and whatever is beneficial will be bestowed upon the human race.[7]

While this *symphonia* may represent a theological ideal, it is not the only system acceptable to Orthodox politicians and citizens. Additionally, *symphonia* did not, per Huntington, subjugate the Church to the State. It is, perhaps, only when attempting to comprehend the pre-modern concept of *symphonia* through modern state-centric rationalist eyes that such a conclusion becomes possible.

James Scott points out in his studies of power and ideology, that all belief systems bestow legitimacy to support both the domination of the powerful over the weak and the resistance of the weak against the powerful.[8] To whit, Orthodoxy simultaneously expects the people to acquiesce to the rule of corrupt emperors as a form of punishment or *podvig*[9] and, for the same reason,

legitimize the revolt of the people against the emperor. As John Romanides puts it; "the Orthodox Church is theologically not committed to any special form of political institution, culture or society… but at the same time [is] committed to do everything possible to sanctify, as much as possible, society, culture, political institutions, and nature."[10]

More evidence of this can be seen by looking at the historical record of the Orthodox Church as presented through hagiography. The saints provide the Orthodox with examples of how to achieve perfection on earth. The fact that men and women have achieved this perfection while living and serving under regimes of different types seems to give the opinion of Romanides more weight.[11] In addition to individuals, there is a great deal of variation in terms of the governments local Orthodox Churches have elected to work with. [12] Not only has the church acquiesced to the rule of many regime types, but it has also varied the amount of support it has given to political authority.

The point of this brief survey is not to describe the Orthodox ideal regime type, but rather to point out that the local Orthodox churches and Orthodox Christians are allowed a great deal of political latitude in terms of the forms a legitimate Caesar (or Tsar) can take.[13] Given that the local Orthodox churches are allowed some room for maneuverability, it should not be too surprising that, within the past century, the Russian Orthodox Church has worked with Holy Orthodox tsars, atheist communists, and, more recently, democrats. Nor should it come as a surprise that the Russian Orthodox Church has varied in terms of the amount of support it has offered the state. As neither of these aspects is driven wholly by theological necessity, it can be assumed that they are, to some degree, driven by strategic concerns (Gill 2000).

When interpreting Russian church-state relations, it is easy to be misled by terms such as "Holy Russia" and the "Third Rome." The first term describes the sacred character of the society of which the state- even when governed by the tsar- is only a protector. The vast majority of those defending the holiness of the Russian society do not claim that all baptized Russian are sanctified or the recipients of any special grace, but that the culture in general provides the "good soil" referred to in Matthew 13. As proof of this Russians can point to the large number of churches and monasteries and, probably more importantly, the large number of recognized saints and wonderworking relics and icons. It does not refer to the state. Even the Russian Orthodox Slavophiles were "deeply suspicious of any attempts to give to the state any sort of sacral character; [for them] the holiness of a land depends upon its society, upon the degree to which its inhabitants pursue the search for salvation."[14] Professor Gvodev gives the following analogy:

> The Slavophile conception of State to Society can best be understood as an egg. The shell of an egg represents the state; the shell is needed to keep the yolk from spilling out and to protect the yoke from outside elements. The shell, however, itself is dead; vitality comes from the yolk. If Society seeks to weaken the State, the shell will crack and the yolk will be lost; if the State impinges on Society, the shell will squeeze out the yolk and life and vitality will be lost. (ibid)

This is also born out by a quick survey of Russian history. For quite a while after Vladimir converted to Orthodox Christianity and subsequently baptized Rus' the political authorities were limited for very practical reasons from influencing a great deal of control over the local church: it was not fully autonomous and relied on Constantinople for both presbyters and metropolitans[15]. In general, this was a time of relative harmony between the church and state. George Fedotov describes the situation as follows:

> Freedom was especially enjoyed by the Church. The relations between Church and State took forms which were now more advantageous for the former. One cannot say, however, that the Church abused its privileged and influential position. In the dramatic and even tragic history of the relationship between the Christian Church and the Christian State the Kievan experience, short and unstable as it was, can be considered as one of the best Christian achievements
>
> There was certainly no attempt at the separation or at the strict division of the functions between Church and State. The Byzantine system was termed a "harmony" or "symphony" of the two spheres of life. But, whereas in Byzantium the overweight of political power most often led to the domination of the State over the Church, in Russia their collaboration was sincere.[16]

During the Moscovite period of Russian history, the local church gained more impendence from Greece, eventually becoming autocephalous or self-governing. This development did give the state more influence over the selection of church hierarchs, but the church maintained its independence by developing a strong monastic nature and concentrating on liturgy and preaching. From the time of the reforms of Peter the Great and Patriarch Nikon to the early 20th century is commonly thought of as being a period of state domination. After all, it was during this period that the Patriarchate was left unfilled and then replaced by a synod that some have referred to as just another state bureaucracy. There is still a great deal of debate on this subject, but modern scholarship suggests that the Synod enjoyed more autonomy than is commonly believed, although the state did exert influence over episcopal appointments, nationalized monastic properties, and controlled the constituency and activities of the Synod.[17] G.L. Freeze sums up modern scholarship:

> Recent research, as yet little reflected in the general literature, has fundamentally challenged the traditional view of the Church as a mere "servant of the state" in Tsarist Russia. This essay argues that the Petrine reform in fact did *not* transform the Church into a government bureau, that the Synod's autonomy varied considerably from reign to reign, but that the Church never became - in law, in practice, in spirit – a mere ministry of religious affairs.[18]

The period from the early 1900's to 1918 is interesting in that it provides some similarities with the current period and is worth describing in some detail.

Church-State Relations during the Early Twentieth Century:
Revolution, Reform and the Non-Formation of an Orthodox Christian Political Party

If the absence of the Catholic mass organization is the key to the absence of a confessional part, and if this absence was the church's choice, then the puzzle is to explain this apparently self-defeating choice. The answer requires a focus on the risk calculations of the church.

***Stathis Kalyvas The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*[19]**

On the heels of the disastrous Russo-Japanese War and massive social upheaval, the Tsar decided to allow for the election of a consultative parliament, known as the Duma. For centuries the church hierarchy has supported the state, punishing priests and bishops who refused to do so. However, these were revolutionary times, and it is not too surprising that there was a small minority of liberals and radicals among the clergy, despite the punishment doled out to those who were suspected of being liberal. Of the six clergy elected to the First Duma in 1906, four were progressive. The First Duma was dissolved by the Tsar for being too liberal, and the clergy worked with the authorities to increase the chances for a more conservative parliament. Despite these efforts, the Second Duma was even less sympathetic to the authorities. Furthermore, of the thirteen clergy elected to the Second Duma, only four were conservative, with the remaining

ranging in ideology from liberal to revolutionary. Due to their anti-system views and rhetoric, the Synod demanded that they resign their party memberships, in the process declaring that belonging to anti-tsarist parties was incompatible with priestly service. As before, the Tsar dissolved the Duma and revised the electoral law in order to increase the proportion of conservatives in the Third Duma. The effort succeeded. This time 45 clergy were elected, but they ranged ideologically from moderate to conservative.

Throughout this time period, liberals and radicals, as in Europe, increased their anti-clerical attacks. The Russian Orthodox Church still avoided organizing at the grass roots level, but did increase their cooperation with the conservative "parties of power" politicians in order get a more sympathetic Fourth Duma. The number of clergy elected only increased by one, and the efforts of the church did help many conservatives secure seats. However, this did not go unnoticed, and the opposition increased the vitriolity of their attacks against the church. The conservatives continued to show their thanks by increasing the proportion of the national budget given to the Church, a great proportion of which went to providing the parish priests with raises. Unfortunately, money alone could not solve the problems at the local level. Pulpits were silent and had been for quite a while. The sermon has never been the center of Orthodox worship, which is based instead on liturgy. However, the priests, for whatever reason, had not been successful in teaching the fundamental doctrines of the church, much less explain their relevance to the lives of their parishioners. While the liturgy provides more than enough education to attentive parishioners, it did not create the kind of social ties and culture that would protect the church from attacks.

Like France, instead of fending off the attacks of sectarians and radicals by organizing and arming their armies of believers on the ground, the bishops decided to pursue political solutions to their problems. However, with their erstwhile protector the Tsar under increasing pressure to liberalize religious policy at the expense of the Orthodox Church, and without an organized and efficient political machine that could guarantee sympathetic majorities in the Duma, this strategy was doomed to failure. More organization at the local level might not have saved the Tsarist regime from the radicals that replaced it, but it might have left the Church in a better position to weather the storms of the coming decades.

During this same time, the Russian Orthodox Church and its political representative, the Synod, began to call for reforms that would give it more control over its own affairs, to include the convening of an All-Russian Sobor and the reestablishment of the Patriarchate. The fact that both of these reforms, the convening of a Sobor and the election of a Patriarch to replace the Synod and the governmental representative that by this time controlled it, were hotly debated by the clergy suggests the existing arrangement had its advantages. In fact, it was the most liberal and democratic factions that opposed the reforms, the former because it might be done in such a way that only represented the top level of the episcopate, the latter because they believed that a Patriarch would be more sympathetic to the bishops and monks than with the with the married parish priests. Had the state been too heavy-handed in its relations with the church, the different sides might have united against their common foe. The liberal side eventually prevailed, calling for a conciliar Sobor that would elect a Patriarchate and establish metropolitanates to provide greater independence to the church.

Perhaps fearing to lose administrative control over the Orthodox Church, the authorities increased its tolerance for other confessions. Up until this point, the church had supported the state from the pulpit in exchange for the tsars' help in protecting its flock from sectarian poachers. In the early 20th century, both sides of the agreement seemed to be breaking down. Anthony Gill found that Latin American bishops ministering in areas where religious competition is great tended to increase their competitiveness by creating grass-roots religious organizations whereas those in areas where sectarian evangelical efforts were minimal or non-existent, bishops continued to foster a close relationship with the state.[20] It does seem that in the Russian case, increased competition was correlated with increased calls for religious decentralization, but, despite the development of liberal theology in support of such moves, there was not similar call for social organization at the episcopal level. Allowing parish priests and the laity to create religious organizations was an extremely risky proposition for the church hierarchy. As mentioned above, the debate on reform had served to polarize the parish priests from their bishops[21], and the bishops were in some danger of losing their control over the affairs of the church. Strong local bonds might strengthen the parish priests *vis-à-vis* the bishops. This resulting reluctance to sanction grass-roots organization may have been present in Latin America as well, but in Orthodox Russia, it was not offset by Papal encyclicals that seemed to encourage this kind of local activity.

The Church and the Atheist State: Persecution, Accommodation, and Schism[22]

The reality of life in the Soviet Union is a frightful nightmare that can be neither understood nor believed by those who have not experiences it. And the most frightful thing is not the material deprivations, arrests, and banishments, but rather the fact that there a conscious, systematic, and diabolically ingenious battle is being waged for the possession of the human soul, against God. This is the chief aim, and everything else is subordinated to it.

Ivan Andreyev in Russia's Catacomb Saints: Lives of the New Martyrs[23]

After the Bolsheviks seized power from the provisional government, the church was left without any allies in the state at all. To make matters much worse, the new regime was committed to an ideology that was militantly anti-clerical, and its representatives and supporters agitated tirelessly amongst the people against the Church. The Russian Orthodox Church, attacked at the top by the authorities and at the bottom by the guided rage of a discontented people, lacked the organizational capacity and unified will to resist as well as it might have. As part of their war against the Orthodox Church, the authorities killed scores of priests and bishops, sent hundreds more to austere work camps, and harassed the laity[24]. The episcopacy, hounded by the authorities and unable to communicate, was itself divided on how to meet the threat. A complicating factor was that by 1918 the Patriarchate had been reestablished, with Patriarch Tikhon serving as the "first among equals" of the episcopacy of the Russian Orthodox Church. This proved to be a double-edged sword. For a short time the Patriarchate did serve as a rallying point for the persecuted Orthodox, just as the conservatives bishops who supported this reform had hoped. Unfortunately, when the Patriarch was imprisoned and later died, the inability of the bishops to communicate, much less meet as a Synod or Sobor, made choosing the next Patriarch problematic and may have left the Church worse off than it would otherwise have been.

The patriarchal reform had another unintended consequence which directly effected the church's ability to organize at the local level. The majority of the voices against the reestablishment of the Patriarchate were politically liberal and many of them had been under pressure from the church and political authorities as a result of their ideology. They tended to favor investing ecclesiastical authority in a conciliatory and representative Sobor. After the reform went through, they were further alienated from the church leadership. The Soviets, having a hard time eradicating Orthodoxy through agitation, persecution, and terror, tried to split the Russian Orthodox Church from within. It formed a liberal, "Living Church[25]" and enticed some disenchanted liberal clergy to support it. While the official heirs to the Russian Orthodox Church denounced this sect and those who supported it, it did gain many supporters from among the clergy and gained some legitimacy when it was recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. The "Living Church" did not work as well as the authorities had hoped, and was eventually discarded, but much damage had been done. The liberal clergy who supported it, with their ties to social movements, were the ones who would have been most likely to organize the laity at the local level. Instead their effort was wasted.

Patriarch Tikhon died in 1925. He had appointed three bishops in his will to administer the Russian Orthodox Church until such time as a Sobor could be held to select a new Patriarch. The hope was that one of these would be able to avoid persecution and lead the Church. Metropolitan Peter served as the first *locum tenens*. In his capacity as *locum tenens,* Metropolitan Peter selected three candidates to serve as *locum tenens* in the event of his imprisonment or death. One of these was Metropolitan Sergius. The Soviet state continued to persecute the Russian Orthodox Church, support its rivals, refused to grant it official recognition,

and threatened more arrests and killings if the Church's representatives continued to resist. While Metropolitan Peter was in exile, Metropolitan Sergius acted on his behalf. On July 20, 1927, under intense pressure from the authorities, Metropolitan Sergius signed the Declaration of Loyalty, in which he pledged the Church's support to the state. While this choice was in no way inevitable- the fact that a significant segment of the Russian Orthodox Church refused acquiesce to the new policy, went "into the catacombs" and survive to this day despite continued harassment and persecution suggests otherwise- it is not without precedent. As mentioned above, Orthodox are to support the given secular authorities unless doing so would cause them to violate Church Law. It is over this last clause that the disagreement between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia together with the "True" or "Catacomb" church disagree and that caused the schism between these groups and the Moscow Patriarchate.

Regardless of the intent, this was probably the final iteration of the choice between organizing to protect the Orthodoxy subculture and seeking compromise with the authorities. The decision was not inevitable- while persecuted, especially at the top levels- the church on the ground had weathered the storms fairly well, and in many areas bishops had, of their own initiative, begun to create "organizational trenches.[26]" Once the Church recognized and agreed to support the Soviet state, it lost its ability to augment these efforts Church-wide.[27] Priests were not even allowed to give sermons or teach Bible school, much less organize the laity:

> But the new laws on "religious associations"… explicitly forbade any religious activity outside the church walls, classifying these as propaganda, which henceforth was to remain the the exclusive domain of the atheists. The legislation explicitly forbade church groups or the clergy to instruct any special children, youth, women or other study circles or conduct special religious services for special groups. Nor was the Church allowed to organize any hikes, playgrounds, libraries, reading rooms, sanatoria or medical services. Henceforth the clergy was allowed to function only within the area of their residence and of the residences of the members of the parish by which the given cleric was employed.[28]

While this decision had many consequences, this is the one with the greatest effect on the future possibility of organizing an Orthodox political party in later decades.

Christian Democratic Party (non) Formation in Post-Soviet Russia

Religion…plays a very limited role in structuring Russian politics in the late 1990's…Religious cleavages in other competitive polities are mobilized by parties that compete for the support of believers, but there is some hostility towards parties of this kind in Russia, and there was none that ought to gather the support of Orthodox believers on a confessional basis in the postcommunist 1990s. On this evidence, there will be no early "clericalisation" of Russian politics.

Stephen White and Ian McAllister "The Politics of Religion in Postcommunist Russia"[29]

In opinion polls, over half of the Russian population identifies itself as being Russian Orthodox, but this Orthodoxy has not been politicized. As stated above, this is largely because there are no major political parties that have managed to capitalize on this latent political cleavage: as Lipset and Rokkan point out in their work on cleavages, it is organizations- and especially strong political parties- that politicize a certain identity at the expense of others. There are a several very good explanations of why there are no confessional parties in post-communist Russia. The first, which I dealt with above, suggests that Orthodoxy and democracy are incompatible.[30] The second was also described above: confessional parties- indeed all mass parties- require the pre-

existence of secondary organizations. Russia, for reasons described in some length above, lacks such organizations. As a result, there are no confessional parties in Russia. This simple explanation tells much of the story, but not all of it.

It is more proper, based on the evidence presented above, to argue that the lack of religious secondary organizations in Russia means that there will be no confessional parties of the type that formed several decades ago. During the time the confessional and socialist parties formed, the only way a party could be competitive given a large electorate was as a mass party with strong, penetrative supporting organizations. In France, attempts at Christian Democratic party formation failed for this reason: conservative politicians could not compete well against the better organized parties of the opposition. As I have argued elsewhere technology has made smaller, more candidate-centered "cadre" and "cartel" party organizations at least as efficient as mass parties.[31] With the possible exception of the Communist Party, all of the major political parties are candidate-centered and rely on the media rather than secondary organizations to win elections. The question then becomes: why are there no major confessional parties in Russia? It cannot just be due to the lack of secondary organizations. Several charismatic politicians have formed confessional parties in Russia, but they have not been successful. These include Fr. Gleb Yakunin, Fr. Viacheslav Polosin, and Viktor Aksiuchits (Russian Christian Democratic Movement); and Alexander Ogorodnikov (Christian Democratic Union).[32] These politicians were among the first politicians untainted by communism to enter the democratic political arena. The fact that they fought among themselves did not help them, but there is a more basic reason for their failure. In order to understand this reason, it is best to return to the original theory of confessional party formation:

> The formation of confessional parties was the contingent and unwanted byproduct of strategic choices made by the church and conservative political elites under constraints. By mobilizing lay Catholics, the church and conservative elites created a new political actor, the confessional party, with its own preferences.[33]

Kalyvas expends a great deal of effort to point out that the Catholic Church had no desire to create confessional parties: they formed the organizations to protect believers from the encroachment of liberalism and socialism because they thought it would be more effective than compromising with the regime. Later, the church politicized these organizations by allowing them to support conservative politicians in elections. This dramatically improved the showing of the conservatives in the elections, just as the bishops had hoped. Unfortunately for Catholic Church, after seeing how well the religious organizations did politically, lay leaders and conservative politicians made the politicization of the organizations permanent by forming Christian Democratic parties. I say "unfortunately" because this led to a situation the Church did not desire: the empowerment of the laity and lower clergy over religious issues. The Church no longer had full control over religious policy and identity. This chain of events is a great example of unintended consequences: the Church did not want religious political parties, but its actions all but ensured they would be created.

This brings us back to the case of Russia. It seems to be the case that the Russian Orthodox Church, like the Roman Catholic Church before, does not desire confessional parties. In the early 20th century, the Church encouraged its priests and faithful to support certain politicians and even to run themselves, but this did not lead to confessional party formation because the Church did not want any to form and there were no quasi-independent secondary organizations strong enough for it to happen on its own. In the late 20th century, the Church withdrew its

blessing for priests to engage in political activity, even going so far as to defrock Fr. Gleb Yakunin when he refused to obey.[34] Since that time, the Church has continued to defend itself against ideological enemies by through compromises with the Russian State rather than through organizing itself at the grass-roots level. The best example of this has to do with the ratification and implementation of the Religious Law. This law, not so dissimilar to the one in effect in Germany, has been used by the local authorities to harass the competition. As mentioned earlier, competition in the Catholic countries of Europe and Latin America led the bishops to change from a monopolistic market strategy to one that tries to improve the quality of the product and its marketing. This is an interesting difference, and warrants further study.

Summary

Despite the large number of Russian citizens whose identity is associated with Orthodoxy, there are no major politicians or political parties benefiting from this. Compare this with the situation in West Europe, where confessional parties are a major part of the political landscape. The argument that this is a result of the anti-democratic theology of Orthodox Christianity is too simplistic. First, theology, like any ideology, often provides a great deal of wiggle room when put into practice. This is especially the case regarding Orthodoxy and democracy as none of the Ecumenical Synods or Holy Fathers directly addressed the issue. Second, West European confessional parties were the unintended consequence of grass-roots mobilization: the church never wanted them. Even if Orthodox Christian theology were decidedly anti-democratic, Russia could have ended up with (quasi-independent) confessional parties. One wishing to explain the lack of confessional parties in Russia could also turn to some form of Russian exceptionalism for clues. This would be a mistake: comparing the Russian observations to

others from West Europe increases the generalizability of our findings and increases the probability that our findings on Russia are correct. This comparison suggests that Russia, like France of roughly a century ago, decided to react to attacks by compromising with the state rather than organizing at the local level. As a result, when conservative politicians needed the support of the church and church-goers, it could not be counted on because the laity had not been organized. If confessional parties and politicians are to do well in Russia, they must do so without organizations. Modern technology makes this possible. In fact, few politicians and parties in modern Russia rely on strong grass-roots organizations- they tend to rely on modern media technology to get out the vote. The Russian Orthodox Church, given the support of the state or an oligarch or two, could support the creation of a cadre-type religious party. Religious politicians outside the Russian Orthodox Church with access to the media could also make a go of forming a political party. These is possibility is discussed in the next session.

Current Trends

In the run up to the 1999 Duma elections a party came literally out of nowhere to win the elections. This victory was due to two factors, its access to the mass media and the support it was given by state and regional governments. It is now the dominant party in the Duma. Nor is it the first party to enjoy this kind of support: the state has backed a different "party of power" in each of the post-communist elections. There does not seem to be any reason why the next "party of power" could not be an Orthodox political party. In fact, just this seemed to be happening in the late Spring and Summer of 2000. In May of 2000, a prominent and influential Russian newspaper (*Nezavisimaya Gazyeta*) announced that the founding conference of just such a party was to take place in Moscow in July. The meeting was said to have been arranged by the

Moscow Patriarchate and to have the full support of the Putin government. But the meeting never took place. It seems that the Patriarchate was not behind the meeting after all (but see the Keston attack- get cite). While it could still happen, an analysis of the costs and benefits such a move would present to the two relevant actors suggests that it will not. First, the state has very little to gain from such an alliance. It has less control over the Russian Synod than it does over the sycophantic politicians that make up the existing "party of power." As long as Putin is able to use Unity to meet his objectives, he will.[35] Second, the Russian Orthodox Church has more to gain working as an interest group than as a political party. This move would also be a risky one for the Church: it would likely lose control over any politicians it allowed to represent its interests in the venture. It would also embarrass the Church if the new party were to perform poorly; a very real possibility given the precarious state of the Russian Church. Nor would it contribute to the evangelic mission of the Church: religious political campaigns conducted over the airwaves are not likely to get more people to attend liturgy on Sunday morning. The recent "Social Doctrine" developed by the Russian Orthodox Synod suggests that the Church will continue to support the state in the capacity of advisor, supplicator, and intercessor, but not as a direct participator in electoral politics.[36]

Since the early 1990's the Russian Orthodox Church has discouraged its clergy from participating directly in politics. Some have refused to obey. The situation of confessional party formation in Russia is complicated by the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church has rivals that threaten its ability to enforce this ban. The example of Fr. Gleb Yakunin, described above, is evidence of this. Independent religious politicians are unlikely to get the kind of support they would need to compete without the support of either the state or business interests. Neither of

these is likely to be forthcoming. The increasing popularity of non-Orthodox religious sects could become a springboard for political success were it not for the fact that these sects are dependent on foreign missionaries and money.

Some criticize the Russian Orthodox Church's willingness to take advantage of state resources. Let me conclude with a market analogy to explain the Moscow Patriarchate's choice. The leaders of many developing countries would prefer that their economy be based on local industry than on foreign companies working within their borders. As a result, they often erect trade barriers to shield local industries from international competition, at least until such time as the industry is strong enough to compete on its own. Needless to say, the leaders of local industry support this plan. The Russian Orthodox Church is organizationally weak. The fact that it even exists to this day with a committed base of believers seems testimony to its heritage rather than human effort. It has very little money, and efforts to change this have blown up in its face. After decades, perhaps centuries, under siege, it needs time to recover if it is to compete. The Russian state seems to be willing to give it some time to do so, and the Church returns by supporting the regime at key moments. The question that remains to be answered is whether the Church will use this time to prepare for a future of increased religious competition, or whether it, like many local industries in developing countries, will find itself mired in corruption and inefficiency and totally unable to compete in the global economy.

[1] In addition to its explanatory power, which is considerable, Kalyvas' work is noteworthy for its methodology. First, it uses the comparative method (analytic narratives?) to establish correlations between the macro-level independent and dependent variables. Second, it uses rational choice to provide the microfoundations between cause and effect. Third, it traces the processes of causation using "uses structured, focused" case studies (analytic narratives?). See also Carolyn M. Warner's *Confessions of an Interest Group: The Catholic Church and Political Parties in Europe* (2000. Princeton University Press: Princeton).

[2] Gill notes that churches and their constituent parishes can provide ready-made organizational assets (2000. "The Political Origins of Religious Liberty: Initial Sketch of a General Theory." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association's Annual Conference. Washington DC.). It should be noted that these organizational assets are largely potential until developed by entrepreneurs.

[3] This statement is true, but a bit misleading. Not all of the bishops supported this decision. This disagreement led to the schism between the Moscow Patriarchate on the one hand and the True Orthodox Church of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad on the other. See Dimitry Pospiolovsky's *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime Volumes I&II* (1984. St. Vladimir Seminary Press: Crestwood NY); and Ivan Andreyev's *Russia's Catacomb Saints: Lives of the New Martyrs* (19XX. Saint Herman of Alaska Press: Platina California), and Archpriest Michael Polsky's *The New Martyrs of Russia* (2000. Monastery Press, Alberta).

[4] pages 221-222. 1974. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company. Richard Pipes. For an excellent discussion of church-state relations see Nikolas Gvosdev's *An Examination of Church-*

State Relations in the Byzantine and Russian Empires with an Emphasis on Ideology and Models of Interaction. (2001, Edwin Mellon Press: Lewiston New York).

[5] [Huntington, 1996 #27]

[6] Quoted on page 95 of Reinhard Bendix's *Kings or People: Power and the Mandate to Rule.* (1978 Los Angeles: University of California Press).

[7] Quoted in Nikolas K. Gvosdev, "The Theory of Symphony and Actual Practice in the Orthodox World: Case Studies in the Balkans and the Caucasus", a lecture given at Baylor University (http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/5357/symphony.html).

[8] See for example his *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (1990 New Haven: Yale University Press.

[9] *Podvig* is ascetic struggle that can assist a person's sanctification.

[10] [Romanides, 1989 #236] page 261. It is worth noting that Romanides spends most of his chapter talking about the Orthodox religion and only gets to the implications of the religion for church-state relations at the end. This is because one must first understand the Orthodox world-view before attempting to pass judgment on politics and Orthodoxy. For a more general discussion of the legitimizing utility of religion see Gill 2000.

[11] When using the stories of the saints in this manner, it is important to distinguish those sanctified through martyrdom and confession. Orthodox can live in pagan societies and under pagan regimes, but must refuse to apostatize. Some saints pursued perfection throughout their natural days under pagan and Islamic regimes. But there are many saints whose natural days were cut short because these same regimes demanded they offer religious rather than simple political fealty.

[12] There is only one Orthodox Church, but there are several autocephalous (Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, and Albania) and autonomous local churches (Czech Republic and Slovakia, Sinai, Finland, Japan, and China).

[13] The converse is also true- Orthodox are expected to resist heresy no matter what sort of regime commits it.

[14] Quoted in Nikolas K. Gvosdev (1999) "The Slavophile Conception of the State: Eastern Perspectives on Church and State" a lecture presented at the J.M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies, Baylor University (http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/5357/chsslav.html). See Pipes otherwise excellent analysis (eg footnote 1) for the usual Western interpretation of Russian understandings of the state. Needless to say, the modernizing Westernizers displayed no tendency whatsoever to sanctify the state.

[15] The former was because Rus' did not yet have a society that produced monks of sufficient quantity and quality to staff the episcopacy. The latter was because the local church did not yet have the right to confirm its own religious hierarchy. See George P. Fedotov's *The Russian Religious Mind* (1946. Harvard University Press: Cambridge).

[16] ibid page 400-401.

[17] For the conventional view, see the first chapter of John Shelton Curtiss' *Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of the Empire, 1900-1917* (Columbia University Press: New York). For a more generous account, see G.L. Freeze (1985) "Handmaiden of the State? The Church in Imperial Russia Reconsidered" in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*. 36:1. Also see Marc Szeftel

(1978) "Church and State in Imperial Russia" and David W. Edwards (1978) "The System of Nicholas I in Church State Relations" both in *Russian Orthodoxy under the Old Regime* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis).

[18] ibid page 84.

[19] Page 137.

[20] Anthony Gill (1998) *Rendering unto Caesar: the Catholic Church and the state in Latin America*. (The University of Chicago Press: Chicago).

[21] In the Orthodox Church, the bishops, as successors to the Apostle's and as Christ's human representatives on earth, are the center of public religious life and are expected to play an active role in the lives of their flocks. Unfortunately, in Russia the ratio of bishops to parishes was such that bishops rarely, if ever, visited all their parishes. As a result, the bishops, overburdened with governmental and ecclesiastical red-tape, were already somewhat estranged, at least in body, from their parish priests. This did not help to sooth tensions between the two groups. See Chapter One of Glennys Young (1997) *Power and the Sacred in Revolutionary Russia: Religious Activists in the Village* (The Pennsylvania State University Press: University Park).

[22] The tragic events of this time are best described by Dimitry Pospielovsky in *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime: 1917-1982* (1984 St. Vladimir's Seminary Press: Crestwood New York) and I. M. Andreyev's *Russia's Catacomb Saints* (1982 edited by Fr. Saraphim Rose St. Herman's Press: Platina California). The debate about the events of this time-period, and especially over Metropolitan Sergius' decision to cooperate with the Soviet regime. It is not the purpose of this paper to decide the merits of his decision, but rather to describe the decision and

some of its political consequences. Glennys Young (1997) does an excellent job describing the situation among the rural Orthodox.

[23] Page 47.

[24] In the two years between 1921 and 1923 2,681 married priests, 1,962 monks, and 3,447 nuns were killed (Pospielovsky 1984: 99). I use the more conservative scores not to understate the magnanimity of the evils committed by the Bolsheviks, but for methodological reasons.

[25] The "Living Church" was actually only one part of a wider renovationist schism. The other two major branches of this schism were the Union of Communities of Ancient Apostolic Churches, and the Union for Church Renovation.

[26] See Chapter Seven of Young (1997) and Chapter Three of Pospielovsky (1984) for descriptions of grass-roots organization of the laity and parish priests.

[27] That organization was a possible option is also suggested by the continued operation of the "Catacomb Church", a church that went underground at this time and managed to survive throughout the Soviet period (see Andreyev 1982).

[28] ibid page 164.

[29] Page 248 in Religion, State and Society, Vol. 25, No. 3, 1997.

[30] See Gvosdev (2000) for a more thorough refutation of this hypothesis.

[31] Doug Perkins (1999) "The Organizational Strategies of Political Parties: An Integrative Model" (*Southeastern Political Review*. 27:4) and (1996) "Structure and Choice: The Role of Organizations, Patronage, and the Media in Party Formation" (*Party Politics*. 2:3).

[32] For descriptions of these efforts, see Paul D. Steeves (1994) "Christian Democrats in Russia, 1989-1993" and "Current Developments in Russia and the Response of the Russian Orthodox" in

Niels C. Nielsen, Jr (ed) *Christianity after Communism: social, political, and cultural struggle in Russia* (Westview Press: Boulder Colorado); Vsevolod Chaplin (1995) "The Church and Politics in Contemporary Russia" in Michael Bourdeaux (ed) *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia.*(M.E. Sharpe, Inc: Armonk, New York).

[33] From the abstract of Stathis Kalyvas (1998) "From Pulpit to Party: Party Formation and the Christian Democratic Phenomenon" (*Comparative Politics* 30:3).

[34] Fr. Yakunin's story is fascinating, and not only for political reasons. He was one of the authors of exposés linking the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church with the KGB. After being defrocked by the Russian Orthodox Church, Fr. Yakunin was accepted as a priest in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church- Kiev Patriarchate, an upstart jurisdiction formed by one of the Bishops he himself had exposed and that had himself been defrocked by Moscow.

[35] The fact that Orthodoxy is operating in an increasingly competitive market makes it even less attractive to the regime (Gill 2000).

[36] The fact that Russia is a strong presidential system makes it even less likely that the Russian Orthodox Church as an interest group would ally with a political party.