

VLADIMIR SOLOV'ĚV AS THE MENTOR OF ANTI-MARXIAN  
SOCIALISM: CONCEPTS OF SOCIALISM IN S.N. TRUBECKOJ,  
S.N. BULGAKOV AND N.A. BERDJAEV

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'Wann endlich wird der große Mensch erstehen, der  
den echten Sozialismus mit der Metaphysik versöhnt?'  
Franz Werfel, *Der veruntreute Himmel*

*'Truth' and 'Lie' of Marxian Socialism by Vladimir Solov'ëv*

As a young man Vladimir Solov'ëv ardently read the works of the French socialists and he had hoped that socialism would start a new epoch. However, in 1874 he presented a revised interpretation of socialism in his master's thesis *Krizis zapadnoj filosofii*. All socialist theory was built on an anthropology, the traits of which were egoism and hedonism, which was an idea clearly worked out by L. Feuerbach. On such an anthropological basis no profound change in the depth of society could possibly be declared without destroying the logic of the theoretical system. This observation of a contradiction within socialist theory led Solov'ëv to pronounce a sharp condemnation of the basic abstract principle underlying all socialist theory. Its 'apotheosis of materialism' did not differ from capitalist theory! This was considered the 'lie' in Marxian socialism. From the anthropological point of view, socialist theory defended materialism just as much as capitalist theory had done before. Capitalism and socialism were to be regarded as two sides of the same coin. In the course of his lectures held in 1878 Solov'ëv stated that socialism in all present forms was a mere substitute for religion, now considered to be the competitor of socialism. This substitution was brought about by the failure of the Christian church to defend the 'social truth' of its belief. The 'truth' in socialism was its well-founded criticism of social injustice, of unequal distribution of goods and power in capitalism. Solov'ëv supported the protest against capitalism, saw it in line with the ideals proclaimed by the French Revolution.<sup>1</sup> It was first

<sup>1</sup> H. Gleixner, 'V. Solov'ëv's Verständnis und Kritik des Sozialismus', in: M. Depermann (Hrsg.), *Russisches Denken im europäischen Dialog* (Innsbruck/Wien, 1998), pp. 246-266.

S.N. Trubeckoj, then S.N. Bulgakov along with N.A. Berdjaev, whose visions of a 'metaphysical', 'Christian' and 'personal socialism' were based on the notion of defending the 'truth' by substituting Marx's 'lie'. In this respect Trubeckoj, Bulgakov and Berdjaev can truly be called disciples of Solov'ëv.

*Sergej Nikolaevič Trubeckoj and 'Metaphysical Socialism'*

Sergej Nikolaevič Trubeckoj (1862-1905) was personally acquainted with Solov'ëv and was a professor of philosophy in Moscow. He was the first to rewrite socialism on the basis of its 'truth' and its 'lie' as outlined by Solov'ëv. His publications in *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii* deeply influenced Bulgakov and Berdjaev in their turning away from Marxism.

Trubeckoj, a specialist in Greek philosophy, started to develop his concept of socialism by examining Socrates' term of the universality or catholicity [*katolikos*] of man's soul in his master thesis *Metafizika v drevnej Grecii* (1890).<sup>2</sup> By 1905, when he had finished 'O prirode čelovečeskogo soznanija' [On the nature of human consciousness], he presented his idea of a 'metaphysical socialism', having further developed Socrates' definition of every individual's 'soul bearing the world'.<sup>3</sup> In the work just cited, he underlined that man's individual 'soul' was recognized only in communities unified by a common religion. Here the soul's transcendental and communicative character as emphasized.<sup>4</sup> When using the term 'metaphysical socialism' Trubeckoj means a state of consciousness derived from the recognition of God as the Father. Every man's soul then evolved into a *sobornost' soznanija* [universality of consciousness].<sup>5</sup> The sense of community born out of this type of self-awareness becomes the essence of 'metaphysical socialism'.

This state of consciousness cannot possibly be reached outside the church. Man, seen as carrier of God and vice versa [*bogočelovek*], achieved the corresponding *bogočelovečeskoe obščestvo* as society of God-men exclusively in the arms of the Christian church.<sup>6</sup> Trubeckoj by

<sup>2</sup> S.N. Trubeckoj, *Metafizika v drevnej Grecii* (Moskva, 1890), pp. 435-472.

<sup>3</sup> S.N. Trubeckoj, 'O prirode čelovečeskogo soznanija', in: *Sobranie sočinenij Kn. Sergeja Nikolaeviča Trubeckogo*, t. 1-4 (Moskva, 1906/08), t. 2, pp. 1-111; pp. 11-13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93f.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, and p. 95. Cf. also Trubeckoj, *Učenie o logose v ego istorii* (Moskva, 1900), pp. 377-428 and 453.

<sup>6</sup> Trubeckoj, 'O prirode', p. 94f; n. 1.

no means discussed the question as to whether or how this 'metaphysical socialism', this type of socialist society, isolated in time and in place from the rest of the world, would find a way to break through the walls erected against the world. This question, in conjunction with the economic questions, was discussed by Bulgakov and by Berdjaev.<sup>7</sup> Their concepts of socialism, also deeply inspired by Solov'ëv's analysis of right ('truth') and wrong ('lie') in Marxian socialism, can be regarded as an attempt to further develop Trubeckoj's concept of 'metaphysical socialism'.

*Sergej Nikolaevič Bulgakov and his Vision of a 'Christian Socialism'*

Bulgakov, critic of Marx and of Lenin, deputy in the second Duma and founder of a party-like union named *Sojuz khristianskoj politiki* [Union of Christian Politics, 1905], was a professor of economics until 1918, when he was ordained orthodox priest. Bulgakov introduced an idea of 'Christian socialism', which basically agreed with Trubeckoj's concept of *sobornoe soznanie* [universal consciousness] and which answered the questions left open by the latter. He included economics, i.e. the social question presented by Marx. His attempt to refute Marx's concept of historical materialism by showing its inconsistency departed from this point.

Bulgakov's central argument can be summarized as follows. According to Marx, man was a slave because of his total and merciless dependence on his social class, which itself was defined by the mutual antagonism of classes. The consciousness born out of the competition among classes affected everybody, no escape was possible! In Bulgakov's eyes, the idea of 'personality' as an end in itself, plus the idea of its liberty, were abolished by Marx, whose concept of liberty was founded neither on an ethical nor on an anthropological idea. His idea of liberty was defined by nothing but economic factors. Precisely these factors were contradictory to any type of socialist paradise. According to Marx man was a *homo economicus*. In this respect Marxism did not differ at all from the Scottish/English liberal school of economics. The new Leviathan created by Marx was 'worse', however, since in his theory the individual submerged in a social class and became a collective individual.<sup>8</sup> The 'pit

<sup>7</sup> Berdjaev correctly titled Trubeckoj's concept 'Socialism of consciousness', in: N.A. Berdjaev, *Von des Menschen Knechtschaft und Freiheit. Versuch einer personalistischen Philosophie* (Darmstadt/Genf, 1954), p. 255f.

<sup>8</sup> S.N. Bulgakov, 'Christentum und Sozialismus' (1918), in: H.-J. Ruppert (Hg.), *Sozialismus im Christentum?* (Göttingen, 1977), pp. 17-53: p. 37, and S.N. Bulgakov, 'Die Seele des Sozialismus' (1931-1933), in: *ibid.*, pp. 135-171: p. 139ff.

of wolves', which Marx had created, was to work its way up to a community of 'brothers, loving and kissing each other'.<sup>9</sup> This metamorphosis from 'wolf' to 'brother' constituted the central weakness of Marx's historical materialism, because the paradise it promised could not be deduced from any given concept of man.<sup>10</sup> This constituted a gaping void. Marx did not bridge the gap between social Darwinism and paradise on earth. Therefore his vision of socialism was merely another type of misty religious faith,<sup>11</sup> an interpretation that had been discussed by Solov'ev already in 1878.<sup>12</sup> Socialism and capitalism — it did not make too much of a difference — both systems made out of man 'a safe, either empty or full'.<sup>13</sup> Marx's socialism demonstrated a 'bourgeois spirit'<sup>14</sup> because historical materialism divided mankind into merely two groups. First there were the proprietors and then those who possessed nothing, but their hands still sought the same thing: economic fulfilment. Bulgakov was not convinced by the premise that people could live freely under socialism/communism because then their individual 'safes' contained roughly the same amount.<sup>15</sup>

In order to offer a more solid concept and to weaken the Bolsheviks' position among the Russian public he founded the 'Union of Christian Politics' in 1905. Bulgakov did not share the opinion of many Christians that the world was divided into two parts, the first of which combined religious faith and life in the arms of the church, while the second part, the worldly world, was obviously the worst of the two. He despised any attitude that did not protest against injustice but, instead, withdrew from the world. Referring explicitly to Solov'ev, he asserted that Christian faith by definition implied an urgent task to become involved in the affairs of the world and that retreat from politics was generally not acceptable.<sup>16</sup> Between 1905 and 1918, when Bulgakov was ordained orthodox priest, he taught economics at the

<sup>9</sup> S.N. Bulgakov, 'Christentum und Sozialismus' (1918), in: H.-J. Ruppert (Hg.), *Sozialismus im Christentum?*, pp. 17-53; p. 28f.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22f.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28f.

<sup>12</sup> See n. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>14</sup> S.N. Bulgakov, 'Duševnaja drama Gercena' (1903), in: *Ot markzisma k idealizmu. Sbornik statej* (1896-1903) (Sankt-Peterburg, 1903) (Reprint: Frankfurt a. M., 1980), pp. 161-194; p. 38f. Cf. also S.N. Bulgakov, 'Christentum', *op. cit.*, p. 41ff. and 'Neotložnaja zadača. O sojuze khristianskoj politiki' (1905), in: V.N. Akulinin (Ed.), *Khristianskij socializm. S.N. Bulgakov* (Novosibirsk, 1991), pp. 25-60; p. 35.

<sup>15</sup> 'Zadača', p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.31f.

Universities of Kiev and Moscow. At the same time he published a large number of papers which in part covered the question of what role the church was to assume in modernizing societies.<sup>17</sup> Their common denominator was that the Christian church had to pull down its protective barriers and become an integral part of life in the outside world. By founding the 'Union' in 1905, Bulgakov had undertaken a first attempt to pull the Orthodox Church out of its agony. In the name of Christian 'social truth' he demanded renewed dogmatic work. Referring again to Solov'ëv he also asserted that the Christian 'social truth' was important enough to unify members of all different Christian confessions.<sup>18</sup> The resulting union was to become a platform which would fight the false socialism by means of publications, public debates and which would also boost political reforms.<sup>19</sup> In numerous papers and articles, as in the Union's founding text, he underlined that the defence of the suppressed and exploited was called for by the whole of the content of Scripture. Still, it was impossible to find any form of a predetermined economic order in the Bible.<sup>20</sup> It did not prescribe any communism, as some German Marxists, like K. Kautsky, had proclaimed.<sup>21</sup> What was to be taken as 'truth' was the appeal to man's creativity concerning all aspects of life [*bogočelovečestvo*], including economic aspects.<sup>22</sup> Analyzing the entire work of Bulgakov on the question of what would be the proper economic order corresponding to 'Christian socialism', corresponding to his idea of *bogočelovečestvo*, it can only be said that communist distribution and private ownership should go hand in hand. Property should not have the meaning of a fetish.<sup>23</sup> When starting the 'Union' in 1905, Bulgakov evidently did not think in terms of politics other than that the Russian agrarian population was to be granted more land in order to establish a kind of 'agrarian

<sup>17</sup> For example: 'Cerkov' i kul'tura' (1906), 'Cerkov' i gosudarstvo' (1906), 'Cerkov' i social'nyj vopros' (1906).

<sup>18</sup> S.N. Bulgakov, 'Čto daët sovremennomu soznaniju filosofija Vladimira Solov'ëva?' (1903), in: *Ot marksizma k idealizmu*, pp. 95-262: p. 241f. Cf. also S. N. Bulgakov, *Avtobiografičeskie zametki*, 2oj vypusk (Paris, 1991), p. 79 and 'Zadača', p. 29.

<sup>19</sup> 'Zadača', p. 49f.

<sup>20</sup> *Khristianstvo*, p. 206ff.

<sup>21</sup> S.N. Bulgakov, 'Pervokhristianstvo i novejščij socializm' (1909), in: *Dva grada. Izsledovanija o prirode obščestvennykh idealov*, t. 1/2, (Moskva, 1911) (Reprint: Gregg International Publishers Limited, England, 1971), t. 2, pp. 1-50: p.1ff.

<sup>22</sup> 'Seele', p.145 and cf. *Filosofija khozjajstva. Čast' pervaja: Mir kak khozjajstvo* (Moskva, 1912) (Reprint 1971) representing a work developing this idea systematically.

<sup>23</sup> 'Khristianstvo', p. 223ff.

socialism'<sup>24</sup> in the long run, and that constitutional rights should be fought for immediately.<sup>25</sup>

In general terms Bulgakov hoped for a religious rebirth irrespective of the form of government. From the very beginning he hoped that the church would regain influence on man's consciousness. Paradoxically enough, it was due to the resistance of the church that Bulgakov's 'Union of Christian Politics' failed the same year that it was founded. Nevertheless, after Bulgakov was exiled in 1923, he further developed his idea of 'Christian socialism' and reissued his ideas on the role of church in its name. Teaching at the Institut St. Serge in Paris he reissued his former idea that the church was to work out a dogmatic sociological concept, which also took into account the fact of man's dependence on social and economic circumstances. This anticipated dogmatic work would have to consider deeply the grave problems arising from the standardization and rationalization of man's life. The fantastic speed of technological progress had turned people into 'ants' or 'flocks of sheep', wherever in the modern world one might look. Almost twenty years after Bulgakov had rejected Marxism because of its 'bourgeois spirit', he came to the conclusion that the Soviet Union had manifested exactly the same 'bourgeois spirit' as was found in capitalist Europe. Both societies were founded on atheist perceptions of the world and man was increasingly in danger of falling victim to idols and fascism. After machines had taken over, people were given a new type of freedom which was not developed beyond the limits of the 'bourgeois spirit' already mentioned. It was a spirit resulting from man's lapse into materialism.<sup>26</sup> In view of this assessment, Bulgakov accentuated the role of church at one point. The significance of the individual personality was to be expressed in sociological terms and he suggested the classical Russian term *sobornost'* to be the dogmatic mediator. *Sobornost'*, or what was meant by Trubeckoj's 'metaphysical socialism', did not suggest doing away with 'individualism', but its metamorphosis into loving respect for one's neighbour. This definition of man's personal and historical destination was looked at by Bulgakov as a specifically Russian heritage, which created splendid grounds for rejecting

<sup>24</sup> 'Zadača', p. 39.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50f.

<sup>26</sup> 'Seele', p. 134f and p. 163ff. Cf. S.N. Bulgakov, 'Ot avtora' (1910), in: *Dva grada*, t.1, pp. VII-XXI: pp. VII-XI, and, 'Religija čelovekobožija u L. Fejrbakha' (1905), in *Ibid.*, pp.1-68. See also 'Karl Marks kak religioznyj tip' (1906), in *Ibid.*, pp. 69-105. Here Bulgakov distinguished between an atheistic (pantheistic) and religious (theistic) perception of the world, *tertium non datur*.

capitalism.<sup>27</sup> 'Christian socialism' and *sobornost*' became synonyms in the late works of Bulgakov. The Orthodox church was to be the decisive institution in bringing about a religious rebirth after the Soviet system would have been defeated, and it was to replace the state and its institutions in the long run.<sup>28</sup> Towards the end of history, the Christian church was to take over the reorganization of the entire world [*vocerkovlenie*].<sup>29</sup>

*Nikolaj Aleksandrovič Berdjaev as a Prophet of an 'Eighth Day of Creation' of 'Personal Socialism'*

Berdjaev (1874-1948) was the son of a Polish-Russian aristocratic family. Although his life and work are well-known worldwide, so far it has been overlooked that his vision of 'personal socialism' equals his prophecy of the 'eighth day of Creation'.

Berdjaev also radically refused the bourgeois spirit of Marx's concept of socialism. The class struggle Marx had proclaimed to fuel history, documented nothing but a fallen world. It was merely a strife within 'Mammon's realm'. Although Christian belief accepted Marx's demand for a basic change at the foundation of the structures of society, it rejected the idea of class struggle, because this humiliated humanity. Any reform or any type of revolution was a farce, if the individuals in a society were not prepared to undergo a personal transformation.<sup>30</sup> Berdjaev agreed with Marx, on the other hand, as to the 'truth' his socialism had proclaimed. In particular he agreed that bread was to be distributed equitably.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, capitalism defended — as Berdjaev conceded to Marx — neither freedom nor justice, but it forced all its participants into a merciless dependence on the anonymous power of money. 'Liberty' was the exclusive right of the winners.<sup>32</sup> This 'distortion of values' produced by capitalism was in no way compatible with Berdjaev's idea of 'personalism'. This 'personalism' implied a radical denial of capitalism, while yet at the same time there was a strict refusal of Marx's historical materialism.

<sup>27</sup> S.N. Bulgakov, 'Pravoslavie i khozjajstvennaja žizn', in: *Pravoslavie. Očerki učeniya pravoslavnoj cerkvi* (Paris, 1950 [?]), pp. 345-369: p. 362. Cf. also 'Seele', p. 136ff. and 'Reč', p. 31f.

<sup>28</sup> *Pravoslavie*, p. 363ff.

<sup>29</sup> 'Seele', p. 158f.

<sup>30</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, *Christentum und Klassenkampf* (Luzern, 1936), p. 2ff.

<sup>31</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, *Wahrheit und Lüge des Kommunismus* (Darmstadt/Genf, 1953), p. 11. And also N.A. Berdjaev, *Das neue Mittelalter. Betrachtungen über das Schicksal Rußlands und Europas* (Tübingen, 1950), p. 125, *Von des Menschen Knechtschaft und Freiheit. Versuch einer personalistischen Philosophie*, p. 263f.

<sup>32</sup> 'O social'nom personalizme', *Novyj grad 7* (Paris, 1933), pp. 44-61: p. 48ff.

The social projection of 'personalism' meant a 'socialization of the economy and the guarantee of work, hence a subsidized material minimum for everybody within a society without classes'.<sup>33</sup> The justification for this claim, however, was substantially different from Marx's. In Berdjaev's perception, man was indeed a *homo economicus*, but only if he regarded his work as a 'spiritual' service. This aspect of man's labour, as Berdjaev criticized, had been completely ignored by socialist theoreticians. Any political or economic question, any theory of an ideal order could be judged only if looked at from this point of view.<sup>34</sup> What Berdjaev had called 'extreme personal socialism' was the radical denial of all sovereignty except the sovereignty of individual personality.<sup>35</sup> His demand for personal freedom also implied the abolition of the representative form of democracy, whose spirit of liberty and of human rights was a lie. Any representative system necessarily led to a leveling of personality. The freedom of conscience and convictions was broken up by the dictatorship of political parties and by organized interest groups.<sup>36</sup> Christian faith, the true defender of personal liberty, was compatible with the idea of democracy only as far as its direct and self-governing form was concerned. Christian faith rejected the sovereignty of any majority.<sup>37</sup>

Logically, Berdjaev's blueprint for the world was that it should become a 'spiritually joined federation', a federation of loosely associated 'fraternal units'. This is what he called 'personal socialism' in its political order.<sup>38</sup> Considering how this political order could possibly be achieved, it has to be said that in Berdjaev's eyes it was absolutely impossible to reformulate Christianity into a state doctrine. The 'crucified truth' would have to be converted into a 'doctrine of crucifying'.<sup>39</sup> Even though Berdjaev principally supported the reformulation of Marx by E. Bernstein,<sup>40</sup> he believed in a radically new type of revolution. In order to understand Berdjaev's solution to the serious problems that go with any theory of historical progress, one first has to go into his

<sup>33</sup> 'Personalizm i marksizm', *Put'* 48 (Paris, 1935), pp. 3-20: p. 7.

<sup>34</sup> *Christentum*, p. 62 and 67ff.

<sup>35</sup> 'O social'nom personalizme', p. 55.

<sup>36</sup> *Mittelalter*, p. 114f.

<sup>37</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, 'Problema khristianskogo gosudarstva', *Sovremennye zapiski* 31 (Paris, 1927), pp. 280-306: p. 302.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 278.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 302. Cf. also *Filosofija neravenstva. Pis'ma k nedrugam po social'noj filosofii*, 2oe ispr. izd. (Reprint: Paris, 1970), p. 154.



anthropological conception, and secondly into the type of existentialism he defended.

Man's 'personality' was characterized as the junction of two worlds. It was 'the consciousness of belonging equally to the world of phenomena and to a God-like existence'.<sup>41</sup> The latter enabled man to be free and it contradicted the world of phenomena, the world of necessities. True 'personality' arose out of the transformation of instincts into a 'spiritual power' instead of by their suppression. Hence 'personality' was not defined as a product of 'natural evolution' but rather as a result of the Spirit's 'breakthrough', which corresponded to a 'breakthrough into the realm of liberty'.<sup>42</sup>

'Man's countenance is the most touching thing in the world'.<sup>43</sup> With these allegoric words Berdjaev summarizes the inner struggle to become what he called 'personality'.<sup>44</sup> The task of being a participant in the creation of a new individual world was thus not bound to the Father and not to the Son either, but to the Spirit. By embracing Spirit man created his proper 'personality'. Berdjaev called this process a 'myth' because it was not possible to talk about it rationally.<sup>45</sup> It called for 'myths' and 'symbols' for its description.<sup>46</sup> The decisive force in the social transformation was the type of personality described above. The true basis of life and its organizational forms were of a spiritual quality. The acknowledgment of this fact led to a change of focus for any revolution.<sup>47</sup> The 'personal revolution' was proclaimed as a way out of the crisis of modern times. No matter whether you looked Eastward or Westward, it was the same 'spiritual crisis'. The 'personal revolution' would be the outcome of man's efforts to elevate his spiritual values.<sup>48</sup> It would

<sup>41</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, *Opyt èskhatologičeskoj metafiziki (Tvorčestvo i ob'ektivacija)* (Paris, 1947), p. 282f. Cf. also, N.A. Berdjaev, *Der Sinn des Schaffens. Versuch einer Rechtfertigung des Menschen* (Tübingen, 1927), p. 55 and 79.

<sup>42</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, *Geist und Wirklichkeit* (Luzern, 1936), p. 11.

<sup>43</sup> *Von des Menschen Knechtschaft*, p. 41.

<sup>44</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, *Die menschliche Persönlichkeit und die überpersönlichen Werte* (Wien, 1937), p. 26f. Cf. also, *Geist*, p. 11.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. N.A. Berdjaev, *Das Ich und die Welt der Objekte. Versuch einer Philosophie der Einsamkeit und Gemeinschaft* (Darmstadt, 1951), p. 57.

<sup>46</sup> *Geist*, p. 38.

<sup>47</sup> *Mittelalter*, p. 109 and 186.

<sup>48</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, *Sud'ba čeloveka v sovremennom mire (K ponimaniju našej èpokhi)* (Paris, 1934), p. 81, and cf. *Geist*, p. 174f, also, *Von der Würde des Christentums und der Unwürde der Christen*, 4. Aufl. (Luzern, 1937), p. 80, and, *Christentum*, p. 82, plus, 'Reč' Berdjaeva' (Reči N.A. Berdjaeva, V.I. Il'ina, G.P. Fedotova, Prot. S. Bulgakova v otkrytom sobranii Religiozno-Filosofskoj Akademii) in: *Khristianstvo pered sovremennoj social'noj dejstvitel'nost'ju* (Paris, 1932), p. 8ff.

be a mistake to interpret what has been said as some religious form of enlightenment, derived for example from Kant's *sapere aude*. Berdjaev was convinced that all epochs up to his time had merely been a pre-creative phase and that the last one to come would manifest the 'anthropological mystery'. It would substitute 'creativity' for 'obedience'.<sup>49</sup>

In later years Berdjaev envisaged an 'eighth day of creation', which he formulated with the self-confidence of a prophet.<sup>50</sup> In Berdjaev's form of existentialism, 'existence' being bound to man's creative task to become 'personality' was thus reduced to 'existential time', whereas 'historical time' was a distortion.<sup>51</sup> The 'personal socialism' in 'existential time' was to break into the world as an 'eighth day of Creation'.<sup>52</sup> This day could be prepared for by 'prophets' both in and outside the church.<sup>53</sup> This 'catastrophic' breakthrough of a 'New Jerusalem' could be brought about by anybody and at any time with the creative help of the Spirit.<sup>54</sup>

Berdjaev's last works reflect his conviction that the modern world was in a state of crisis. The world was heading for total 'chaos', which was organized by nothing but technology.<sup>55</sup>

Man had become a 'slave' that had lost his 'soul'.<sup>56</sup> In his *Russian Idea* (1943) Berdjaev briefly discussed the 'German idea' and claimed it to be an idea of 'power' and 'might', whereas the idea of his native country was dedicated to 'community' and 'fraternity'. Thus, the gate to the 'new epoch' was likely to be opened in Russia, because its historical traditions offered a better foundation for the 'new Jerusalem'.<sup>57</sup>

### Conclusion

Socialism, considered as a Christian concept, cannot on any account be understood as a term which specifies any social or economic order. On the contrary, the golden times to come are not defined by a specific order at all, but they are deduced by a specific anthropology.

<sup>49</sup> *Sinn*, p. 108 and 305.

<sup>50</sup> *Sud'ba*, p. 49ff and 81f. Cf. also, *Der Mensch und die Technik* (Luzern, 1943), p. 35.

<sup>51</sup> *Von des Menschen*, p. 324ff. Cf. also, *Persönlichkeit*, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> See note 50 and cf., *Sinn*, p. 93ff and 108.

<sup>53</sup> N.A. Berdjaev, *Die Philosophie des freien Geistes. Problematik und Apologie des Christentums* (Tübingen, 1930), p. 410.

<sup>54</sup> *Sinn*, p. 315.

<sup>55</sup> *Sud'ba*, p. 81.

<sup>56</sup> *Sinn*, p. 311.

<sup>57</sup> *Die russische Idee. Grundprobleme des russischen Denkens im 19. Jahrhundert und zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts* (St. Augustin, 1983), p. 231.

Anti- and post-Marxian socialism as it was presented by Trubeckoj, Bulgakov and Berdjaev all deal, in one way or another, with the 'Russian Idea' as it was presented by Solov'ëv in Paris in 1888. Its main thrust was that Russia should evolve into a vanguard civilization renewing Christianity.<sup>58</sup> It makes little difference whether you call this vision 'Russian Idea' or 'socialism', because Trubeckoj's, Bulgakov's and Berdjaev's 'metaphysical', 'Christian' and 'personal socialism' implies a mystical ontological concept, a Christian perception of the world. The types of socialism discussed in this paper could be considered as belonging to one school or group, with each theorist adopting Solov'ëv's Christian ideas about right ('truth') and wrong ('lie') of Marxian socialism and developing them to fit into their concepts of *sobornost*' plus into their visions of an ideal Russian future linked to it. Socialism, turned into an ontological or metaphysical problem thus renews the question of how man should define himself and what window he may chose to look through to see and to interpret the world.

<sup>58</sup> Vladimir Sergeevič Solov'ëv, 'Die russische Idee', in: *Deutsche Gesamtausgabe* Bd. III, 2. Bd., pp. 27-91.