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Nikolai Yaponsky and the Russian Orthodox Mission to Japan during the Meiji Period: Encounters and Tensions between Russia, Japan and the West

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Abstract 1

This thesis offers a full account—the first in a Western language—of the activities of the Russian Orthodox missionary Nikolai Kasatkin in Japan in the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. In my study of this important page in the history of Christian missionary work, I draw on extensive resources—both archival and published—that Kasatkin left behind. His diaries provide the most sincere and detailed account of his work and have recently been published in Russian and Japanese, while most other sources are held in various archives in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and Tokyo. On the basis of these sources, I demonstrate that Kasatkin's work can be divided into three distinct periods.

The transitions between these periods are not strict but are by and large determined by the broader historical context. It is, therefore, important to contextualise Kasatkin's work within the tripod scheme of historical developments in Japan and Russia—which he knew well—and in the West, which he observed through interactions with other missionaries, correspondence, and newspaper reports. This thesis is structured in three main chapters that correspond to the three periods, with a fourth chapter that addresses the core issue of Nikolai's approach to the status of the Church, which remained unchanged throughout his life. The thesis forms a unique contribution to the history of Orthodox missionary work and Christian missiology in general for a number of reasons. In addition to the fact that the described encounter between Nikolai and Japan is different from most studies in the field, Nikolai was no simplistic evangeliser; he was a remarkable person with a sharp gift for observation who entrusted his soul to his diaries and provided an honest account of his life and work and the historical, political, and social events around him.

Abstract 2

This dissertation is a study of one of the most fascinating and significant pages in the history of Christian missionary work in general and Orthodox missionary work in particular: the activities of the Russian Orthodox missionary Nikolai (Ivan Dmitrievich Kasatkin) in Japan in the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. Having arrived in Japan alone to work as the priest of the consular church in Hakodate on the island of Hokkaido in 1861, with the exception of short breaks, Nikolai remained in Japan until his death in 1912 and during this time, he founded the Russian Spiritual Mission to Japan and left behind a Japanese Orthodox Church with 33,000 Japanese Orthodox Christians, 266 parishes, eight permanent and 175 temporary churches, and 40 Japanese clergymen. According to contemporaries, Nikolai was one of the most recognisable foreigners in Tokyo, with extensive connections in the upper echelons of society. Emperor Meiji himself sent a large wreath of flowers bearing the inscription 'A Royal Gift' to his funeral.

This important part of the history of Christian missionary work has been very poorly studied in the English-language literature and Western literature more generally. No book-length, English-language study of Nikolai's mission currently exists; there is only one, relatively little-known collection of articles, and several articles and chapters in collections that touch on his activities to one degree or another. In Russia and Japan, the mission has been studied somewhat better but even in these countries, the literature is insufficient and has significant shortcomings. In Russia, most research has been written either by clergymen of the Russian Orthodox Church, in which Nikolai has been canonised as equal-to-the-apostles, or by people associated with it and a result, this research is occasionally less objective in nature. Japanese works tend to be a simple presentation of the facts with insufficient supporting analyses.

Kasatkin's activities had already aroused interest in Russia during his lifetime and immediately after his death. Before 1917, at least one dissertation and several articles (both overviews and more in-depth pieces) had been written on the topic but subsequently, due to the atheist policies of the communist Soviet government, it became difficult to write about the matter and only a few articles appeared in religious publications, to which the academic community had limited access. A resurgence of interest in Nikolai's work began in 1979, when the Japanese researcher Nakamura Kennosuke discovered, in Leningrad archives, the diaries, which Kasatkin

kept them from 1870 until the end of his life, and set about studying and publishing them. Even though their existence had been known earlier, no one had engaged in their formal study. On the basis of this new information, Nakamura and several other Japanese and Russian researchers published a number of books and articles on Nikolai, the history of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan, and the Japanese Orthodox Church. The diaries were published in Russian first partially and then fully in five volumes and Kasatkin's activities continue to attract scholarly attention in both countries to this day. In Russia, a collection of his works in 10 volumes is being edited; so far, three volumes of his official and private correspondence have been published. The Japanese Orthodox Church of this period has also attracted scholarly attention in Ukraine, primarily at the Kiev Theological Academy, to which Nikolai sent many of his Japanese students.

Following on from this recent research, the present thesis will fill a significant lacuna in English-language studies of the mission and views of Kasatkin. This work offers a new and full study of the primary sources and other relevant data and employs new research methods to completely reinterpret the approach to his activities that is prevalent in the existing literature. The general characteristics of this approach can be summarised as follows:

1. Nikolai's activities are viewed as part of an exclusively Russo-Japanese cultural interaction outside the broader historical context and outside the context of the development of Christian missionary work in Asia.
2. Nikolai's world view is characterised as having been unchanging, whilst no attention is paid to its evolution throughout his life, as well as its possible influence on the political, economic, and social situation in both Russia and Japan.
3. Nikolai's attitude to pre-Christian Japanese teachings, which he supposedly always considered useful in preparing the Japanese for the adoption of Christianity, is presented as having remained unchanged. Some researchers even believe that he pursued the idea of producing a synthesis of these teachings with Orthodoxy.
4. It is thought that from the very outset, Kasatkin sought to create an autocephalous Japanese Orthodox Church, independent of the Russian Orthodox Church, and it is for this reason that he relied mainly on Japanese catechists and priests.

In this thesis, these assessments are subjected to the following revision:

1. Nikolai's work is considered in a broad historical context as part of the history of East Asia in general and Christian missionary work there in particular.

2. The evolution of Kasatkin's world view is analysed against the backdrop of political changes in Japan, Russia, and the world, such as in relation to the trilateral cultural interaction between Russia, Japan, and the West, and not just between Russia and Japan. This evolution is divided into three stages, separated by two fundamental shifts in Nikolai's thinking that occurred in the mid-1870s and at the end of the 19th century.
3. As part of the analysis of this evolution, it is shown that Kasatkin only evaluated pre-Christian Japanese teachings positively during the second stage; before that, he actively criticised them as completely contrary to Christianity and harmful to the perception of true Orthodox Christianity.
4. Through a study of Nikolai's diary entries and documents, it is demonstrated that he never strove to create a Japanese Orthodox Church independent of the Russian Church because doing so would have fundamentally contradicted Orthodox canon law. On occasion, however, he voiced such a possibility during the period of extreme deterioration in Russo-Japanese relations for tactical purposes, so as not to bring harm to Japanese believers. Furthermore, Kasatkin only used Japanese catechists and priests out of necessity, since he did not have access to a sufficient number of Russian Mission employees to perform such functions.

The core argument of this dissertation is that the activities and world view of Nikolai are an integral part of the history of Christianity in general and Christian missionary work in East Asia in particular and should be viewed in the context of the trilateral interactions between Russia, Japan, and the West at the turn of the 20th century. Moreover, his world view was not static or unchanging; it rather evolved as a result of transformations in this trilateral interaction. The argument formulated in this thesis is supported both by reinterpretations of the existing sources and literature and by analyses of new sources that had not previously been used in academic works, having only recently been published or having been kept in archives to this day. The sources have been subjected to a critical analysis; their narrative and statements by Nikolai have not been taken at face value but rather analysed in the context of other data. This supports the conclusion that a number of his public statements were tactical in nature, while others (particularly the notes he made in his private diaries) were an accurate reflection of his thoughts.

The dissertation is structured in the form of an introduction, four substantial chapters, and a conclusion. The first three chapters are devoted to an analysis of the three stages of the development of Nikolai's world view, its two fundamental shifts, and their origins, course, and consequences. The fourth and fifth chapters focus on separate general issues of his world view and activities that support the tripod framework of interaction and the main argument.

Chapter breakdown

<u>Introduction</u>

The introduction presents the overall argument and objectives of the work, provides an overview of the sources and the literature, explains the originality of the study, and formulates the argument of each chapter.

<u>Chapter One</u>: The sermon begins: Optimism and moderate Westernism (from the early 1860s to the mid-1870s)

This chapter focuses on the first phase of Nikolai's work. It starts when he arrives in Japan and continues until approximately the mid-1870s, when he moves to Tokyo and his missionary work begins to yield its first tangible results. This period is characterised by a hopeful attitude towards the prospects of Orthodoxy in Japan, based on the following ideas. During this period, Nikolai largely supported the 'Westernising' ideas disseminated in Russia about the superiority of Western civilisation—of which he considered Russia to be a part—compared to other global civilisations. As a Christian, Nikolai considered Christianity as a whole—of which Orthodoxy was a part—to be the highest achievement of this civilisation, and therefore the arrival of Western culture and all Christian denominations in pagan Japan was a positive phenomenon. Nikolai thought traditional Japanese religions to be primitive and to constrain social and spiritual progress, but he nevertheless assessed Japanese culture in general to be higher than those of other pagan societies as manifested by, for example, its level of literacy. It is precisely because of their highly developed nature, according to Nikolai, that he thought that Japanese people would be able to relatively quickly abandon their past teachings (Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism)—none of which satisfied their thirst for spirituality—and naturally accept Orthodoxy as the most perfect and profound form of Christianity: true Christianity.

<u>Chapter Two:</u> Successes in preaching and Japanese culture from the mid-1870s to the mid-1890s

This chapter focuses on the second period of Nikolai's work, which begins in the mid-1870s and ends in the mid-1890s. During this time, he continued to assess the prospects for Orthodoxy in Japan optimistically, but on a slightly different basis due to two factors. First, the

Meiji reforms had brought about the rapid development of Japan along Western lines, but this compressed development had not yet led to major spiritual changes. Second, after the ban on Christianity in Japan was lifted in 1873, Catholic and Protestant preachers with huge amounts of money and resources poured into the country, which turned such missionaries from Nikolai's allies in Christianisation into competitors. In light of this development, Nikolai changed his attitude towards traditional Japanese teachings, attempting to see allies in Japanese teachers and scholars. He began to voice flattering comments about them to show that such learning had prepared Japan for a geopolitical position independent of the West—an umbrella grouping that no longer encompassed Russia—and to assert that Japan did not aspire to what he considered to be Western materialism but rather to high spirituality—i.e. Orthodoxy, the religion in which this higher spirituality is best manifested. The triangular model employed for this analysis illuminates how the acute changes Nikolai had faced over the years interacted with his religiosity and directed the evolution of his outlook.

Chapter Three: The third period of Nikolai's missionary work, mid-1880s–1910s: The plight of Orthodoxy in Japan

This chapter focuses on the third and final period, which ran from the mid-1890s to the end of Nikolai's life and was marked by his growing pessimism due to a variety of factors. First, Nikolai saw that the Meiji reforms had caused Japan to move rapidly along the Western path of secularism and materialism. Second, Catholicism and Protestantism were clearly overshadowing spiritual Orthodox Christianity in Japan because—so Nikolai believed—of their enormous material resources, rather than their spirituality, thus turning Japan into a materialistic and not a spiritual force. During this period, Nikolai returned to his former criticisms of traditional Japanese teachings, finding in them prerequisites not for the adoption of Orthodoxy but rather for an inclination towards the materialistic absence of spirituality that characterised the Western world and purely pragmatic thinking. Third, Nikolai was pessimistic due to his perception that the Western materialist path of development had 'captured' not only Japan but the whole world, including Russia.

Nikolai thought that the Japan of the late-19th and early-20th centuries was moving in the wrong direction, which was to abandon moral objectives and to subordinate religion to secularism. He viewed the growing nationalism and secular materialism, which found expression in militarism, consumerism, and the idealisation of technological progress, as links in a single chain: A tendency towards the subordination of spiritual objectives to material and state interests. Nikolai considered that these trends were deepening in both Japan and Russia, which led him to believe that the global

victory of Orthodoxy that in his youth he had believed was imminent would not occur until some uncertain future time. For this reason, he began to display a less optimistic view of the prospects of the Japanese Orthodox Church, and particularly of its ability to gain independence in the foreseeable future.

Chapter Four: Nikolai's understanding of Church-state relations and the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church

This chapter focuses on Nikolai's concept of the Church's existence, mission, role in society, and relationship with the state. Differently to the concepts studied in the previous chapters, Nikolai's views on these matters remained constant throughout the three periods in question. They are analysed here in the context of Orthodox theology and canon law to show that Nikolai's ideas were both traditional and modern; they were based on the Orthodox model of a 'symphonic' relationship between Church and state, which has its roots in Byzantine theology. These ideas came about as part of a general discussion in Russian religious circles in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries about the role of the Holy Synod, its need for reform, and the prospects of the restoration of the position of the Patriarch. Nikolai believed that the Church should provide society with a spiritual foundation, acting in much the same way as it would towards an individual in its capacity as the basis for spiritual improvement, control over one's passions, and the struggle against vices. From this perspective, the Church is higher and greater than the state because it pursues heavenly goals, but it should not interfere directly in state affairs but rather confine itself to articulating spiritual and moral guidelines. This desire to help society is a non-essential, earthly task undertaken by the Church, but without the Church, society and individuals alike would perish due to a lack of animating spiritual goals. At the same time, the Church must not be subordinated to state goals or it would perish because state goals are often not aligned with or even contradict spiritual and moral objectives.

Nikolai's growing pessimism in the late 20th century and strict observance of Orthodox dogma influenced his views on the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church, which he thought should remain under the guidance of the Russian Church for the foreseeable future. This approach did not completely prevent Orthodoxy from becoming indigenous to Japan, but it did limit it significantly in comparison to, for example, various branches of Protestantism. It did become an important factor in preventing the Japanese Orthodox Church from completely transforming into a tool of Russian state policy, even though it shared the state's patriotic position during the Russo-Japanese War. This made it impossible for the Japanese elite to view Orthodoxy as an instrument

that could boost the Westernisation or elevation of the country, thereby leading to a decline in what had initially been significant interest in the Church.

Conclusion

This section contains the results and main outcomes of the study with regard to why previous studies have not touched on the evolution of Nikolai’s world view, and outlines possible directions for and areas of future research.

Introduction

This dissertation is a study of one of the most fascinating and significant subjects in the history of Christian missionary work in general and Orthodox missionary work in particular: The activities of the Russian Orthodox missionary Nikolai (Ivan Dmitrievich Kasatkin, now also known as Nikolai Yaponsky) in Japan in the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. Having arrived in Japan alone to work as the priest of the consular church in Hakodate on the island of Hokkaido in 1861, with the exception of short breaks, he remained in Japan until his death in 1912. During this time, he founded the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and left behind the Japanese Orthodox Church as it currently stands, with more than 33,000 Japanese Orthodox Christians, 266 parishes, eight permanent and 175 temporary churches, and 40 Japanese clergymen.[1] According to contemporaries, Nikolai was one of the most recognisable foreigners in Tokyo, with extensive connections in the upper echelons of society.[2] Emperor Meiji himself sent a large wreath of fresh flowers bearing the inscription ‘A Royal Gift’ to his funeral.[3]

Nikolai’s activities are usually considered to be an integral part of Russian-Japanese cultural interactions, but his historical role goes beyond simply introducing Russian culture to Japan. Nikolai was first and foremost an outstanding Christian missionary who achieved extraordinary success, despite facing many serious obstacles. To satisfactorily assess his role, it needs to be understood in the context of Christian missionary activity in East Asia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Nikolai was certainly one of the most successful missionaries of that time and after his ordination as a bishop in 1880, he became the highest-ranking and authoritative Russian Orthodox missionary serving abroad. Most Christian missionary activity that took place in that period was an integral part of the new stage of interaction between Western and Eastern civilisations in general, a stage that saw colonial powers struggle for influence in the non-Western world, and Nikolai’s mission was an outstanding example of this process.

Finally, Nikolai was an outstanding Orthodox thinker who made a significant contribution to missiology, ecclesiology, and several questions of Canon law (in particular issues concerning

[1] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 3 vols., vol. 2 (Moscow: Penaty i kniga, 2018), 487.
[2] A. A. Markova, *Svjatoj ravnoapostol'nyj Nikolaj Japonskij* (Moscow: Blagovest, 2014), p. 67.
[3] *Taiyō* 4 (1912); Japonskaja pechat' po povodu konchiny arhiepiskopa Nikolaja, in *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v vospominanijah sovremennikov*, in *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v vospominanijah sovremennikov*, ed. G. E. Besstremjannaja (Moscow: STSL, 2013), p. 26.

the relationship between society and state and the status of newly established churches). Nikolai was not a theologian in the literal sense of the word but in his diaries, and especially when criticising Catholic and Protestant doctrines, he often expressed opinions on a number of theological issues. A study of his diaries and letters shows that he was one of the most notable conservative Russian thinkers of his time. Finally, he was a unique—and perhaps the first—Russian expert on Japan.

In an article written in 1912 and dedicated to Nikolai's legacy, the famed Russian specialist on Japan Dmitry Pozdneev (1865–1937) suggested that every facet of Nikolai's work could 'provide subsequent researchers [with] material for entire volumes.' Pozdneev singled out several aspects of Nikolai's activities as worthy of future study including 'The story of the spread of Orthodoxy in Japan,' 'Orthodoxy's struggle with Buddhism and Shintoism,' 'The Japanese translation of the Bible,' 'The Japanese version of the Orthodox liturgy circle,' 'A Japanese Orthodox theological dictionary in relation to Buddhist and Shinto terminology,' 'The education of Orthodox Japanese,' and 'The role of Orthodox Japanese in bringing Russian theological, fictional, and historical literature to Japanese soil.'[4]

Almost none of these topics has as of yet been studied in depth. Of course, this study cannot even touch on—much less analyse—all the activities of this amazing and extremely productive individual, but it does thoroughly examine the important and little-studied question of the genesis and evolution of Nikolai's world view against the backdrop of societal changes in Japan, Russia, and the world. The characteristic feature of the methodology employed is its analysis of this evolution as a result of the three-way interaction between Japanese, Russian, and Western cultures.

Nikolai's work and thought has been very poorly studied in the English-language literature and Western literature more generally. No book-length, English-language study of Nikolai's Mission exists; there is only one, relatively little-known collection of articles, and several articles and chapters in collections that touch on Nikolai's activities to one degree or another. In Russia and Japan, the mission has been studied somewhat better, but even in these countries the literature is insufficient and has significant shortcomings. In Russia, most research has been written either by clergymen of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), which has canonised Kasatkin as equal-to-the-apostles, or people associated with the Church and as a result, it is occasionally less objective in nature. Japanese works tend to be a simple presentation of the facts with insufficient analysis.

Nikolai's activities aroused interest in Russia both during his lifetime and immediately after his death. By 1917, at least one dissertation and several articles and memoirs (both overviews

[4] D. M. Pozdneev, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaja Japonskij (Vospominanija i harakteristika)," in *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v vospominanijah sovremennikov*, ed. G. E. Besstremjannaja (Moscow: Sergiyev Posad: Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius, 2012), p. 51.

and more in-depth pieces) had been written on the topic. However, due to the atheist policies of the communist Soviet government, it subsequently became difficult to write about this matter and relatively few articles appeared in religious publications, to which the academic community had limited access. There was a resurgence of interest in Nikolai's work in 1979 after the Japanese researcher Nakamura Kennosuke discovered in Leningrad archives the diaries the missionary kept from 1870 until the end of his life, and set about studying and publishing them. Although the scholarly community had known of their existence, no one had embarked on their systematic study. On the basis of the new information uncovered, Nakamura and some other Japanese and Russian researchers published a number of books and articles on Nikolai, the history of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan, and the Japanese Orthodox Church.[5] The diaries were published in Russian first partially and then fully in five volumes[6] and Nikolai's activities continue to attract scholarly attention in both countries to this day. In Russia, a collection of his works in 10 volumes is currently being edited; so far, three volumes of his official and private correspondence have been published.[7] There have also been studies of the Japanese Orthodox Church during this period, primarily by scholars at the Kiev Theological Academy, to which Nikolai sent many of his Japanese students.[8]

Following on from this research, the present thesis fills a significant lacuna in English-language studies of the mission and views of Nikolai. Based on a new and full study of the primary sources and other relevant data and by employing new research methods, this work completely reinterprets the approach to his activities that is prevalent in the existing literature. The general characteristics of this approach can be summarised as follows:

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[5] Mitsuo Naganawa, *Nikoraidō ibun* (Yokohama: Seibunsha, 2007); Mitsuo Naganawa, *Nikoraidō no hitobito: nihon kindaishi no naka no roshia seikyōkai*, PQ Books (Tokyo: Gendai Kikakushitsu, 1989); Kennosuke Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to Meiji Nihon* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996); Kennosuke Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to sono jidai* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2011); Kennosuke Nakamura, *Nikorai: kachi ga aru no wa, ta o awaremu kokoro dake da* (Kyōto-shi Mineruva Shobō, 2013). R. A. Savchuk, *Problemy vzaimootnoshenij cerkvi i obshhestva rubezha XIX–XX vekov v osmyslenii ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo: monografija* (Moscow: RUSAJNS, 2018).

[6] Nakamura, K., Nakamura, J., Jasui, R., Naganava, M., sostav., Dnevniki svjatogo Nikolaja Japonskogo, Sapporo: Izd-vo Hokkajdskogo Universiteta, 1994; *Dnevniki Svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* [Diaries of Saint Nikolai of Japan]. Edited by Kennosuke Nakamura. 5 vols, Vol. 2. St. Petersburg: Giperion, 2004; Nakamura, K., Senkyōshi Nikorai no Zennikki Zen Kyū Kan, Kyōbunkan, 2007.

[7] *Sobranie Trudov Ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo* [Collection of Works of Nikolai of Japan, Equal-to-the-Apostols]. 3 vols., Moscow: Penaty i kniga, Vol. 1–2, 2018; Vol. 3, 2019.

[8] Uhtomskiĭ, Andreĭ. "Daniil Konisi — Japonskiĭ Student v Kievskoĭ Duhovnoĭ Akademii." *Proceedings of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 22 (2015): 200–18; Kapranov, S. V. "Japons'ki Intelektuali – Vipuskniki Kiïvs'koï duhovnoï akademiï: Ivan Kawamoto-Senuma and Mark Saikaishi. (Ending)." *Shìdnijsvìt* 1 (2019): 5–17; "Japons'ki Intelektuali – Vipuskniki Kiïvs'koï duhovnoï akademiï: Simeon Mii, Daniïl Konisi, Kliment Nameda." *Shìdnijsvìt* 4 (2018): 24–42; "Vipusknik Kiïvs'koï Duhovnoïakademiï Daniïl Konisi Jak Interpretator Kitajs'koï Filosofs'koï Dumki." *Magisterium* 68, Kul'turologija (2017).

1. Nikolai's activities are viewed as part of an exclusively Russo-Japanese cultural interaction outside the broader historical context or the context of the development of Christian missionary work in Asia.
2. Nikolai's world view is characterised as having remained unchanged and no attention has been paid to its evolution throughout his life, or the possible influence of the political, economic, and social situations in Russia and Japan.
3. Nikolai's attitude to pre-Christian Japanese teachings which—according to the literature—he considered useful to prepare Japanese people for the adoption of Christianity is presented as unchanging. Some researchers have even claimed that he pursued the idea of producing a synthesis of these teachings with Orthodoxy.
4. It is widely thought that from the outset of his missionary work, Nikolai sought to create an autocephalous Japanese Orthodox Church independent of the ROC, and that this is the reason why he relied heavily on Japanese catechists and priests.

These assessments are subjected to the following revisions in this paper:

1. Nikolai's work is considered in the broad historical context as part of the history of East Asia and the particular context of Christian missionary work in that region.
2. The evolution of Nikolai's world view is analysed against the backdrop of political changes in Japan, Russia, and the world—i.e. as a result of the trilateral cultural interaction between Russia, Japan, and the West, rather than just between Russia and Japan. This evolution is divided into three stages, separated by two fundamental shifts in Nikolai's thinking that occurred in the mid-1870s and at the end of the 19th century, respectively.
3. In the analysis of these stages of evolution, it is shown that Nikolai only evaluated pre-Christian Japanese teachings positively during the second stage; before, he actively criticised them as completely contrary to Christianity and later as harmful to the perception of true Orthodox Christianity.
4. Through an examination of Nikolai's diary entries and documents, it is demonstrated that he never strove to create a Japanese Orthodox Church independent of the Russian Church because doing so would have fundamentally contradicted Orthodox canon law. On occasion, however, he did give voice to such thoughts during the period of extreme deterioration in Russo-Japanese relations for tactical purposes, so as not to bring harm to Japanese believers. Furthermore, Nikolai used Japanese catechists and priests out of

necessity, since he did not have a sufficient number of Russian mission employees who could perform similar functions.

The core argument of this dissertation is that Nikolai's activities and world view form an integral part of the history of Christianity in general and Christian missionary work in East Asia in particular and should be viewed in the context of the trilateral interaction between Russia, Japan, and the West at the turn of the 20th century. Moreover, his world view was not static or unchanging but rather evolved as a result of transformations in this trilateral interaction. The formulated argument is proven by both reinterpreting the existing sources and literature and by analysing new sources that have not previously been used in academic works because they were only recently published or are still only to be found in archives. These sources have been subjected to a critical analysis in which their narratives and Nikolai's own statements have not been taken at face value but rather analysed in the context of other data. This supports the conclusion that a number of his statements were tactical in nature, while others (and particularly the notes he made in his private diaries) can be considered an accurate reflection of this thought.

The dissertation is structured in the form of an introduction, four subsequent chapters, and a conclusion. The first three chapters are devoted to an analysis of the three stages in the development of Nikolai's world view and the two fundamental shifts, their origins, course, and consequences. The fourth chapter focuses on the separate, general issue of his world outlook, particularly his concept of state-church relations and the activities that support the tripod framework of interaction and the main argument.

The Introduction presents the argument and objectives of the work, provides an overview of sources and literature, explains the originality of the study, and formulates the argument of each chapter.

Chapter One focuses on the first phase of Nikolai's work. It starts at the time of Nikolai's arrival in Japan and continues until the mid-1870s, when he moved to Tokyo and his missionary work began to yield its first tangible results. It is characterised by a hopeful attitude towards the prospects of Orthodoxy in Japan, based on the following ideas. During this period, Nikolai on the whole supported the 'Westernising' ideas disseminated in Russia about the superiority of Western civilisation—of which he considered Russia to be a part—over others. For Nikolai, as a Christian, Christianity as a whole—of which Orthodoxy was a part—was the highest achievement of this civilisation, and he considered the arrival of Western culture and any Christian denominations in pagan Japan to be a positive development. Nikolai deemed traditional Japanese religions to be primitive and to constrain social and spiritual progress, but at the same time, he assessed Japanese culture in general as superior to other pagan societies as manifested by, for example, its level of literacy. It was precisely because of their highly developed nature, Nikolai believed, that the

Japanese would relatively quickly abandon their past teachings (Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism)—none of which satisfied their thirst for spirituality—and naturally accept Orthodoxy as the most perfect and profound form of Christianity: true Christianity.

Chapter Two analyses the second period of Nikolai's work, which runs from the mid-1870s to the mid-1890s. During this time, he continued to assess the prospects for Orthodoxy in Japan optimistically, but on a slightly different basis due to two factors. First, the Meiji reforms had brought about the rapid development of Japan along Western lines, but this compressed development had not yet led to major spiritual changes. Second, after the ban on Christianity in Japan was lifted in 1873, Catholic and Protestant preachers with access to huge amounts of money and resources poured into the country, which turned them from Nikolai's allies in Christianisation into competitors and as a result, Nikolai changed his attitude to traditional Japanese teachings as he looked to form new alliances. In this period, Nikolai discussed traditional Japanese learning in the most flattering terms as he sought to show that it had prepared Japan for a position independent of the West, of which Russia was no longer considered a part, and that Japan strove not for what he considered to be Western materialism but rather for high spirituality—i.e. for Orthodoxy, in which this higher spirituality is manifested. The triangular model employed for this analysis illuminates how the acute changes in Nikolai's thought over the years interacted with his religiosity and directed the evolution of his outlook.

Chapter Three discusses the third and final period, which runs from the mid-1890s to the end of Nikolai's life and is marked by a growing pessimism that he experienced due to a variety of factors. First, he saw that the Meiji reforms had caused Japan to move rapidly along the Western path towards secularism and materialism. Second, Catholicism and Protestantism had clearly overshadowed spiritual Orthodox Christianity in Japan as a result of—according to Nikolai—the enormous material resources to which they had access, rather than due to their spiritual nature, thus turning Japan into a materialistic rather than a spiritual force. During this period, Nikolai returned to his previous criticisms of traditional Japanese learning, finding in it the prerequisites not for the adoption of Orthodoxy but rather an inclination towards the materialistic absence of spirituality and purely pragmatic thinking that characterised the Western world. Third, Nikolai was pessimistic because he thought that the Western materialist path of development had 'captured' not only Japan but indeed the whole world, including Russia.

Nikolai saw Japan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as moving in the wrong direction; that is, abandoning moral objectives and subordinating religion to secularism. He viewed the growing nationalism and secular materialism that found expression in Japan in militarism, consumerism, and the idealisation of technological progress as links in a single chain: a tendency towards the subordination of spiritual objectives to material and state interests. Nikolai's growing

belief that these trends were deepening in both Japan and Russia led him to believe that the worldwide victory of Orthodoxy that in his youth he had believed was imminent would not occur until some uncertain future time. For this reason, he began to display a less optimistic view of the prospects for the Japanese Orthodox Church and particularly of its ability to gain independence in the foreseeable future.

Chapter Four focuses on Nikolai's concept of the Church's existence, mission, role in society, and relationship with the state. Unlike the concepts studied in the previous chapters, his views on these matters remained constant throughout the three periods and they are analysed in the context of Orthodox theology and canon law to show that they were both traditional and modern and based on the Orthodox model of a 'symphonic' relationship between Church and state, which has its roots in Byzantine theology. This came as part of a general discussion taking place in Russian religious circles in the second half of the 19th and early 20th century about the role of the Holy Synod and the need for its reform, as well as the prospects for the restoration of the position of the Patriarch. Nikolai believed that the Church should act in much the same way as it did towards individuals: It should offer society a spiritual foundation by providing a basis for spiritual improvement, control over the passions, and the struggle against vices. The Church is higher and greater than the state, according to this perspective, because it pursues heavenly goals, but should not interfere directly in state affairs but rather restrict itself to articulating spiritual and moral guidelines. Helping society was deemed to be a non-essential, earthly task of the Church but without the Church, society and individuals alike would perish for a lack of animating spiritual goals. At the same time, the Church should not be subordinated to state goals or it would perish because state goals are often not aligned with and sometimes even contradict spiritual and moral objectives.

Nikolai's growing pessimism in the late 20th century and strict observance of Orthodox dogma influenced his view of the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church, which he thought should remain under the guidance of the Russian Church for the foreseeable future. This approach did not completely prevent Orthodoxy from becoming indigenous to Japan but did limit it significantly in comparison to, for example, the various branches of Protestantism. It also became an important factor in preventing the Japanese Orthodox Church from completely transforming into a tool of state policy, even though it shared the state's patriotic position during the Russo-Japanese War. This made it impossible for the Japanese elite to view Orthodoxy as an instrument for the Westernisation or elevation of the country, thereby leading to a decline in what had initially been significant interest in the Church.

The conclusion details the results and main outcomes of this study with regard to why previous studies have not touched on the evolution of Nikolai's world view and outlines possible directions and areas of future research.

This study is the first comprehensive analysis of the Russian Orthodox mission to Japan in English or any other Western language and its very existence can be considered a major contribution to the scholarship because discussions of this matter are virtually absent from the English-language history of missiology. Furthermore, Nikolai is practically unknown in the West, and this thesis brings his fascinating personality and writings to public attention.

Nikolai is the lens through which the thesis considers the history of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan. His attitudes change as the world around him changes, and his work can be best understood in the context of a triangular relationship between Japan, Russia, and the West. This thesis takes account of an extensive historical context in order to show how the relationships between the various actors change throughout Nikolai's life: He increasingly comes to see Russia as outside the West, while he views Japan as moving closer to Western-style modernisation as the West embraces 'materialism'.

Previous academic discourse on this subject has not taken account of this useful division of Nikolai's work into three periods. Scholars who sympathise with the achievements of the Russian Mission to Japan (such as Eleonora Sablina) have concentrated on Nikolai's relative success, quoting the relevant excerpts from his diaries and articles,[9] while those who have noted the pessimistic undertones in his writings have attributed them to temporary periods of distress. Nevertheless, the major changes that can be observed in his attitudes have for the most part gone unnoticed. Even the more detailed studies of Nikolai's work produced by Mitsuo Naganawa, Nakamura, Sablina, and Ruslan Savchuk[10] do not discuss the evolution of his views.

This thesis represents a significant contribution to research into Orthodox missions, Orthodox thought in the second half of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, the global history of Christianity, and Russo-Japanese cultural and religious interactions through its investigation of the central protagonist in a unique missionary project and by tracing the various changes and developments in his perspective over several decades.

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[9] Ėleonora B. Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai* [150 Years of Orthodoxy in Japan. History of the Japanese Orthodox Church and its Founder Saint Nikolai], Institut stran Azii i Afriki (Moscow: AIRO 21, Dmitry Bulavin, 2006).

[10] Mitsuo Naganawa, *Nikoraidō ibun* (Yokohama: Seibunsha, 2007); Mitsuo Naganawa, *Nikoraidō no hitobito: nihon kindaishi no naka no roshia seikyōkai*, PQ Books (Tokyo: Gendai Kikakushitsu, 1989); Kennosuke Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to Meiji Nihon* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996); Kennosuke Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to sono jidai* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2011); Kennosuke Nakamura, *Nikorai: kachi ga aru no wa, ta o awaremu kokoro dake da* (Kyōto-shi Mineruva Shobō, 2013). R. A. Savchuk, *Problemy vzaimootnoshenij cerkvi i obshhestva rubezha XIX–XX vekov v osmyslenii ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo: monografija* (Moscow: RUSAJNS, 2018).

Nikolai's mission in the context of 19th-century Christian missionary activity in East Asia

The mid-19th century marked the start of a new phase of Christian missionary activity in East Asia. Although Catholic missionaries had been to Japan, Korea, and China much earlier, they had faced fundamentally different conditions. At first, they went to these countries at their own risk, suffered persecution, and then witnessed all three countries ban Catholicism at the beginning of the 17th century. In the face of threats from the Western powers, however, that ban was lifted by the second half of the 19th century. In China, this came about as a result of the Qing Dynasty having suffered a number of military defeats and therefore agreeing to sign the Treaty of Tientsin (Tianjin) with the major powers (Russia, the US, the UK, and France) in 1858. Similarly and in the same year, Japan signed the Ansei Treaties with the same states plus the Netherlands under pressure from their fleets. Korea was 'opened' to foreigners in 1876 by a newly strengthened Japan. Although these treaties with the major powers were concluded primarily to permit trade, representatives of the Western powers inserted in each a provision for the freedom to preach Christianity. Initially, this applied only to their own subjects but after a time, to local residents as well. In this new phase, missionaries enjoyed the support not only of religious organisations of Europe and the United States but also of powerful Western states that saw Christianity as a means of bringing 'pagans' into the 'advanced' Western civilisation and increasing their own influence. Christianity arrived in Asia as an integral part of Western civilisation and gained popularity among some local elites who saw it as a necessary part of the overall effort to modernise their societies according to the Western model.

The ROC was an active participant in this process. Although it had long conducted domestic missionary activity in lands that Russia had recently acquired, it was far less active abroad. The earliest types of missionary activity included so-called 'monastic colonisation' (in which monasteries were founded during the time of the Mongol conquest), the enlightenment of the Perm region in the 14th century, and the mission to the Golden Horde in the 13th to 15th centuries. The most important subsequent efforts included missionary activity in the Volga region and Siberia as well as the establishment of official missions in Altai, Kamchatka, Russian America, China, Japan, Korea, and Urmia (Iran).

In the 19th century, the ROC officially divided its missionary work between domestic and foreign activity. The external missionary work focused on *inovertsy* (gentiles)—that is, non-Christians, whether they lived in Russia or abroad—whereas internal activity tried to return Old Believers and members of Christian sects to the fold of Orthodoxy. The internal mission was closely linked to the history of the formation of the Russian state and, in particular, to the history

of colonisation and the spread of monastic life in Russia. Special-purpose missionary work—sending special individuals of the Church to various outlying areas of Russia inhabited by non-Orthodox peoples with the express purpose of converting them to Christianity—were the result of either general activities conducted by the Church or the pious zeal of individuals. Such domestic missions were established in the Kodiak region (on Kodiak Island near Alaska, then part of Russian America), Altai, Kirghizia, Irkutsk, the Trans-Baikal region, Kamchatka, Obdorsk, Surgut, the Yenisei area, Yakutsk, and others. Domestic missionary activity consisted of establishing and maintaining mission schools based on the system of education in place for the non-Russian population.[11]

Most missionary activity was organised by Church brotherhoods and other Church societies. However, these activities were carried out in close coordination with the state, which also provided assistance including material support. This is entirely logical, given that the reforms implemented by Peter the Great had made the Church part of the Russian state, at least administratively. The supreme organ of church administration, the Most Holy Governing Synod, formed part of the government and developed the rules, regulations, and charters of missionary organisations, conducted national and local missionary congresses, and issued all manner of instructions concerning various forms of missionary work such as preaching in church, holding exhortatory conversations, exposing the 'mistaken beliefs' of sects, and organising schools and libraries.[12]

Initially, foreign missions were established to provide spiritual support for Russian subjects living abroad, usually the employees of diplomatic missions. Sometimes, however, as happened in the US, China, and Japan, the missions grew to become such major undertakings that foreign dioceses were established. The Holy Synod and Ministry of Foreign Affairs typically managed them jointly. According to Foreign Ministry staffing records, by the end of the 19th century, there were missions in operation at the Russian embassies in Berlin, Vienna, Istanbul, London, Paris, Rome, Tokyo, and Madrid. A total of 31 priests served at those missions and a sum of 130,000 rubles was allocated for their support. Most were under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg. There were various methods for appointing priests and clergymen: In parish churches, they were appointed directly by the Metropolitan; in embassy churches under the jurisdiction of the Russian state, they were named on the recommendation of the Foreign Ministry; and in private

[11] A. D. Efimov, *Ocherki po istorii missionerstva Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi* (Moscow: PSTGU, 2007).

[12] E. I. Kochetkova, "Missionerskaja dejatel'nost' russkoj pravoslavnoj cerkvi vo vtoroj polovine XIX - nachale XX vv," *Izvestija Tul'skogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Gumanitarnye nauki*, no. 2 (2010); N. A. Smirnov, "Missionerskaja dejatel'nost' Cerkvi (vtoraja polovina XIX v. — 1917 g.)," in *Russkoe pravoslavie: vehi istorii*, ed. A. I. Klibanov (Moscow: Politizdat, 1989), pp. 438–39.

churches, they were appointed at the request of the owner.[13] Special status was granted to the Missions in the US and Japan, where independent dioceses were formed, and to the Mission in Beijing, which was established in the early 18th century and essentially fulfilled the function of a diplomatic mission until 1861. It was also granted to the mission in Jerusalem, which served a representative function for the Jerusalem Orthodox Church while simultaneously supporting pilgrims to the Holy Land.

The decision to send the young priest Nikolai Kasatkin to the Russian Consulate in Hakodate in 1861, and even to establish a Mission in Japan in 1870, were ordinary steps taken by a Church leadership that wanted primarily to provide spiritual support to Consulate staff and secondarily to spread the faith among interested Japanese, should the opportunity arise. The fact that the Mission expanded and became an overseas diocese in 1906 was a unique occurrence and is unquestionably attributable solely to the personal efforts of Nikolai.

Despite the fact that Russian missionaries had been sent abroad for many years, practically no discussion took place in tsarist Russia of the theoretical and methodological issues of that work. Of course, the memoirs, advice, and instructions of famous missionaries and some Church commentators were published, but there were no manuals on missionary work available. Even after centuries of such efforts, the ROC had not developed a theory or methodology of missionary work, and no systematic study of the history of missionary activity had been undertaken. Interestingly, until the 1990s, the only volume wholly devoted to Russian missionary work was a small booklet of 91 pages.[14] It was primarily the missionaries themselves who wrote about the issues associated with missionary work and particularly attitudes to foreign cultures. They shared their experiences in notes, counsels, and recollections that were then used by those who followed in their path. Periodicals also contained discussions of issues pertaining to missionary work.

There were two major trends in the way Orthodoxy interacted with the cultures of peoples who had converted. Advocates of the first treated the culture of *inorodtsy* (primarily minority peoples in the eastern part of Russia at that time) as extremely undeveloped and the people themselves as ‘savages.’ The mission’s objective was to completely eradicate these backward cultures and assimilate the new converts, while the transition to Orthodoxy was often considered to be a part of the overall process of Russification because Orthodoxy was itself seen as part of ‘Russianness.’ Although such sentiments were generally characteristic of non-Church writers,

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[13] L. S. Chernjavskaja, "Zarubezhnye russkie pravoslavnye missii XIX veka," *Pravoslavie i sovremennost'*. Retrieved from: https://eparhia-saratov.ru/Articles/article_old_4970.

[14] E. K. Smirnov, *Ocherk istoricheskogo razvitija i sovremennogo sostojanija russkoj pravoslavnoj missii* (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naja tip., 1904).

some priests espoused them as well. Archbishop Veniamin (Blagonravov, 1825–1892) of Irkutsk, the patron of the Japanese Mission, claimed that:

> only that one who is Orthodox is called Russian … Orthodoxy makes everyone Russian, and all of them [newly baptised non-Russians] would consider it an insult if they were called non-Russian after accepting Orthodoxy. Thus in relation to non-Christians, Orthodoxy must fight not only with an alien faith but also with an alien ethnicity with manners, habits, and the whole lifestyle of non-Russians to convince them of the superiority of the Russian way of life, so that they become Russian not only in faith but also in ethnicity. In their view, this change is a condition without which it is impossible to be a true Christian.[15]

The second major trend was made up of those who advocated respecting the culture of other peoples, learning their languages and customs, and preaching in a form accessible to them, which was no less influential than the first. The most prominent member of this school of thought was Innokenty (Veniaminov, 1797–1879), known as Saint Innocent of Alaska, who essentially became a mentor to Nikolai. Himself an active missionary, Innokenty had been sent to the Aleutian Islands (then a possession of Russia) where he preached among the Aleuts and other indigenous peoples until 1838. In 1840, he became the Bishop of Kamchatka, Kuril, and the Aleutian Islands in the newly created Kamchatka Diocese with its centre in Novo-Arkhangelsk and resumed preaching among the peoples of these territories (the Aleuts, Yakuts, Tunguses [Evenks], Chukchi, Kamchadals, Koryaks, and others).

Innokenty (who had been called Ioann before he became a monk) learned the Aleutian language, created an Aleutian alphabet based on Cyrillic, and formulated its basic grammar. He also translated a number of holy texts into Aleutian and wrote or translated his own sermons and other catechetical works in the language. His main catechistic work, 'Indication of the Pathway into the Kingdom of Heaven' (1833), was initially written in the Aleutian language and consisted of catechetical conversations with the Aleuts. It was subsequently translated into Russian (in which it went through more than 50 editions), Yakut, Altaic, Shor, Mongolian, and other languages and became one of the best manuals for Orthodox missionaries.[16] Innokenty also conducted geographical, ethnographic, and linguistic research and authored a number of scholarly works about local populations, languages, and customs that became widely known.

His work 'Instructions to the priest appointed to convert gentiles and guide the converts to the Christian faith' is of particular interest for this study. Written in 1840, approved by the Synod

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[15] As quoted in: L. N. Harchenko, *Missionerskaja dejatel'nost' pravoslavnoj cerkvi v Sibiri (vtoraja polovina XIX v. — fevral' 1917 g.)*. (St. Petersburg: Nestor, 2004), p. 36.

[16] Ioann Venijaminov, *Ukazanie puti v carstvie nebesnoe. Pouchenie* (Moscow: Sinodal'naja tipografija, 1899).

the following year, and intended primarily for Russian missionaries in North America, for many years the 'Instructions' remained the main official methodological guide for several generations of missionaries, and naturally, Nikolai also studied it. In the booklet, for which Innokenty drew from his own experiences, the author urged his readers not to show obvious contempt for the way of life of the 'savages' so as not to offend or irritate them and to learn 'the faith, rites, customs, inclinations and whole way of life of your parishioners, especially to more fully and readily influence them.' He also recognised that 'giving credit to their good customs' was essential to the success of the preaching work. As for his attitude towards the Russian government, although he recognised the need to emphasise its superiority and unselfish concern for all the peoples of Russia, Innokenty also demanded that missionaries not state they were sent by the government and not present themselves as someone in authority but rather 'as a simple wanderer desiring the true well-being of his neighbour…'[17]

Innokenty knew very well what he was talking about when he called for missionaries to learn the language of their new parishioners because he himself had often needed to adapt the sacred texts to the local culture. For example, he learned that Aleuts had no understanding of bread, and so he changed the text of the Lord's Prayer, replacing the word 'bread' with 'fish' so that it read: 'Give us this day our daily fish.'[18] This was an outstanding example of the indigenisation of a sacred text without any loss of meaning.

Innokenty's missionary activities in Alaska have received significant attention in the English-language literature because in 1867, Russia sold Alaska to the US. Many of the descendants of his disciples among the indigenous population have retained their Orthodox faith until the present day and have attracted the interest of not only historians of religion but also ethnographers. Generally, the reception of Orthodox Christianity among the indigenous population of Alaska is seen as an example of a successful indigenisation of Orthodoxy that became an integral part of the local culture. In his description of Innokenty's tradition, Tim Noble has pointed out that missionaries like him:

> …translated the faith and practice of the Russian Orthodox Church into the languages and cultures of the peoples to whom they ministered, whilst these peoples in turn absorbed and, in so doing, indigenised and inculturated what they heard into their own experience, history, and identity. In this way the traditions merged so that

[17] Innokentij Veniaminov, "Nastavlenija svjashhenniku, naznachaemomu dlja obrashhenija inovernyh i rukovodstvovanija obrashhennyh v hristianskuju veru," ed. Ivan Barsukov, *Tvorenija Inonokentija Mitropolita Moskovskogo* (Moscow: Sinodal'naja tipografija, 1886). Retrieved from: https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Innokentij_Moskovskij/nastavlenija-svjashhenniku-naznachaemomu-dlja-obrashhenija-inovernykh/2. pp. 250-59.

[18] G. E. Besstremjannaja, *Hristianstvo i biblija v Japonii* 1 (Moscow: OVCS MP, 2006), p. 183.

> there could be genuine recognition of the presence of the one tradition that united the cultures and the histories.[19]

Noble adds that the Russian missionary:

> …adopted the language of his audience, both linguistically and experientially. The story he told was one that was couched in an accessible language. It spoke of a longing for happiness, as well as of the experience of suffering and disease and problems of depression and anxiety and the irruption of violence. Innocent presented another way, not subjugation to the Russians, but obedience to God, and despite some temptations, the two were never simply equated, in theory or practice. The fruits of this approach are seen in the way in which Orthodox Christianity has become a key part of the self-identity of the peoples of the region. Christianity is no longer part of a foreign history but their history, and the God of Innocent is now their God, the one God of all.[20]

Students of the Alaskan case often suggest that 'theologically, Orthodoxy is in a strong position to indigenise, however much it has struggled with the idea practically'[21] and that it '[is] much more susceptible to native reinterpretation and indigenisation than the more cerebral Presbyterianism.'[22] Several reasons have been cited for this: The Orthodox emphasis on ritual, the use of sacred objects that fit local spiritual traditions, its greater use of the native language to make it clear that missionaries were not the imposition of a foreign power, and the fact that it allows local people to be involved in the work of the Church. Another factor mentioned is the very strong Orthodox theology of creation,[23] which allows it to engage much more positively with the world than some Western theological approaches, as well as that fact that Innokenty did not uncritically affirm the ideas of modern society and progress, as liberal Protestants did.[24]

Nikolai's writings and missionary work show that he constantly reflected on this principle and generally worked in Innokenty's tradition.[25] In Japan, however, he encountered a very different society. Japan was a big and independent country with a strong religious and philosophical tradition of its own and a long experience of indigenising other foreign religions and

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[19] Tim Noble, "'The Pathway into the Kingdom of Heaven': The Indigenization of Russian Orthodox Tradition in Alaska." *Mission Studies* 32, no. 1 (2015), p.43.

[20] Ibid., p. 44.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Sergei Kan, "Shamanism and Christianity: Modern-Day Tlingit Elders Look at the Past," *Ethnohistory* 38, no. 4 (1991): p. 368. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.2307/482478.

[23] Michael Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska: A Theology of Mission* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992), pp. 59–61.

[24] Noble, "The Pathway into the Kingdom of Heaven," p. 39.

[25] Dimitry Pospielovsky, *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia* (NewYork: St Vladimir's Press, 1998), pp. 166–70.

social concepts such as Buddhism and Confucianism. This put new and unexpected limits on Nikolai's wish to convert the entire nation to Orthodoxy, although the case of Alaska shows that this goal was not absolutely unsubstantiated. This task, however, was much more difficult and this study shows how Nikolai tried to fulfil it and how he reflected on his experience.

Nikolai first met Bishop Innokenty in the winter of 1860 in Nikolayevsk-on-Amur, where he spent the winter waiting for a ship to Hakodate. In his diary entry of August 3(16), 1901,[26] Nikolai wrote that Innokenty often invited him to his home on Sunday evenings where he gave instructions that—judging from the numerous references to them in his diaries—Nikolai remembered well.[27] Innokenty later travelled to Japan when Nikolai was there and, after becoming Metropolitan of Moscow in 1868, looked after the Japanese Mission and provided it with every possible assistance.

Nikolai was the first Orthodox theorist on how to convert the people of a large, independent country to Christianity. This was made possible by the fact that the Japanese Mission was unique in a number of ways. First, in contrast to most other missions, in Japan Orthodoxy encountered potential parishioners who were subjects of a country that would never become a part of Russia, meaning that the might of the Russian state and its 'unselfish concern' would play a very indirect role. Second, Japan was home to an ancient and highly developed culture. From the point of view of Orthodox priests, the Japanese were pagans, and yet it was difficult to classify them as 'savages.' In this sense, the Japanese Mission bore a similarity only to that in China, which for most of its existence had focused on diplomatic activity and the provision of spiritual support to Russians living in China and their offspring, and not on baptising the Chinese.

By addressing and understanding these problems, Nikolai became the ROC's first theorist on the indigenisation of Christianity. He and his followers devoted many pages of their works to the question of how Orthodoxy was perceived in Japan, the need to interact with the country's culture and traditional religions, and the role the latter played in preparing the people to accept Orthodoxy.

[26] The Russian Empire officially used the Julian Calendar. The Gregorian Calendar was introduced in Russia on January 24, 1918 by the Bolshevik government. In this work, in some cases both dates are used (the Julian date that Nikolai actually used in his diary and the Gregorian date, which is used after 1918 in the following form: Julian date/ Gregorian date.)

[27] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* ed. Kennosuke Nakamura, 5 vols., vol. 4 (1899–1904) (St. Petersburg: Giperion, 2004), p. 502.

Missionary work and indigenisation

One issue this study examines is Nikolai's approach to the possibility of indigenising Orthodoxy. This was of particular concern because Japanese culture was much more developed than those of most other peoples that Russian missionaries had encountered. The theological literature of the mid-20th century in general and that which focused on the theory and practice of Christian missionary activity in particular actively debated how to change the form and even the content of the teachings that missionaries introduced to different cultural, political, economic, and social contexts.

It was important for missionaries to know whether the gist of their teachings would change as a result of the way they were introduced to a different culture and how this core meaning could be adequately conveyed in the language of the recipients, in the context of the philosophical, religious, and mythological understandings that they had gathered by the start of the mission. Independent researches face a broader set of questions: Do the teachings contain a definable core? How did recipients perceive those teachings? Do all teachings inevitably undergo a fundamental change when introduced into a new context? These questions are not restricted to Christianity but also pertain to other religions and even ideological systems. This question can be formulated as follows: Is the Anglican Church the same in the United States and Africa as it is in England?[28] If differences do exist, are they fundamental in nature or do they concern only outward forms? The same question can be applied to the Muslim faith in the Arab world and Southeast Asia,[29] to Buddhism in China and Japan, [30] and to Marxism in the Soviet Union and China.[31]

There is one longstanding practical question: Which are the best local forms for conveying the teachings? Researchers who have studied the question of the contextualisation of Christianity have noted that in a sense, Christ's sermons were the first attempt to contextualise Christian teachings. In Christian theology, Jesus—the second person of the Trinity, who became a true human being after being born in human flesh—translated the higher reality that was difficult for people to understand into a very specific, human language. In this way, the doctrine of incarnation 'suggests that very reality of the only true and transcendent God took the risk of contextualization

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[28] Zablon Nthamburi, "Toward Indigenization of Christianity in Africa: A Missiological Task," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 13, no. 3 (July 1, 1989).
[29] Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed* (New Haven Yale University Press, 1968), p. 54.
[30] Joseph M. Kitagawa, "The Buddhist Transformation in Japan," *History of Religions* 4, no. 2 (1965); Yoshirō Tamura and Jeffrey Hunter, *Japanese Buddhism: A Cultural History*, 1st English ed. (Tokyo: Kosei Pub. Co., 2000), 103, 13–26; Ekaterina Safronova, "Sinto i buddizm v srednevekovoi Yaponii (istoricheskii analiz ikh vzaimodeistviya na primere shkoly dzen)" (Kandidat istoricheskikh nauk Akademiya Nauk SSSR, 1982), p. 42.
[31] Nick Knight, "Mao Zedong and the 'Sinification of Marxism'." In *Marxism in Asia*, ed. Colin Mackerras and Nick Knight (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).

in a very human, very concrete, very contextual person.' After Christ, we can view the 'church as the body of Christ, [as] the incarnate presence of the living, taking many shapes and forms in multiple contexts of the world.'[32]

The Gospel has always been translated into various languages and carried to a wide range of peoples and cultures. This process began immediately after the emergence of Christianity which, having originated within Second Temple Judaism, began spreading at once among other peoples of the Roman Empire. The first Council of Jerusalem, which was held in approximately AD 50, had created favourable conditions for this. The Council relaxed the requirements of the Law of Moses regarding gentiles who converted to Christianity, in particular by making circumcision non-obligatory. This was the first time that Christ's teachings had been adapted to the customs of non-Jewish peoples, making the Apostles the first to carry out indigenisation. It had been common practice to address heathens in their own language ever since the time of the Pentecost when, after the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles began preaching so that 'each one heard them speaking in his own language' (Acts 2).

Over the long centuries of the Church's existence, its teachings—which were probably first recorded in Aramaic—were translated into Greek and Latin and used many concepts of ancient philosophy that became the language of theology. In this way, Christianity underwent a Greco-Roman contextualisation. It later spread to numerous peoples

> …as it moved into the Greco-Roman world, north onto Europe, east to the Slavic and Middle Eastern lands, and subsequently around the world, has contextualized the faith wherever it went, even if missionaries sometimes resisted indigenization and wanted to preserve the exact forms of confession and practice they brought with them. In the process, the Church has bounds of peoples of enormous variety of backgrounds into a common witness to a common vision of God's truth and justice as known in and through Jesus Christ.[33]

All subsequent missionaries continued this practice of adaptation, and we can since say that the necessity and inevitability of adapting teachings to the needs of the newly converted is, perhaps, the essence of Christian missionary work. Despite the fact that this process continued for centuries, the desire to theorise it only arose in the mid-20th century due to two factors, one political, the other academic.

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[32] Max L. Stackhouse, "Contextualization, Contextuality, and Contextualism," in *One Faith, Many Cultures: Inculturation, Indigenization, and Contextualization*, ed. Ruy O.Costa, The Boston Theological Institute Annual Series (New York: Orbis Books, 1988), pp. 4–5.

[33] Ibid., p. 5.

The political factor was linked to the global process of decolonisation and Christianity, this trend found expression in the demand for indigenisation. The idea arose among Christian groups in former colonies and dependent states as part of the overall process of decolonisation that there was a need to indigenise religion and especially Christianity. At the same time, the centuries-long imposition of purely Western forms of religion on colonial peoples and especially the continuing administrative structures dominated by colonists were seen as a form of colonialism. This prompted calls to transfer the management of missions and local church organisations to indigenous peoples and to rehabilitate the status of local traditional beliefs by recognising them as not simply as harmful and pagan but rather as having played an important role in preparing the local population to accept the truth of Christianity.

Of course, demands that foreigners transfer control over missions to members of the local population had been made long before this development, arising in India as early as the mid-19th century,[34] and some Orthodox believers in Japan made similar demands. The reasons for this are examined in detail in Chapter Four, in addition to Nikolai's reaction to them. His response sheds light on the position of the Orthodox Church concerning indigenisation—a topic that had not been analysed previously in the academic literature.

The concept of 'indigenisation' derived from the word 'indigenous' (Latin: *indigenus* – 'native, born in a country') and in contemporary language it means 'produced, growing, living, or occurring naturally in a particular region or environment.'[35] The term has its roots in biology (indigenous plants), ecology (indigenous species), and anthropology (indigenous peoples indigenous). In the second half of the 20th century, the term 'indigenisation' began to be widely used in various social sciences while in linguistics, it took on the meaning of the process of adopting a previously foreign language in a certain area.[36] In economics, indigenisation can be used to characterise a policy of a post-colonial government to secure privileged or dominant position in the economy for the population that they believe to be indigenous.[37]

The term has become especially popular in the post-colonial period and has usually been seen as the need to modify Western-dominated ideas and practices when used in the non-Western

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[34] Ruy O.Costa, "Introducton: Inculturation, Indigenization, and Contextualization," in *One Faith, Many Cultures: Inculturation, Indigenization, and Contextualization*, ed. Ruy O. Costa, Boston Theological Institute annual series (New York: Orbis Books, 1988), pp. 10–11.

[35] "Indigenous," definition retrieved from: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/indigenous.

[36] Eric A. Anchimbe, "Introduction—Indigenisation and Multilingualism: Extending the Debate on Language Evolution in Cameroon," in *Structural and Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Indigenisation*, ed. Eric A. Anchimbe (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), p. 1.

[37] Amos Tendai Munzara, "The Consequences of Implementing the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy Framework on the Banking Sector in Zimbabwe," *IOSR Journal of Business and Management* 17, 1, no. 11 (2015); Chibuzo S. A. Ogbuagu, "The Nigerian Indigenization Policy: Nationalism or Pragmatism?" *African Affairs* 82, no. 327 (1983).

world along the lines of local patterns. Its interpretation has ranged from radical proposals of decolonisation in social sciences such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology involving the rejection of entire fields of Western social sciences as colonialist and having imposed colonialist thinking on non-Westerners[38] to more moderate calls for indigenous scholars 'to develop their own problematiques and research agendas relevant to indigenous societies.'[39]

Although the term 'indigenisation' carries different meanings as it is applied in these various areas, all such meanings have one thing in common: The adaptation or accommodation of a foreign system of ideas, ideology, teaching, academic concept, or practice to local conditions with the goal of applying it under these local conditions and possibly even enriching the original concept or practice in the process. Naturally, for the purposes of this study, it is important to understand that religious and, more specifically, missionary research began to use the concept of indigenisation at around the same time—that is, in the second half of the 20th century. In 1955, it was accepted by the World Council of Churches when its East Asia Theological Commission organised the Bangalore Conference on the Indigenization of Worship. The conference discussed two main problems: How to deal with the domination of foreign missionaries in missions and mission churches, and how to bring about culture-sensitive interpretations of the Christian faith.[40]

At the same time, the concept of indigenisation was used to theorise a long-standing practice in Christian missiology: That of adapting religious teachings to the culture, thinking, and behaviours of peoples who had converted to Christianity to make it easier for them to understand and accept it. This began as early as the Jerusalem Council, which relaxed some but by no means all of the requirements of the Law. In particular, the obligation 'to abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication' remained in force (Acts 15:27–28). This is understandable because idolatry, for example, contradicts the essence of Christian teaching and permitting it would have led to a fundamental change in the religion itself. In modern theoretical terms, the end result would not have been indigenisation but rather syncretism—the merging of two doctrines and the resultant emergence of a new one.[41]

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[38] Yogesh Atal, "The Call for Indigenisation," *International Social Science Journal* 33, no. 1 (1981); Mehrzad Boroujerdi, "Subduing Globalization: The Challenge of the Indigenization Movement," in *Globalization and the Margins*, ed. Richard Grant and John Rennie Short (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Maukuei Chang, "The Movement to Indigenize the Social Sciences in Taiwan: Origin and Predicaments," in *Cultural, Ethic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*, ed. J. John Makeham and A-chin Hsiau (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); G. Wang, *De-Westernizing Communication Research: Altering Questions and Changing Frameworks* (Taylor & Francis, 2010).

[39] Huang Yunong and Zhang Xiong, "A reflection on the indigenization discourse in social work," *International Social Work* 51, no. 5 (2008): p. 612.

[40] Costa, "Introducton: Inculturation, Indigenization, and Contextualization," pp. 12–13.

[41] Antonio Gualtieri, "Indigenization of Christianity and syncretism among the Indians and Inuit of the Western Arctic," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 12, part 1 (1980): p. 57.

Of course, there is a fine line that divides indigenisation and syncretism; it is not a simple task to determine which aspects of Christianity are fundamental and immutable and which can be adapted to a particular time or setting. The various Christian denominations often disagree on this matter; what constitutes Christianity for some might be heresy—or at least a distortion—for others. However, almost all denominations agree that Christianity does have foundational beliefs. Christ said, 'I am the truth,' and this is what must be conveyed to non-Christians. For this reason, a Christian is unlikely to advocate the relativistic belief that other truths also exist of which Christ was unaware.

Nevertheless, history does record clear cases of syncretism in Christianity. These can probably be defined as teachings that no other Christian denominations recognise as Christian, such as the ideology of the peasant revolt in Taiping state in the mid-19th-century China whose leader, Hong Xiuquan, proclaimed himself the younger brother of Christ and advocated a belief system that combined Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism.

Even in the social sciences there are opponents of the idea of indigenisation who believe that 'the concept of indigenization does not apply to the sciences'[42] because science is unified, making it natural that indigenisation in Christianity can only apply to certain aspects of it. What, then, do researchers see as the indigenisation of Christianity?

John F. Butler, an editorial secretary of the Christian Literature Society in Madras who was one of the first to use the term 'indigenisation' to formulate the needs of Christianity in India, described this approach very clearly:

> In one sense, indeed, all truth is international, and Christian truth is the most international of all truth. The essential Gospel is the same in Paris and Peking[[43]], in Massachusetts and Madras. So far as its central truths go, all the theology for the world might just as well be written in Ohio by Ohioans and exported to the whole world. Such a scheme would certainly save some production costs. But, for all that, it would not be a very good scheme. Ohio has no monopoly on theological talent; and such a scheme would mean some books being written by certain second-rate minds among the Ohioans, and some first-rate minds in Madras being left frustrated. And, while Ohioans can doubtless, for most purposes, speak most tellingly to their fellows in Ohio, the same applies to the rest of the world – those can best apply the Gospel locally who know the local background and idiom.[44]

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[42] S. H. Alatas, "Autonomous Social Science Tradition in Asia: Problems and Prospects," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 30. No. 1 (2002): pp. 150–7.

[43] A now-antiquated spelling of "Beijing."

[44] Rev. J. F. Butler, "The Indian Research Series," *The Occasional Bulletin* 11, no. 2 (1951): p. 2.

Clearly, Butler is not referring to a different interpretation of the 'truth' of Christianity but rather to a more accessible presentation of it, a task that local residents can manage better than outsiders. Furthermore, the author notes that Indian Christians can make their own contribution to Christianity that will consist not of financial support for other Christians or working in Church structures overseas (because they are short-staffed in India itself) but in contributing to Christian thought.[45]

In general, perspectives on whether the indigenisation of Christianity is possible in principle and what forms and limitations it should have depend largely on the approach a particular denomination or mission takes to the general theological issue that theologian Reinhold Niebuhr termed 'Christ and culture.' This refers to the relationship between the divine (that which is eternal, unitary, and immutable) and the human (that which pertains to culture and society) in Christianity. In his classic book of the same name, Niebuhr identified five possible approaches, two of which are opposites: 'Christ against Culture' (an opposition to culture) and 'Christ of culture' (an agreement between Christ and culture). The other three represent more moderate approaches and various combinations of the first two: Christ above culture (which sees Christ as the fulfilment of culture); Christ and culture in paradox (which sees an ongoing tension between Christ and culture); a portrayal of Jesus as the converter of culture and society; and Christ as the transformer of culture.[46]

The first position is the most radical. It sees a sharp opposition between Christ and culture and believes that acceptance of Christianity should involve rejection of the world. Niebuhr believes this approach to be characteristic of the earliest Christians and that it can be clearly seen in the Apocalypse, the writings of Tertullian, and in Lev Tolstoy in the 19th century. Proponents of the second position ('Christ against Culture') maintain that Christ Himself is a product of culture and was born into a particular cultural environment. Since this environment changes, the aim of Christians should always be to reconcile the teachings of Christ with the current way of thinking. Niebuhr calls this approach 'cultural Christianity.' He believes the first cultural Christians to be Gnostics who translated Christ's original teaching, which was based on the Old Testament, into the terms of Hellenistic metaphysics, and later in the Middle Ages its finds its expression in Peter Abelard's moral theory of atonement.

According to the first moderate view (Christ above culture), since the world was created by God, Christ and the world cannot be opposed to each other, and the world cannot be godless and cannot exist unless it is upheld by the creator. Like His Father, Christ is above culture. Niebuhr

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[45] Ibid., p. 3.
[46] Helmut Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951).

sees the roots of this approach in the writings of Clement of Alexandria, who stressed that being a good man in accordance with the standards of a good culture is a pre-requisite for the Christian.

The second middle position is held by the dualist who sees Christ and culture in paradox. According to this position, there is always a conflict between God and man. Man is always expressing the will to live without God. The dualist, like the radical Christian, pronounces the entire world of human culture to be Godless and sick unto death. The difference, however, is that the dualist sees no exit; he is trapped in culture and God sustains him there. It is desirable that he transcend culture, but it is impossible for him to do so. Niebuhr sees this motif in St. Paul in the early period of Christianity. According to the fifth position, Christ transforms culture despite the fact that it is sinful. Representatives of this position believe that the Holy Spirit works within the Church, which can use culture and improve it, regardless of its imperfect character.

Advocates of the first approach reject the possibility of indigenisation because it could violate the truth of the Church by introducing human elements into it. Most Christian denominations adhered to this approach until the 18th century, despite the fact that at least some aspects of indigenisation occurred. Even the most stubbornly conservative missionary must deal with the question of how to translate Holy Scripture into the local language and, therefore, how to convey the ideas contained in those writings using a different terminology. Even the Apostles dealt with this question and without such efforts, Christian missionary work would be impossible. Church artwork, for example, frequently undergoes indigenisation, and this also holds true for Church architecture, music, and iconography inasmuch as these areas do not concern central dogmas and are purely traditional in character.

According to Niebuhr, the second approach was dominant among Western Christian denominations from the 18th century onward. He writes:

> A thousand variations of the Christ-of-culture theme have been formulated by great and little thinkers in the Western world, by leaders of society and of the Church, by theologians and philosophers. It appears in rationalistic and romantic in conservative and liberal versions; Lutherans, Calvinists, sectarians and Roman Catholics produce their own forms.[47]

In the 21st century Graham Ward formulated an even more culture-dominant approach, according to which Christ himself is already a cultural event since we 'have no access to a Christ who has not already been encultured'. Therefore, according to Ward, 'Christ is not above culture or against culture; rather, he is encultured himself.'[48]

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[47] Ibid., p. 91.

[48] Graham Ward, *Christ and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), p.22.

There is an extensive academic literature on the indigenisation of Christianity that describes these theories and their application to specific missions. No description has yet been proposed of the important issue of Orthodoxy's position on indigenisation, but most of the abovementioned problems had already been discussed by Orthodox missionaries in the 19th century, without using the term 'indigenisation,' and Nikolai was the most notable thinker of this trend. His example suggests that Orthodoxy, being the most conservative Christian denomination, sets strict limits to any changes in doctrine but in other matters such as liturgics, language, Church architecture, and painting, it permits some adaptation to local traditions. During the process of evolution of his thought and approaches to missionary work, Nikolai wrote extensively on the role of traditional Japanese religions in the acceptance of Christianity. I show that his opinion on this role changed several times, and Chapter Four of this study looks in greater depth at the boundaries of indigenisation in Orthodoxy as Nikolai understood them.

Primary sources

Nikolai's works serve as the primary sources for this study. The extensive and meticulous diaries that he kept throughout almost the entire period of his work in Japan provide the richest source of information. These were first published in an abridged form in Russian and Japanese. In 2004, Hyperion Publishers of St. Petersburg released a five-volume unabridged version edited by Nakamura.[49] Keeping diaries or other records of their activities was a common and even necessary task for Russian and other Christian missionaries of this time. In his 'Instructions,' Innokenty recommended that missionaries maintain several written documents including 'notebooks for writing reports and recording interactions,' as well as a journal to record all actions concerning their duties to submit as an annual report to the Church leadership.[50] When he blessed Nikolai before he embarked on his missionary work in Japan, Metropolitan Isidor spoke of the need to keep records[51] and Nikolai himself said that he began to keep a diary from the very start of his first trip to Japan.

In his diaries, which span the years 1870 to 1912, Nikolai wrote in detail about the life of the Mission and also commented on various issues and events taking place in Japan, Russia, and the world, reflected on religion, social, and political topics, and even recorded the texts of some of his sermons. The diaries—which were not intended for publication during his lifetime—are

[49] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo*, ed. Kennosuke Nakamura, 5 vols. (St. Petersburg: Giperion, 2004).
[50] Veniaminov, "Nastavlenija svjashhenniku, naznachaemomu dlja obrashhenija inovernyh i rukovodstvovanija obrashhennyh v hristianskuju veru," pp. 260–63.
[51] Anatolii Scherbina, "“Neschastnyi dnevnik.” Archiepiskop yaponskii Nikolai i ego zametki," *Rossiya i ATR*, no. 4 (2006): p. 186.

remarkable for their candour, and Nikolai would probably not have wanted to make some of the thoughts they contain public.

Some of his notes are no longer extant. Nikolai stated that the diary he kept during his first trip was burned during a fire that occurred in Hakodate[52] and several theories have been put forward about the unknown fate of his diaries covering his arrival and early years in Hakodate (1861–1870).[53] Nikolai referred to their existence in his letter to Metropolitan Isidore in July 1868 that was published the following year under the title ‘And in Japan the harvest is plentiful… A letter from a Russian in Hakodate.’[54]

A report compiled by Bishop Sergius of Kyoto (Tikhomirov, 1871–1945) in April 1912 soon after Nikolai’s death and sent to the Holy Synod contains a complete listing of the latter’s surviving manuscripts. In all, it refers to 30 notebooks, some devoted to general questions and others describing exclusively his missionary trips to various regions of Japan. Sergius also mentioned that Kasatkin kept small notebooks during his travels in which he recorded aphorisms, comments, and sundry interesting thoughts. Sergius noted that Nikolai kept systematic records from May 14(26), 1895 until December 27, 1911 (January 9, 1912)—that is, until the day that marked the onset of the illness that would eventually take his life.[55] Prior to this, there were significant gaps in the records Nikolai kept of his time in Japan.

Sergius stored Nikolai’s manuscripts in a box that was later sent to St. Petersburg and deposited in the archive of the Holy Synod. That repository later became part of the Central State Historical Archive of the Soviet Union, renamed the Russian State Historical Archive (RSHA) in 1992. The manuscripts are currently located there. The diaries were rediscovered in the archive in 1979 by Otsuma University Professor Nakamura, who had made the publication and analysis of the diaries the focus of his life’s work. Describing them in 1992, archive employee Marina Danilushkina mentioned 35 handwritten volumes containing an average of 200–300 pages each and filled with small, neat handwriting.[56]

The diaries provide a wealth of material for analyses of the evolution of Nikolai’s worldview. They are the focus of numerous works, primarily by Japanese researchers Nakamura and Naganawa Mitsuo, as well by a number of Russian scholars, particularly Eleonora Sablina and

[52] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* ed. Kennosuke Nakamura, 5 vols., vol. 1 (1870–1880) (St. Petersburg: Giperion, 2004): p. 459.

[53] Evgeny Steiner, "Review: Nikolai of Japan. The Diaries of St. Nikolai of Japan by St. Nikolai," *Monumenta Nipponica* 50, no. 4 (1995): 538; Scherbina. Neschastnyi dnevnik, p. 187.

[54] Hieromonk Nikolaj (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," *Hristianskoe chtenie* 2 (1869), p. 253.

[55]Donesenie episkopa Kiotosskogo Sergija (Tihomirova) Svjatejshemu Sinodu o dnevnikah sv. Nikolaja, arhiepiskopa Japonskogo, in *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), pp. 459-61.

[56] M. Danilushkina, "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij i ego 'Dnevniki'," *Moskovskij zhurnal* 8 (1992).

more recently Roman Savchuk, who have done outstanding work in interpreting the diaries. However, there are certain peculiarities concerning both the diaries themselves as a source material and the previous research on them. Despite their gaps, the diaries are an important an extremely multi-layered source containing a wide range of materials written for different purposes. In accordance with Innokenty's recommendations and accepted norms, Nikolai intended the official part of his diary to contribute to formal reports. This included various economic and financial data, the occasional complete text of a talk or speech, and detailed records of conversations with officials and journalists. Nikolai often cited passages verbatim from this part of the diaries in his official reports to the Foreign Ministry, the Holy Synod, the Orthodox Missionary Society, and various benefactors, which is why parts of those reports sometimes matched his diary entries word for word. His missionary notes mostly contained descriptions of the regions of Japan and the religious situation in them, the number of people who had converted to Orthodoxy, and information about their lives, needs, and problems. He also drew on these notes for reports, although they contained personal observations that he did not intend for official purposes.

Finally, one more layer contained in the diaries is that of Nikolai's private notes. These are his personal—and at times very unflattering—observations, doubts, and internal discussions that were not intended for others. Although Nikolai might have thought that they could be of use to someone in the future, he almost certainly did not think that this would take place in his lifetime. To understand these unique and multi-layered diaries fully, it is necessary to subject them to critical analysis and to compare and contrast the opinions Nikolai expressed privately with those he professed in public for official purposes, which often differed somewhat or even contradicted each other. The reason for this is not because Kasatkin intended to mislead anyone but rather due to the fact that for tactical purposes, he did not allow himself to express pessimism or doubts in official speeches and sermons. In his private utterances, however, Nikolai constantly engaged in an internal dialogue, recording and responding to the doubts and criticisms of his colleagues and acquaintances. In addition, many of Nikolai's attitudes changed significantly over time and so should be analysed in a temporal context, taking into account the evolution of his ideas in general. Previous studies, however, simply present each of Nikolai's statements as fully reflecting his position at all times, regardless of when he made them or how his views evolved later. This work, therefore, represents the first critical analysis of Nikolai's diaries. His letters, reports, and articles represent additional valuable source materials. They sometimes overlap with certain letters and reports and provide material for his published articles, while others effectively take the form of reports on achievements and specific plans for developing the mission, and still others discussed his articles.

In the first period of his work and to some extent in the second, Nikolai actively studied Japan and published his findings in several articles in Russian journals. A collection containing most of them was published in Russia in 2006.[57] His article 'And in Japan the harvest is plentiful,' published in the *Hristianskoe chtenie* [Christian Reading] journal in early 1869, is the earliest such publication to provide a wealth of material about the first period of his activity.[58] Two other major works of the first period are 'Japan from the point of view of the Christian mission'[59] and 'Shoguns and Mikado: A historical essay from Japanese sources.'[60] They were originally published in issue numbers 9, 11, and 12 of *Russkiy vestnik* [Russian Bulletin] of 1869, one of the most influential literary and socio-political Russian magazines of the second half of the 19th century. With only a few differences, the text of 'Japan from the point of the view of the Christian mission' largely repeats the content of the note he sent to Foreign Ministry Asian Department Director Pyotr Stremoukhov (1823–1885)[61] and his letter to Acting Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod Yury Tolstoy (1824–1878).[62]

These articles are particularly important because they shed light on the early period of Nikolai's work in Japan that is not covered by the surviving diaries. It was during this early period that Nikolai studied the Japanese language, culture, religion, and philosophy sedulously and in depth and worked to bring the results of that research to the Russian reader. It is these articles that make it possible to study Nikolai's views prior to the 1870s.

In the mid-1860s, Nikolai published several shorter scholarly pieces in the local weekly newspaper *Vostochnoe Pomorye*, which was published in 1865–1866 in Nikolaevsk. Most of them later became parts of longer articles published in journals with much larger readerships.[63] Another important article, 'Japan and Russia,' was published a decade later in the November 1879 issue of the illustrated monthly historical magazine *Drevnyaya i novaya Rossiya* [Ancient and New Russia].[64] This magazine was devoted to the history, archaeology, and ethnography of Russia and in his article, Nikolai compared the development of Russia and Japan. This article is of particular

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[57] Tatyana Sila-Novitskaya, "Ot sostavitelya," in *Izbrannyye uchyonyye trudy svyatitelya Nikolaya arkhiepiskopa yaponskogo* (Moscow: Pravoslavnyi Svyato-Tikhonovskii gumanitarnyi universitet, 2006), p. 5–6.

[58] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," pp. 239–58.

[59] Arhiepiskop Nikolaj (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," in *Izbrannyye uchyonyye trudy svyatitelya Nikolaya arkhiepiskopa yaponskogo* (Moscow: Pravoslavnyi Svyato-Tikhonovskii gumanitarnyi universitet, 2006).

[60] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Sjoguny i mikado. Istoricheskij ocherk po japonskim istochnikam."

[61] Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P. N. Stremouhovu, in Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, p. 302.

[62] Pis'mo upravljajushhemu dolzhnost' ober-prokurora Svjashhennogo Sinoda Ju.V.Tolstomu, in *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Moscow: Penaty i kniga, 2018), p. 124.

[63] Hieromonk Nikolaj (Kasatkin), "Uragan v Japonii," *Vostochnoe Pomor'e* (Oct. 16, 1865); Hieromonk Nikolaj (Kasatkin), "Chislo narodonaselenija v Japonii," *Vostochnoe Pomor'e* (Dec. 4, 1865).

[64] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija i Rossija."

interest because it contains his views of not only Japan but also of his own country. Because Nikolai was already keeping his diary at this time, it is possible to compare the contents of the article with that of his diary and to see the extent to which his confidential notes differed from the texts he intended for publication. Such comparisons are impossible for subsequent periods because Nikolai later decided to give himself entirely to his missionary work and did not publish any more scholarly articles. It is also important because in his articles, Nikolai presented his views on the history, culture, religion, and philosophy of Japan, as well as the prospects for that country's interaction with Russia and possible acceptance of Orthodoxy, in a systematic and academic form that differs markedly from the writing style prevalent in his diaries.

Nikolai's letters to various recipients are usually reports or requests for material or other forms of assistance for the mission. At the same time, a number of them are very detailed and provide significant insight into not only the work of the mission and the challenges it faced but also into Kasatkin's views on both Japanese and Russian public life. Other letters detail plans for the development and spread of Orthodoxy in Asia.

Several collections of Nikolai's correspondence are extant. The most complete is a planned 10-volume set entitled *A Collection of the Works of Nikolai of Japan, Equal to the Apostles*. The publication of that work remains unfinished: As of early 2020, three volumes have been published, the first two in 2018 and the third in 2019. The first volume contains Nikolai's official correspondence from 1860 to 1883, as well as a facsimile of part of his manuscripts and maps of late 19th-century Japan, showing the routes of his missionary travels and the spread of Orthodoxy in that country. The second volume contains his official correspondence from 1884 to 1912. The third volume brings together his private correspondence from 1860 to 1911. In his private letters, Nikolai writes more candidly on a wide range of topics. This volume also contains illustrations and publishes some of Nikolai's drawings for the first time.[65] While not all of his private correspondence for this period is included, the missing letters can be found in other previously published collections.[66]

According to Elizaveta Zaruba, a Russian researcher into Nikolai's epistolary heritage, 'Our analysis shows that the epistolary legacy of St. Nikolai of Japan is an extensive, independent, and unquestionably authentic corpus of documents that spans almost the entire half-century of his

[65] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 1; *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 2; *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Moscow: Penaty i kniga, 2019).

[66] *"Ja zdes' sovershenno odin russkij": Pis'ma Revel'skogo episkopa Nikolaja (Kasatkina)*, ed. R. K. Curkan (St. Petersburg: Kolo, 2002); *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij. Vidna Bozhija volja prosvetit' Japoniju: sb. pisem*, ed. G. G. Gulichkina (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Sretenskogo monastyrja, 2009); "Pis'ma Nikolaj Japonskij Svjatoj ravnoapostol'nyj," accessed Sept. 24, 2020. Retrieved from: https://litresp.com/chitat/ru/%D0%9D/nikolaj-yaponskij-svyatoj-ravnoapostoljnij/pisjma.

missionary service in Japan. It is only partially published. Although this documentary body of work is scattered across different collections, its content represents a single whole. Its value lies not only in the author's deep familiarity with the state of affairs of Japanese Orthodoxy in different years but also in the fact that Bishop Nikolai's correspondents included dozens of Church hierarchs, fellow missionaries, major Russian statesmen, military figures, philanthropists, members of the publishing world, and people from science and the arts.'[67] The original letters are stored in the collections of the Russian State Historical Archives, the Manuscript Department of the Russian National Library, the Manuscript Trust of the Russian State Library, the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art, and various personal trusts of Nikolai's correspondents and the trusts of the Holy Synod. Zaruba groups Nikolai's letters into several categories, according to their recipients.[68] The greatest source of useful information is letters addressed to spiritual patrons and superiors. Of these, the most noteworthy is Nikolai's correspondence with Metropolitan Innokenty of Moscow (Veniaminov), Metropolitan Isidore of Novgorod, St. Petersburg, and Finland (Nikolsky),[69] Archbishop Veniamin of Kamchatka (Blagonravov),[70] and other hierarchs.

The second category includes letters written to both Japanese and Russian staff members of the Orthodox Mission in Japan: Tokyo Theological Seminary Head Ivan (John) Senuma (Kawamoto Kakusaburo, 1868–1953), the priest Sergei Suzuki (Nomura Kyuhati, 1863–1946),[71] Mission Representative in Russia Archpriest Aleksei Mal'tsev (1854–1915), Hieromonk (and future Archbishop and Hieromartyr) Andronik (Nikol'sky, 1870–1918), Bishop Sergius (Tikhomirov),[72] who became the head of the Mission after Nikolai's death, and others. Although in these letters, Nikolai primarily discussed the Mission's organisational problems, many of his comments reveal his attitudes towards more general issues as well.

Nikolai's letters to fellow missionaries in other countries also offer a great deal of information. In these, he shares his experience and requests advice on various issues. This category includes his letters to Korean Spiritual Mission Head Archimandrite Pavel (Ivanovsky, 1874–1919),[73] Bishop of the Aleutian Islands and North America and future Patriarch Tikhon (Belavin,

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[67] E. A. Zaruba, "Jepistoljarnoe nasledie Svjatitelja Nikolaja kak istochnik po istorii Pravoslavija v Japonii v jepohu Mjejczi," *Vestnik PSTGU II: Istorija. Istorija Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi* 4, no. 65 (2015): p. 107.
[68] Ibid., pp. 98–109.
[69] Russian State Historical Archive, F. 796. Op. 151. D. 1422a. L. 202–203 ob.
[70] "Pis'mo k episkopu Veniaminu (Blagonravovu)," *Pribavlenija k Irkutskim eparhial'nym vedomostjam* 43 (1873).
[71] "Pis'ma ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo svjashhenniku Sergiju Sudzuki," *Hristianskoe chtenie* 5 (2012).
[72] "Episkop Sergij (Tihomirov) Pamjati Vysokopreosvjashhennejshego Nikolaja, Arhiepiskopa Japonskogo," in *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v vospominanijah sovremennikov*, ed. G. E. Besstremjannaja (Moscow: STSL, 2013). First edition: Sergij (Tihomirov), Pamjati Vysokopreosvjashhennejshego Nikolaja, Arhiepiskopa Japonskogo (s portretom). SPb., 1913.
[73] "Pis'ma k arhimandritu Pavlu nachal'nika missii nashej v Japonii, arhiepiskopa Nikolaja," *Golos Cerkvi* 5 (1915); "Pis'ma k arhimandritu Pavlu nachal'nika missii nashej v Japonii, arhiepiskopa Nikolaja," *Golos Cerkvi* 6 (1915);

1865–1925),[74] and Altai Mission Head Makarius (Nevsky, 1935–1926). In these letters, Nikolai deals with a variety of topics, from dogma (for example, whether it is possible to recognise a baptism performed by someone who is not himself baptised) to issues concerning the translation of liturgical texts into Oriental languages.

Nikolai's secular correspondence can be divided into letters addressed to benefactors, high-ranking state authorities, and various acquaintances.[75] The first are interesting only because they sometimes refer to the state of affairs at the Mission but due to the specific nature of such communications, Nikolai often deliberately describes that situation in excessively complimentary language, with an emphasis on achievements. Letters from the second group are often lengthy reports of activities and although the author here also focuses more on successes than difficulties or the doubts that he mentions in his diaries, they do contain significant information. Of Nikolai's private correspondence, the most interesting is that with renowned Orientalist Dmitry Pozdneev, Director of the Oriental Institute of Vladivostok and compiler of Russia's first Russian-Japanese hieroglyphic dictionary. Those letters were devoted primarily to the issue of studying Japan and the Japanese language. Pozdneev also asked Nikolai to write a review of his Japanese language textbook *Tokuhon*, which he did and even recommended his textbooks and dictionaries to the ministry of public education. The content of these letters indicates that Nikolai enjoyed considerable authority not only in religious circles but also in academia.[76] When analysing these letters, it should be borne in mind that their purpose, and especially the official communications, made it necessary to present the situation in the mission in a very positive and optimistic way, which differed significantly in tone from the much more candid diary entries of the same period.

In addition to Nikolai's works, this study cites as sources works by other members of the Mission and the Orthodox Japanese associated with it. These letters can also be divided into several categories. The first consists of the memoirs, notes, and letters of other Russian employees of the Mission that clarify Nikolai's views and look at various aspects of his work and that of the Mission as a whole. Foremost among these are the works of Sergius (Tikhomirov), Nikolai's closest co-worker and the man who succeeded Nikolai after his death.[77] Notes about the work of the Mission

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Pis'ma k arhimandritu Pavlu (Ivanovskomu), in *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij. Vidna Bozhija volja prosvetit' Japoniju: sb. pisem*, pp. 112–17.

[74] Pis'ma k episkopu Tihonu (Belavinu), in Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, pp. 395–401.

[75] Zaruba, "Jepistoljarnoe nasledie Svjatitelja Nikolaja kak istochnik po istorii Pravoslavija v Japonii v jepohu Mjejczi," p. 105.

[76] *"Ja zdes' sovershenno odin russkij": Pis'ma Revel'skogo episkopa Nikolaja (Kasatkina)*, 83-98; D.M. Pozdneev, *Tokuhon ili Kniga dlja chtenija prakticheskih uprazhnenij v japonskom jazyke*, vol. 1-2 (Tokyo: Tjeikoku insacu kabusiki, 1907–1908).

[77] Bishop Sergij (Tihomirov), "Sredi japonskih hristian (Poezdka v cerkov' Suka)," *Pribavlenija k cerkovnym vedomostjam* 3 (1909); Archbishop Sergij (Tihomirov), *Osvjashhenie Voskresenskogo kafedral'nogo sobora v Tokio.*

in Japan by another of Nikolai's co-workers, Sergius (Stragorodsky, 1867–1944), represent a particularly interesting source. Sergius, who became Patriarch of Moscow in 1943, served in Japan from 1890 until 1893 (with a short break) and from 1897 until 1899. He learned Japanese quickly, taught dogmatic theology at the Kyoto Seminary, and later served in Osaka.[78] Hieromonk (from 1880, Archimadrite) Anatoly (Tikhai, 1838–1893), who worked in Japan under Nikolai from 1871 until 1892, and Andronik (Nikolsky), who worked at the mission from 1997 to 1907, also wrote diaries and several accounts of missionary activities.[79]

Various memoirs by Japanese Orthodox believers are also important documents. Many described why they accepted Orthodoxy, their motives for doing so, and how their thinking transformed during the process. They also describe the Japanese view of Orthodoxy and the work of the Mission. The most important works of this group are by Daniil Konishi (Konishi Masutaro, 1862–1940) and Ivan Senuma. Sergey Syozi (Shoji Shogoro, 1869–1936), who graduated from the Seminary at the Orthodox Mission in Tokyo and then from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy of the Mission, also left behind interesting memoirs.[80]

This study also cites some publications of the Mission as sources, primarily journals published in Japanese whose contents shed light on Nikolai's views and aims. According to people who knew Nikolai when he was the head of the Mission, he 'edited all of the Mission's publications' and 'carefully monitored the periodicals published by the Mission,' checking each one.[81] The Mission published four journals under Nikolai: *Seiko Shinpo* [Orthodox Bulletin], published bi-weekly since 1880 and devoted to general issues of Christianity and the Christian Church from the Orthodox perspective; *Uranishiki* [Brocaded Lining or Modesty], published

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S istoricheskim predisloviem (Tokyo, 1930); Sergij, "Osvjashhenie sobora v Tokio," *Pribavlenija k cerkovnym vedomostjam* 31 (1896); Bishop Sergij (Tihomirov), *Missionerskie radosti. Putevye zametki i vpechatlenija* (Moscow: Sretenskij monastyr', 2014).

[78] Hieromonk Sergij (Stragorodskij), "Hristianstvo v Kitae i Japonii," *Russkij vestnik* 1 (1893); Archimandrite Sergij (Stragorodskij), *Na Dal'nem Vostoke. Pis'ma japonskogo missionera* (Arzamas: Tipografija M.Dobrohotova, 1897); Sergij (Stragorodskij), *Po Japonii. Zapiski missionera* (Moscow: Krutickoe Patriarshee podvor'e: Obshhestvo ljubitelej cerkovnoj istorii, 1998); Archbishop Sergij (Stragorodskij), "Prazdnovanie pjatidesjatiletija blagovestnicheskih trudov vysokopreosvjashhennogo Nikolaja v Japonii," *Pribavlenija k Cerkovnym vedomostjam* 41 (1911). Sergij (Stragorodskij). "Po Japonii. Zapiski missionera. M.: Krutickoe Patriarshee podvor'e: Obshhestvo ljubitelej cerkovnoj istorii," 1998. Initially published in *Bogoslovskij Vestnik*, 1899. № 4, pp. 7–12.

[79] Hieromonk Anatolij (Tikhai), *Dnevnik russkogo pravoslavnogo missionera v Japonii o. ieromonaha Anatolija.* (Moscow, 1878); Hieromonk Anatolij (Tikhai), "Ot Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Missii v Japonii," *Moskovskie vedomosti* (June 11, June 14, June 17, etc. 1881); Archimandrite Andronik (Nikol'skij), "Missionerskij god v Japonii: Iz dnevnika japonskogo missionera," *Ufimskie eparhial'nye vedomosti* 1904.-№№7–24; 1905.-№№ 1–11, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22; 1906.-№№ 5, 21, 24; Arhimandrite Andronik (Nikol'skij), "V Japonii (Vospominanija i vpechatlenija byvshego japonskogo missionera)," *Russkij vestnik* 5 (1904); Archimandrite Andronik (Nikol'skij), "Russko-Japonskaja Hristova cerkov' i russko-japonskaja vojna," *Ufimskie eparhial'nye vedomosti* 17 (1905).

[80] Sergij Seodzi, "O pravoslavnoj Missii i Cerkvi Japonii," *Pribavlenija k cerkovnym vedomostjam* 13 (1891); Sergij Seodzi, "Vesti iz Japonii," *Pribavlenija k Cerkovnym Vedomostjam* 40 (1891); Sergij Seodzi, "Kak ja stal hristianinom " *Russkij vestnik* 11 (1891).

[81] Pozdneev, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaja Japonskij (Vospominanija i harakteristika)," p. 61.

monthly from 1902 until 1909, one of the first Japanese publications for women; *Shinkai* [Spiritual Sea], published monthly for only a few years beginning in 1893; and *Seikyō Yowa* [Orthodox Conversation], published monthly starting in 1893 and devoted to religious preaching and theological issues. A lack of funds caused the discontinuation of some of these journals.[82]

Secondary sources

The study of Nikolai's activities and the work of the Japanese Mission began during his lifetime, and several articles on these topics were published in the early 20th century.[83] However, his death and the resulting flood of information about his work sparked the first wave of serious research and popular biographies. For this study, the most interesting among the former are 'Archbishop Nikolai of Japan (memoirs and characteristics)' published by his personal acquaintance Dmitry Pozdneev as early as 1912, and the first dissertation about him, 'Archbishop Nikolai of Japan as a teacher of morality (his life, activity and views),' defended in 1914 by St. Petersburg Theological Academy hieromonk (and future archbishop who died in a Stalinist camp) Anthony (Martsenko, 1887–1954). Pozdneev's work retains much of its significance to the present day. In addition to providing a detailed analysis of the Mission's activities and Nikolai's role as an expert on and researcher of Japan and an advocate of Russian-Japanese rapprochement, the author expressed several important ideas that, unfortunately, later researchers did not accept. Pozdneev was the first to point out that Nikolai's assessments of Japanese culture and the Japanese people in terms of their cultural readiness to accept Orthodoxy changed over the course of his life. He was initially sceptical, but later became more optimistic about this matter. Pozdneev even asked Nikolai himself about these changes, and was told that his opinion had changed because the system of public education introduced under Emperor Meiji had largely reformed the Japanese mentality and the thinking of young Japanese people. Elderly people who had been raised according to the Chinese Confucian system, which lacked consistency and logic, were unable to think and write in the way young people could, according to Nikolai.[84]

Pozdneev made another important point—that not only did Nikolai not seek to create an autocephalous Japanese Orthodox Church that would be independent of Russia but he also fought

[82] Ibid., p. 84.
[83] "O rasprostranenii v Japonii Pravoslavnoj Hristianskoj very russkimi veropropovednikami," *Pribavlenija k Irkutskim eparhial'nym vedomostjam* 36–39 (1875); "Nasha missija v Japonii," *Russkij vestnik* 7 (1899); S. O. Makarov, *Pravoslavie v Japonii* (Saint Petersburg Sinodal'naja Tipografija, 1889); F. Prohorenko, "Russkaja duhovnaja missija v Japonii," *Vera i razum* 2–4, 7, 10, 17, 19 (1906); P. Prokoshev, "Russkaja pravoslavnaja missija v Japonii" *Strannik* 2–4 (1896); "Russkie missionery v Japonii," *Istoricheskij vestnik* 2 (1894); Seodzi, "O pravoslavnoj Missii i Cerkvi Japonii."
[84] Pozdneev, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaja Japonskij (Vospominanija i harakteristika)," p. 54.

the immoderate aspirations of Japanese Orthodox youth for *dokuritsu* (independence) as a means of controlling the funds sent from Russia.[85] Unfortunately, instead of developing these observations, later researchers failed to attach sufficient importance to them. Although Archbishop Anthony's works—whose manuscripts were only recently discovered in the manuscript archive of the Russian National Library—have not been fully preserved, the parts that are available contain important information about Nikolai's life and personality before he travelled to Japan.[86] Another noteworthy early work is the recollection by Bishop Sergius (Tikhomirov) 'In memory of His Eminence Nikolai, Archbishop of Japan,' written in 1913 on the first anniversary of his death. It contains a detailed account of Kasatkin's final days, his thoughts, his funeral, and the reactions to them by the Japanese and Russian public.[87]

After the 1917 Revolution, the Soviet Union conducted almost no research into religious issues in general or the Japanese Mission in particular, while the Japanese Orthodox Church was seen as a tool of Russian and Japanese imperialism.[88] It was not until the 1960s that the ROC published several works on the topic.[89] The renewed interest in Nikolai stemmed from negotiations in 1970 between the ROC and the Orthodox Metropolis of America on the status of the Japanese Church and the canonisation of Nikolai. Some limited works, memoirs, and other publications about Nikolai and the Japanese Church appeared outside the Soviet Union, particularly in the US, but were not disseminated widely. Several works by the theologian Archpriest Pyotr Bulgakov (1861–1937), a former employee of the Japanese Mission who moved to the US in 1924, are also of interest. However, those works were published using the hectographic method and are still little known.[90] Finally, the Japanese Orthodox Church has also published separate works in Japan.[91]

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[85] Ibid., pp. 98, 109.

[86] D. Karpuk, "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v gody obuchenija v Sankt-Peterburgskoj duhovnoj akademii" (Feb. 2, 2020). Retrieved from: https://spbda.ru/publications/dmitriy-karpuk-svyatitel-nikolay-yaponskiy-v-gody-obucheniya-v-sankt-peterburgskoy-duhovnoy-akademii/.

[87] Bishop Sergij (Tihomirov), "Pamjati Vysokopreosvjashhennogo Nikolaja, Arhiepiskopa Japonskogo (k godovshhine konchiny ego + 3 fevralja 1912 g)," *Hristianskoe chtenie*, no. 1 (1913).

[88] B. Kandidov, "Japonskaja pravoslavnaja cerkov' na sluzhbe russkogo i japonskogo imperializma," *Antireligioznik* pp. 11–12 (1932).

[89] Archbishop Minskij i Belorusskij Antonij, "Svjatoj ravnoapostol'nyj arhiepiskop Japonskij Nikolaj," *Bogoslovskie trudy* 14 (1975); Archpriest E. Ambarcumov, "Arhiepiskop Japonskij Nikolaj," *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarhii* 10 (1961); A. Kazem-Bek, "Apostol Japonii arhiepiskop Nikolaj (Kasatkin)," *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarhii* 7 (1960); Priest L. Voronov, "Svjatitel' Nikolaj - revnitel' i zashhitnik Pravoslavija," *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarhii* 7 (1961); Archbishop Sergij (Larin), "Slavnyj jubilej arhiepiskopa Nikolaja," *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarhii* 12 (1961); A. A. Shherbina, "Nikolaj Kasatkin - odin iz pervyh russkih japonovedov," *Narody Azii i Afriki* 4 (1977); A. Vasil'ev, "Iz vospominanij ob arhiepiskope Japonskom Nikolae," *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarhii* 6 (1962).

[90] Archpriest Petr (Bulgakov), "Hristianstvo v Japonii," (1929); Archpriest Petr (Bulgakov), "Vysokopreosvjashhennyj episkop Japonskij Nikolaj i episkopaly," (1930). Manuscripted in the Russian National Library, F. R-5973, 1 op.

[91] Petr Shibayama, *Daishūkyō Nikorai Shi Jiseki.* Tokyo: Nippon Harisutosu Seikyōkai sōmukyoku, 1936.

In both Japan and Russia, the study and publication of Kasatkin's diaries sparked a surge of interest in his activities and to this end, a number of works about Nikolai and the Japanese Orthodox Church have been published in Japan.[92] The first Japanese historian of the Japanese Orthodox Church was Archpriest Prokl Ushimaru (Ushimaru Yasuo) (1936–1986), who published *Meiji Culture and Nikolai* in 1969, *History of Japanese Orthodox Church* in 1969, and several other works including histories of Orthodox Christianity in 1978. Most of these works were published by the Japanese Orthodox Church and their circulation was limited to Church members.

The publication of Nikolai's diaries drew attention to the history of Japanese Orthodoxy among a number of Japanese academics who have written several rather comprehensive studies, the most interesting of which are books and articles by Nakamura Kennosuke and Naganawa Mitsuo.[93] They provide a full and detailed account of the circumstances and facts of Nikolai's life, the history and structure of the Mission, the financial side of its activities, and the history and structure of Nikolai's diaries. However, given that these works devote relatively little attention to Nikolai's way of thinking, its origins, and the reasons for and course of its evolution, they are of only limited use for this study. These works do not offer a critical analysis of the objectives of the available sources or how accurately they reflect Nikolai's actual views.

In Russia, the collapse of the Soviet Union led not only to an end to all restrictions on religious research but even to the enthusiastic encouragement of such scholarship and a number of books and numerous articles were published that were devoted to various aspects of Nikolai's activity and the Japanese Orthodox Church during the Meiji era.[94] Many earlier materials are currently being republished[95] but to this day, nobody has written a major book-length study devoted exclusively to Nikolai and his thought.

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[92] Ushimaru Yasuo, *Meiji bunka to Nikorai* (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan 1969); Ushimaru Yasuo, *Nihon Seikyōkaishi* (Tokyo: Mitropolija Japonskoj Hristovoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi, 1978); Ushimaru Yasuo, "Kōbe Seikyōkaishi" Shokō 9 (1968); Ushimaru Yasuo, "Nihon Seikyōkai to Meiji bunka" [Japanese Orthodoxy in the culture of the Meiji Period] *Mado* 9 (1978); Ushimaru Yasuo, *Paueru Nakai Tsugumaro shoden* (Suita: Osakskaja Hristova pravoslavnaja cerkov', 1979).

[93] Naganawa, *Nikoraidō ibun*; Naganawa, *Nikoraidō no hitobito: nihon kindaishi no naka no roshia seikyōkai*; Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to Meiji Nihon*; Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to sono jidai*; Nakamura, *Nikorai: kachi ga aru no wa, ta o awaremu kokoro dake da*.

[94] In addition to the works mentioned above, see also: G.D. Ivanova, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaj i ego japonskie ucheniki," in *Iz istorii obshhestvennoj mysli Japonii XVII - XIX vv.*, ed. V.N. Goregljad (Moscow: Nauka, 1990); G.D. Ivanova, "Zhizn' i dejatel'nost' Svjatitelja Nikolaja Japonskogo," in *Pravoslavie na Dal'nem Vostoke*, ed. M. N. Bogoljubov, Pamjati Svjatitelja Nikolaja, Apostola Japonii, 1836–1912. (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo SPbGU, 1996); K. I. Logachev, "Rossijskaja Duhovnaja Missija v Japonii i ee vzaimootnoshenija s drugimi hristianskimi missionerami," in *Pravoslavie na Dal'nem Vostoke*, ed. M. N. Bogoljubov, Pamjati Svjatitelja Nikolaja, Apostola Japonii, 1836–1912. (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo SPbGU, 1996); S. Maljarov, "Nash vypusknik, apostol Japonii, Svjatoj Nikolaj" (Feb. 15, 2013). Retrieved from: https://spbda.ru/publications/nash-vypusknik-apostol-yaponii-svyatoy-nikolay/. Ėleonora B. Sablina, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaj Japonskij i Vostochnyj institut," *Izvestija Vostochnogo instituta DVGU* Spec. vyp. Japonija (2000).

[95] See, for example: *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v vospominanijah sovremennikov*, ed. G. E. Besstremjannaja.

Among the monographs in which Nikolai's activities figure heavily are a book published in 2006 by Eleonora Sablina entitled *150 Years of Orthodoxy in Japan: The History of the Japanese Orthodox Church and Its Founder, St. Nicholas* and a study by Galina Besstremyanaya entitled 'Christianity and the Bible in Japan, Part 1: A Historical Essay and Linguistic Analysis.'[96] If we look in detail at Nikolai's translations, we can see that the latter work makes an important contribution to research into his views on the indigenisation of Orthodoxy in Japan and its limits. Like the Japanese works, Sablina's monograph paints a detailed portrait of the everyday working life of Nikolai and the Mission but her book shares some shortcomings with many Russian researchers.

Sablina does not perform a serious analysis of the consistency and dynamics of Nikolai's thought, instead characterising it by quoting individual phrases from his diaries and letters out of context. This leads to serious errors in her work. For example, she states: 'Nikolai wanted Christian teaching in Japan to become Japanese Orthodox because it had become Greek Orthodox in Greece and Russian Orthodox in Russia.'[97] This statement completely contradicts the foundations of Orthodox dogma and canon law, according to which the Christian (Orthodox) Church is universal and cannot be national because it does not belong to any particular nation.

The academic literature contains almost no studies of Nikolai's approach to the status of the Japanese Church generally and what little does exist is dominated by the overly simplified view that Nikolai immediately sought to make the Japanese Church as independent as possible from the ROC. In fact, most authors rely on individual statements taken out of context, but this this is nevertheless an important question when studying the limits of the Orthodox Church's indigenisation and Nikolai's attitude towards it.[98]

Perhaps the only attempt that has been made in Russia to study specifically Nikolai's thought was the work published in 2018 by Priest Ruslan (Roman) Savchuk, 'The views of Nikolai of Japan, Equal to the Apostles on relations between the Church and society at the turn of the 20th

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[96] Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*; G. E. Besstremjannaja, *Hristianstvo i Biblija v Japonii. Chast' 1. Istoricheskij ocherk i lingvisticheskij analiz* (Moscow: OVCS MP, 2006). Part 2 is a Church Slavonic-Japanese Orthodox dictionary.

[97] Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, p. 15.

[98] Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (New York: Penguin, 1964), p. 375; U. Mazurika, "Sv. Nikolaj Japonskij i russko-japonskaja vojna 1904–1905 gg.: opyt primirenija skvoz' prizmu very," *Aktual'ni problemi vitchiznjanoï ta vsesvitn'oï istoriï,* p. 12 (2009): 169; N. A. Suhanova, *Istorija Japonskoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi v XX veke: put' k avtonomii.* (St. Petersburg: Aletejja, 2013), p. 6; Sho Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*, Harvard East Asian monographs, (Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013), p. 103.; Hellen J. Ballhatchet, "The Modern Missionary Movement in Japan: Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox," in *Handbook of Christianity in Japan* ed. Mark R. Mullins (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003), p. 55.

century.'[99] Despite the fact that this study is relatively small in scope and examines only one aspect of Nikolai's thought, it is nonetheless valuable as the first attempt to study the question seriously. However, it must be accepted that it fails to recognise the fact that Nikolai's views evolved over time.

There are two reasons why many Russian works suffer from the same shortcomings. First, Soviet-era ideological restrictions forced into being a long break in religious research, with the result that many researchers are unfamiliar with the basics of Orthodoxy, in particular dogmatics, liturgics, patristics, and canon law, and without that knowledge, it is difficult to adequately assess the thoughts of an Orthodox priest. In addition, the current popularity of religion prompts researchers to mention only those statements or ideas that look positive by today's standards. The result is that in the case of Kasatkin, little attention is given to his initial conviction of the superiority of Western civilisation, subsequent pessimism, and even some of his xenophobic statements.

Several doctoral dissertations defended in Russia also deserve to be studied in depth. A dissertation by Aleksey Gavrikov, 'Journalistic Activities of the Members of the Russian Spiritual Mission in Japan as a Chanel of Russo-Japanese Intercultural Communication (1860s–1917),' constitutes valuable material on the writings of several mission members both Russian and Japanese, particularly Hieromonk Anatoly (Tikhai), Archimandrite Sergius (Stragorodsky), Archimandrite Andronik (Nikolsky), Bishop Sergius (Tikhomirov), Sergey Seoji (Syozi Syogoro), and Daniil Konishi.[100] In 2018, Hieromonk Nikolai (Ono Shigenobu) of the Japanese Orthodox Church defended his dissertation entitled 'The Formation of the Japanese Orthodox Church under Archbishop Nikolai [Kasatkin] from 1876 to 1891.' Based on Japanese-language documents from the archive of the Japanese Orthodox Church, his study describes in detail its emergence and development in the second half of the 19th century, but it has only limited relevance for the current study since it mainly analyses the internal organisational structure of the Church and does not even mention the question of its status or Nikolai's approach to it.[101]

There is still no English-language monographic study of Nikolai and his activities. The largest publication in English is the collection of articles entitled *Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the*

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[99] Savchuk, *Problemy vzaimootnoshenij cerkvi i obshhestva rubezha XIX–XX vekov v osmyslenii ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo: monografija*.

[100] Aleksej Aleksandrovich Gavrikov, "Publicisticheskaja dejatel'nost' chlenov rossijskoj duhovnoj missii v Japonii kak kanal russko-japonskoj mezhkul'turnoj kommunikacii." (Candidate of Historical Sciences Irkutsk State University, 2012).

[101] Hieromonk Nikolaj (Ono Shigenobu), "Stanovlenie Japonskoĭ Pravoslavnoĭ Cerkvi pri arhiepiskope Nikolae (Kasatkine) v period s 1876 g. po 1891 g. Obzor pervoistochnikov iz arhivov Japonskoĭ Pravoslavnoĭ Cerkvi." (Candidate of Theology Obshhecerkovnaja aspirantura i doktorantura im. svjatyh ravnoapostol'nyh Kirilla i Mefodija, 2018).

Orthodox Mission in Japan: A Collection of Writings by an International Group of Scholars about St. Nikolai, his Disciples, and the Mission, published in 2003 by the Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and St. Francisco and edited by Michael Van Remortel and Peter Chang.[102] Most of the articles it contains are excerpts from fuller treatments on Nikolai written in Japanese and Russian by well-known researchers of both countries such as Eleonora Sablina, Nakamura Kennosuke, Nakamura Yoshukazu, and Naganawa Mitsuo. The most interesting section is the introductory article by Michael Van Remortel that contains some new information, particularly about Nikolai's stays in the US and Europe on his way to Russia, an article with biographies of his Japanese students, and translations of several documents in the Appendix.

There are a number of chapters in books and collections as well as articles in journals that examine certain aspects of Kasatkin's work. Of these, the works of Oxford University Professor Sho Konishi, a specialist on Japanese anarchism, deserve special mention.[103] In several articles and in his book *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan* published in 2013, he writes in some detail about Nikolai's activities and that of several of his students. He goes into particular detail on Daniil Konishi, a student of Nikolai who, according to the author, played a significant role in Japan's reception of the ideas of Lev Tolstoy and created a new system of thought for Japan that he calls 'Anarchist religion' or 'Tolstoyan religion.' Other notable works include a chapter on the activities of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in the book *Russian Orthodoxy and the Russo-Japanese War*[104] by Betsy Perabo and Evgeny Steiner's review of the Japanese edition of the diaries of Nikolai.[105]

In addition to works on Nikolai and the Japanese Orthodox Church of the Meiji period, this study draws on a wide range of works in English, Japanese, and Russian on the history, economy, and religious thought of Japan and Russia, the history of missionary activity in Japan and neighbouring countries, and Japan's and Russia's interactions with the West in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. It also cites several works in French that outline the activities of French missionaries in Japan, as well as articles in Ukrainian published by the Kiev Theological Academy that look mainly at Nikolai's Japanese students who studied there.

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[102] Michael van Remortel and Peter Chang, eds., *Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the Orthodox Mission in Japan: A Collection of Writings by an International Group of Scholars about St. Nikolai, his Disciples, and the Mission* (Point Reyes Station, CA: Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and St. Francisco, 2003).

[103] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*; Sho Konishi, "Translation and Conversion Beyond Western Modernity: Tolstoian Religion in Meiji Japan," in *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology and Transformations of Modernity*, ed. Dennis C. Washburn and A. Kevin (eds.) Reinhart (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 235–66. Sho Konishi, "“Reopening the "Opening of Japan": A Russian-Japanese Revolutionary Encounter and the Vision of Anarchist Progress," *American Historical Review* 112, no. 1 (2007).

[104] Betsy C. Perabo, *Russian Orthodoxy and the Russo-Japanese War* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), pp. 45–64.

[105] Steiner, "Review: Nikolai of Japan. The Diaries of St. Nikolai of Japan by St. Nikolai."

Chapter 1

The First Period of Nikolai's Work. The Sermon Begins: Optimism and Moderate Westernism (early 1860s to mid-1870s)

This chapter examines the first phase of Nikolai's work, which runs from his arrival in Japan until approximately the mid-1870s. Because his views evolved gradually, it is difficult to demarcate specific changes and for the purposes of this study, we will use his arrival in Japan in 1861 as the starting point, although his earlier studies in Russia certainly also played a role in forming his worldview. Three different dates could serve as the endpoint of that period. In April 1870, during Nikolai's return visit to Russia, the Holy Synod of the ROC established the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Japan and Nikolai was appointed as its chief, for which he was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite. This being so, when Nikolai returned to Japan in early 1871, he did so not as a simple priest at the Russian Embassy in Hakodate but as the head of the Mission for the whole country, even though that role only existed on paper. Nikolai moved from Hakodate to Tokyo in 1872 to organise the Mission in the capital. Finally, in 1873, the Japanese government lifted the ban on preaching Christianity to the Japanese, thereby enabling Nikolai to conduct his activities openly. It is, therefore, evident that for most of this first period of his activity, Nikolai lived in Hakodate, far from the country's political centre and served as a priest in the Embassy's church. And, because he did not hold formal status as a missionary, he conducted his missionary activities illegally and covertly. All this naturally left an imprint on his views and his attitude towards his activities.

Nikolai's diaries for this period have not been found, although there is evidence that he did keep them. For example, he mentioned that a diary he kept during his trip from St. Petersburg to

Hakodate was lost in a fire that occurred while he lived in Hakodate.[106] Theories vary as to what happened to his other diaries from that period.[107] As a result, the main sources for this chapter are the articles Nikolai published in Russian journals, his official reports to the Foreign Ministry and Holy Synod, his business and private letters, and the recollections of several of his colleagues.

The religious situation in Russia in the second half of the 19th century and the formation of Nikolai's worldview

Of course, Nikolai's life in Russia before he travelled to Japan played a significant role in shaping the general outlook of the future missionary, so it makes sense to look in detail at the atmosphere and environment that helped form his views. The future Archbishop of Japan was born into the world as Ivan Dmitrievich Kasatkin on August 1, 1836 to the family of a church deacon who lived in the Berezovsky church complex of the Belsky parish of Smolensk province. He received his initial education at the Velsk School of Theology and the Smolensk Theological Seminary. Ivan was a diligent seminary student, although his grades indicate that he did not like ancient languages. Nevertheless, he and the other top two students were given the opportunity to continue their studies at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy at the state's expense. The reforms to Russian spiritual education that were implemented in 1808–1814 introduced a system four successive stages: parochial schools, theological schools, seminaries, and academies, with all seminaries and academies being assigned to one of four spiritual and education districts, according to the number of academies. At that time, there were academies in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, and Kazan, and the Smolensk Theological Seminary was part of the St. Petersburg spiritual and educational district. According to newly available information, Ivan Kasatkin entered the academy in 1857 to study two consecutive two-year courses, the first and lower in philosophy and the second and higher in theology.[108]

Kasatkin was a good student at the Academy, finishing tenth in a class of 50 during his first year. His best subject was history, followed by psychology and mathematics. He did even better during his second and third years. Interestingly, although he would go on to become a well-known missionary later in life, his grade sheet shows no evidence that he attended the optional course on missionary work. Those who knew him at that time described him as a very cheerful and carefree student. Citing the recollections of one of the future monk's classmates, Hieromonk Anthony

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[106] *Sbornik propovedej i rechej vysokopreosvjashhennogo arh. Nikolaja* (1911), p. 261.

[107] Steiner, "Review: Nikolai of Japan. The Diaries of St. Nikolai of Japan by St. Nikolai," p. 538; Scherbina, "“Neschastnyi dnevnik.” Archiepiskop yaponskii Nikolai i ego zametki," p. 187.

[108] Karpuk, "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v gody obuchenija v Sankt-Peterburgskoj duhovnoj akademii."

(Martsenko) wrote in his 1914 work *Archbishop Nikolai of Japan as a Teacher of Morality: His Life, Activities and Views*—the first dissertation on Nikolai—that he:

> was always the most cheerful and carefree in inspiring people to attend dance parties and the theatre, and in organising visits to private parties. Everyone saw and knew the lively student, but no one could imagine that they were seeing not a simple and ordinary young man but a great and wonderful figure of the Church.[109]

This description matches Nikolai's own impressions; he described himself in the same way as a youthful student:

> Being naturally carefree, I did not give much thought to planning my future. During my final year at the theological academy, I did not worry about the future. I had as much fun as I could and danced at my relatives' wedding without a thought that I would soon be a monk.[110]

This, of course, does not prove that Nikolai was only interested in commonplace pursuits such as dancing. The atmosphere at the Academy enabled students to gain deep insight into the workings of the Church and encouraged the best students to devote themselves to sincere service to it. His attitude towards that atmosphere and the role his education played in his future life are revealed in the letter he sent as Archbishop Nikolai to the Academy on the occasion of its centenary in December 1909. He wrote:

> Every time your pupil was in danger of deviating from the straight path, at the slightest attempt to succumb to the temptation that appeared, you offer the strict reminder: "And how would the Instructors, who took the trouble to instil ideals in your soul, look at this? What would your circle of academic friends say, from whom in conversations and disputes, only holy, pure, and noble thoughts for life poured out, resplendent sparks from flint and steel?" And this cry is enough to prevent a wrong step, to remove a threatening temptation. It is this way that you guard your pupils their whole lives and protect them from deviating from the path to which you have led them…[111]

The picture this presents is quite clear, even allowing for the high style of the document, in keeping with the occasion. Nikolai's attitude is in a way unsurprising. The St. Petersburg Theological Academy was one of Russia's main centres of spiritual education in the mid-19th century and many famous clergymen and theological scholars taught there. In addition, many people connected with the Academy were directly involved in missionary work and graduates

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[109] Ibid.

[110] *Otdyh hristianina* 2 (1912): p. 320.

[111] S. Maljarov, "Nash vypusknik, apostol Japonii, Svjatoj Nikolaj."

often went to serve abroad in diplomatic and spiritual missions. Beginning in 1857, the rector of the Academy was the major Church figure, theologian, publicist, and preacher Archimandrite Theophan (Govorov, 1815–1894). He later became a bishop and was canonised in 1988 under the name Theophan the Recluse. For approximately one year before becoming rector, he served as the senior priest of the Russian Embassy Church in Istanbul, where he studied the Greek-Bulgarian schism and became well acquainted with the Orthodox East. In addition to his work as rector, Theophan oversaw instruction about the Law of God in secular educational institutions in the St. Petersburg district, edited the *Christian Reading* magazine that the Academy had published since 1821, was the chairman of an Academy of Sciences committee for publishing Russian translations of works by Byzantine historians, and from 1858, was the chairman of a committee for translating the Holy Scriptures into Russian. According to contemporaries, the rector was simple in his communications and accessible to students. Nikolai probably communicated with him and listened to the sermons he delivered regularly on major holy days and that were published in a separate book in 1858.[112] A new rector was appointed in 1859, Archimandrite Nektary (Nadezhdin, 1819–1874), who also later became a bishop and a well-known figure in the Church. Nikolai's instructors included prominent scholars such as the famous philosopher Vasily Nikolaevich Karpov (1798–1867), who taught history of philosophy; Vasily Ivanovich Dolotsky (1814–1885), a professor of liturgy who had effectively founded the discipline; the theologian Yevgraf Ivanovich Lovyagin (1822–1909); and the biblical scholar and exegete Moses Alexandrovich Golubev (1824–1869). Other instructors at the Academy included writer and Church historian Ilarion Alekseyevich Chistovich (1828–1893), Church historian Ivan Vasilyevich Cheltsov (1828–1878), religious writer, historian, and publicist Andrey Ivanovich Predtechensky (1832–1893), and historian and political publicist Mikhail Osipovich Koyalovich (1828–1891).

The general atmosphere in the country, and especially the intense discussions about the state and fate of the Church, doubtless influenced the worldviews of Academy students during those years. The second half of the 1850s in Russia came just before the Great Reforms of Alexander II, which were mostly although not exclusively liberal in nature. They were generally intended to bring Russia up to the same level as the world's most developed countries, which were primarily European, and gave new impetus to Westernism in the country. The main reforms concerned the peasantry, financial structures, educational systems, local government, city administration, judicial system, state administration, and the military, and the overall trend towards reform could not but affect the religious sphere as well. Reforms in this area pursued entirely

[112] Archimandrite Georgij (Tertyshnikov), *Zhizn' i dejatel'nost' Svjatitelja Feofana Zatvornika* (Moscow: Pravila very, 1999), pp. 39–44.; Feofan (Govorov), *Predosterezhenie ot uvlechenija duhom nastojashhego vremeni* (St. Petersburg: tip. U. Shtaufa, 1858).

different objectives than in Western liberalism. As Gregory Freeze has put it, 'In contrast to the West, where the clerical question was a matter of pernicious clericalism and something to be contained, in Russia the question had an altogether different import: how to aid and uplift the clergy, not suppress it.'[113] It was widely held in Russian society that the Church was in a somewhat dispirited condition: The state had exercised too much control over it and devoted too little attention to its welfare and as a result, the Church was not able to fulfil its purpose of nurturing and educating the people effectively.

One of the catalysts of this discussion was the publication in 1858 in Leipzig of the book *A Description of the Rural Clergy* by the priest Ioann Bellyustin. The author criticised the impoverished, abject, and depressed condition of rural priests and concluded that a radical transformation of the entire clergy was necessary.[114] In particular, he proposed increased funding for the Church and an expansion of its use of appointment by election. The book was translated into several European languages and enjoyed a wide response; Emperor Alexander II, in whom the author had placed most of his hopes for the potential increase in funding, read it as well.[115]

Concurrent to this, the first programmes of Church reforms appeared and began to be discussed. They were initiated in 1856 by the religious writer Andrey Muravyov (1806–1874),[116] Bishop of Revel Agafangel (Solovyov, 1812–1876), theologian and publicist Nikita Gilyarov-Platonov (1824–1887), and others and finally in 1861, the new Minister of the Interior Petr Valuev (1815–1890) began implementing the reforms in earnest. Many of the proposed reforms were contradictory or even mutually exclusive but overall, they were intended to increase the Church's independence and strengthen its role.[117] All such ideas were actively discussed in the Church environment and the students of the country's leading theological academy could not but have known and been interested in them. While in Japan, Nikolai frequently referred to them in his diaries and formed his own position regarding the Church's role in society (see Chapter Four).

In addition to the growing discussion about the Church's role in the state, this period also saw a general revival of Church life and a greater focus on its most pressing challenges. Theological academies founded periodicals that were largely devoted to this discussion. Archbishop Grigory (Postnikov, 1784–1860) of the Kazan Theological Academy founded and

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[113] Gregory L. Freeze, *The Parish Clergy in Nineteenth Century Russia: Crisis, Reform, Counter-Reform* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 194.

[114] Ivan Stepanovich Belljustin, *Opisanie sel'skogo duhovenstva*, vol. 4, Russkij zagranichnyj sbornik, (Paris; Berlin; London, 1858), pp. 1, 111, 47.

[115] Il'ja Aleksandrovich Semin, "Gosudarstvennaja politika v otnoshenii pravoslavnogo prihodskogo duhovenstva." (Candidate of Historical science Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, 2006).

[116] A. N. Murav'ev, *Pis'ma o pravoslavii* (Kiev, 1873), IV.

[117] S. V. Rimskij, *Rossijskaja cerkov' v jepohu Velikih Reform* (Moscow: Kruticкoe Patriarsh'e podvor'e, 1999), pp. 191–252.

began publishing the *Orthodox Interlocutor* journal in 1855. Originally intended to cover the polemic with Old Believers, the publication began to devote attention to other religions as well, particularly Islam and Buddhism. Grigory was later transferred to the St. Petersburg Theological Academy where in 1858, he founded the *Spiritual Conversation* journal that devoted significant attention to religious pedagogy and the catechism. The monthly journal *Strannik* (Pilgrim) was first published in St. Petersburg in 1860 and in the same year, the theological seminary of Kiev founded the journals *Proceedings of the Kiev Theological Academy* and *Guidance for Rural Pastors*. Like other students, Ivan Kasatkin would surely have taken a strong interest in the materials and discussions found in these new journals.

This period also saw a revival in missionary activity both at home and abroad. The St. Petersburg Academy actively trained future missionaries and became a centre for training personnel to staff foreign missions in Beijing, Istanbul, Athens, and Jerusalem, as well as the churches attached to Russian embassies in various countries. As a rule, priests were dispatched to a mission at the request of the Foreign Ministry with the approval of the Holy Synod. It was more convenient for these state bodies to make their request to the academy in the capital because it was both the closest and most authoritative. To fill vacancies in missions quickly, graduating students often received assignments to those posts and were allowed to complete their studies early. Frequently, they were also ordained as priests and, if necessary, permitted to take their monastic vows sooner than usual. Students went to the missions voluntarily, responding to announcements made by the Academy's management and at the same time, students who had not yet become monks applied for hieromonk vacancies and often took vows only if they were approved as candidates.

In 1856, the Academy received an appeal from the Foreign Ministry via the Holy Synod requesting that it send students to the 14th Mission in Beijing. The Academy sent a number of students including hieromonk Isaiah (Polikin) and Alexander (Kulchitsky) (who later became a bishop and a well-known missionary) and as secular members, Academy graduate Afanasy Popov and upper department student Nikolai Mramornov.[118] At the time they were admitted to the Mission, three of them had not yet graduated and were allowed to skip a number of subjects and write their final essays on an accelerated basis. In 1857, another Academy student, Alexander Zaklinsky (1836–1902) was sent as a hierodeacon to the Russian Mission in Istanbul, although he was tonsured as a monk under the name Akaky only after his candidacy was approved.[119] He later became a bishop and a well-known Church writer.

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[118] A. N. Hohlov, "Missionerskaja dejatel'nost' Gurija Karpova do i posle preobrazovanija Pekinskoj duhovnoj missii v 60-e gody XIXv," *Obshhestvo i gosudarstvo v Kitae* 45, no. 2 (2015): pp. 870–71.
[119] Karpuk, "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v gody obuchenija v Sankt-Peterburgskoj duhovnoj akademii."

Strictly speaking, Nikolai's fate and his Church career were not unique; many of his contemporaries also began as theological academy students, then worked at foreign missions and later became bishops and well-known Church figures. Several of Nikolai's colleagues at the Japanese Mission followed a similar path, including Sergei (Stragorodsky) who became Patriarch in 1943, Sergius (Tikhomirov) who became Metropolitan, Vladimir (Sokolovsky-Avtonomov, 1852–1931) who became an archbishop, Gedeon (Pokrovsky, 1844–1922) and Arseny (Timofeev, 1865-1917) who became bishops, and Archbishop Andronik (Nikolsky, 1870–1918) who was canonised as a hieromartyr. Nikolai was unique in the fact that he was the first to choose to serve in faraway Japan and even though there was as yet no Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission there and Japan had banned Christianity in general, Nikolai immediately began to think about preaching to the locals.

The possibility of preaching in Japan had already been mentioned in a report to the Holy Synod sent in 1859 by the Russian Consul in Hakodate, Iosif Goshkevich (1814–1875). Goshkevich was considered a specialist on both the Far East and religious issues. He was also a graduate of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, had worked for 10 years in the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing, and had compiled the first Japanese-Russian dictionary. He wrote in his report that the position of rector of the consular church required:

> …none other than someone who has completed the course of the theological academy, who could be useful not only for his spiritual activities but also for his scholarly works and even for his personal life, and who would be able to impart a good understanding of our clergy to not only the Japanese but also to foreigners living here.

He cited the example of French Catholic missionary Eugène-Emmanuel Mermet de Cachon (1828–1889), the first missionary in Hakodate, an educated person who had mastered Japanese and who had expressed the hope that the rector of the Orthodox Church could 'also contribute to the spread of Christianity in Japan.'[120] This request was forwarded by the Synod to the Academy through Metropolitan Grigory (Postnikov).

Later, Nikolai recalled how he had requested the position on a whim:

> Passing through the classrooms, my gaze fell, without thinking, on a sheet of white paper lying there on which I read the following words: "Would anyone like to go to Japan to serve as abbot of the Embassy church in Hakodate and begin preaching Orthodoxy in this country?" I decided: "Why shouldn't I go?" And starting from vespers that day, I already belonged to Japan.[121]

[120] As quoted in Antonij, "Svjatoj ravnoapostol'nyj arhiepiskop Japonskij Nikolaj," p. 10.
[121] Antonij, "Svjatoj ravnoapostol'nyj arhiepiskop Japonskij Nikolaj," p. 10.

The decision surprised his student friends. One, Vasily Opotsky—who would go on to become Bishop Anastasius (1830–1905)—later wrote to fellow former student Grigory Afanasyevich Polisadov:

> Do you remember that evening, G. A., when the student Kasatkin, excited and agitated, entered the room where you, Samotsvetov, Popov, Orlov, and others lived and where I happened to be, and announced loudly, "Brothers, I have just been to the rector and expressed a desire to join the Japanese Mission and go to Japan"? At the time, we were somewhat indifferent to such a statement and hardly any of us then thought that this student, who did not wait for the end of the academic course, would make a historical name for himself and that his fame would spread from one end of the Orthodox world to the other — that he would shine like a bright star in the Far East and appear, literally, as a light of revelation to the heathens, converting tens of thousands of pagans to Christianity, building numerous Orthodox churches for them, founding many schools and translating liturgical books into Japanese…[122]

However, it is only natural that such a decision that determined the course of the rest of his life was not entirely without basis. Eight years later, Nikolai argued that he had gone to Japan for 'missionary purposes' and that it was unlikely that someone 'would leave the classroom to come here only to serve once a week in a completely empty church, since there are no more than a dozen Russian Orthodox here, including young children.'[123] He also recalled that he already knew a little about Japan and Asia as a whole before he left the Academy. In 1907, speaking about how it had been God's will that had directed him to go to Japan, he mentioned a number of things that had influenced his decision. After reading the novel *Oblomov* by Ivan Goncharov, Nikolai decided to choose to serve God over serving the world. Interestingly, previously, Goncharov had worked as a secretary to Vice Admiral Evfimy Putyatin (1803–1883) and participated in the expedition that had opened Japan to Russian trade. The writer described this expedition and various countries, including Japan, in his diaries published in 1858 under the title *Frigate 'Pallada.'* Nikolai could have read them as well but he only mentioned *Oblomov*, a story about a young Russian nobleman who has numerous plans about how to improve society but is too lazy to put them into practice. The full vision of the novel was published in 1859 and it became the talk of the town. Nikolai mentions 'criticism' from *Oblomov*, obviously referring to criticism of inertia in implementing one's ideals.

According to Nikolai, it was his seminary teacher Ivan Solovyov's stories about China and the decision by his friend from the Academy Isaiah (Polikin) to join the Russian Ecclesiastical

[122] Karpuk, "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v gody obuchenija v Sankt-Peterburgskoj duhovnoj akademii."
[123] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," p. 247.

Mission in Beijing that gave him an idea to go to Asia, initially to China. It is interesting that like Nikolai, Isaiah (Ivan Fyodorovich Polikin, 1833–1871)—who served as an example to Nikolai and was sent to China in 1857—studied local religions and philosophical teachings and combined these activities in tandem with his missionary work.[124] Later when he read Vasily Golovnin's notes about being held in captivity by the Japanese, his interest in Japan was sparked.[125]

In notes that were published in 1816, Vasily Golovnin—Russian navigator and leader of two round-the-world expeditions—was the first person to provide a fairly detailed Russian-language description of Japan including its national character, education, language, religion, system of governance, legislation, and customs.[126] The notes gained broad popularity in Russia and were translated into many European languages.

In other words, the future saint was already interested in missionary work and Japan before he left for Asia. Sergius (Stragorodsky) reported that Nikolai had said that his conscience had led him to the monastic life. '"Should I go?" he asked himself. "Yes, you should go," his conscience answered, "Only unmarried. One or the other: either a family or a mission—especially in such a distant and unknown country."'[127] The fact that Nikolai was the only candidate who had expressed a desire to become a monk probably worked to his advantage and his candidacy was approved. At the personal request of Metropolitan Grigory, Nikolai was awarded the degree of Candidate of Theology without having to submit a qualifying essay. This enabled him to graduate from the Academy, although he remained uncertified in some disciplines because he had missed a whole year of study.[128] On June 24, 1860, Ivan Kasatkin was tonsured as a monk with the name Nikolai (in honour of Nicholas of Mirliki, one of Russia's most respected saints). On June 29 he was ordained as a hierodeacon and on the next day as a hieromonk (monk-priest) because the priestly rank was necessary for the performance of his duties in Japan. After tonsuring him as a monk, Bishop Nektary immediately directed Nikolai to missionary work and noted that his ascetic life would be led not in a monastery but rather in a distant and unbelieving country; that he would have to carry not only the cross of the ascetic but also the staff of a wanderer; and that in addition to the feat of monasticism, he would be called on to 'do the work of the Apostles.'[129]

The 24-year-old hieromonk Nikolai left on August 1, 1860 for his place of service in Japan, but the road was a long one. When the weather put a halt to all travel, he was forced to spend the

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[124] A. N. Hohlov, "Isajja Polikin: missioner, perevodchik, filolog," *Vostochnyj arhiv* 1, no. 33 (2016).

[125] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* ed. Kennosuke Nakamura, 5 vols., vol. 5 (1904–1912) (St. Petersburg: Giperion, 2004), p. 338.

[126] V. M. Golovnin, *Zapiski flota kapitana Golovnina o prikljuchenijah ego v plenu u japoncev v 1811, 1812 i 1813 godah*, 3 vols. (St. Petersburg: V Morskoj tip., 1816).

[127] Sergij (Stragorodskij), *Na Dal'nem Vostoke. Pis'ma japonskogo missionera*, p. 95.

[128] Karpuk, "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v gody obuchenija v Sankt-Peterburgskoj duhovnoj akademii."

[129] As quoted in: Antonij, "Svjatoj ravnoapostol'nyj arhiepiskop Japonskij Nikolaj," p. 11.

winter in Nikolaevsk in the centre of the Maritime region and it was not until July 2, 1861 that he reached Hakodate on the Russian ship *America*.

Nikolai had an interesting meeting in Nikolaevsk with Innokenty (Veniaminov, 1797–1879), the Bishop of Kamchatka and the Kuril and Aleutian Islands, who later became the Metropolitan of Moscow, a famous missionary, canonised as equal to the apostles, and an Apostle of Siberia and America. Bishop Innokenty devoted most of his life to missionary work in Siberia and Alaska. He preached Christianity among the indigenous population of Kamchatka, the Aleutian Islands, and North America, baptised thousands of people, and built churches at which he founded schools in which he personally taught the children. In 1826, he created an alphabet of the Aleutian language, into which he translated sacred texts for the needs of preaching.

According to Nikolai, the famed and experienced missionary gave him 'various instructions on the Sunday evenings that I spent with him at his kind invitation.'[130] The fact that Innokenty directed Nikolai primarily towards missionary work is shown in particular by his advice to 'translate the Holy Scriptures and the prayer book into the language of the newly converted natives so that Orthodoxy takes root in their culture.'[131] Innokenty also advised Nikolai how to behave with non-Christians in order to make a good impression on them. He did not approve of the modest cassock that Nikolai wore at the academy and sent him to buy velvet, from which he personally cut a new cassock and presented it to Nikolai, along with the bronze cross he had been awarded. 'When you go there, everyone will look to see what kind of priests they have. You must inspire them with respect at once,' Innokenty explained.[132]

Innokenty told Nikolai the most important principle of missionary activity, to which he adhered to himself: 'First, love those whom you want to tell about Christ, then make them love you, and then tell them about Christ.'[133] Innokenty said that Nikolai could earn the love of his flock by helping them with their everyday and cultural needs, teaching them crafts, hygiene, and matters of personal health and fighting disease.[134] Nikolai put all this advice into practice in Japan.

Initial activity in Japan

Nikolai did not end up in Japan by accident; his arrival in Hakodate is closely connected to historical events in Japan at that time and to the history of Japan's relationship with the outside

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[130] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 502.
[131] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 21.
[132] Sergij (Stragorodskij), *Na Dal'nem Vostoke. Pis'ma japonskogo missionera*.
[133] Serafim Aleksandrovich Arhangelov, *Nashi zagranichnye missii. Ocherk o russkih duhovnyh missijah* (St. Petersburg: Izdanie P. P. Sojkina, 1899).
[134] Kazem-Bek, "Apostol Japonii arhiepiskop Nikolaj (Kasatkin)," p. 49.

world, particularly with European powers, the US, and Russia. The 1860s were a turbulent time in Japanese history. It marked the final period of the regime of the shogunate—that is, rule by the supreme shogun warlords, with an emperor who held only nominal authority. That system had existed in the country for almost 700 years, but was especially active during the Edo period (1603–1868), when the Tokugawa shoguns were in power. Their residences and government (*bakufu*) were located in Edo (later called Tokyo), while the emperors lived in Kyoto. Nikolai arrived in Japan during the period in which the authority of the shoguns was ending, known as *bakumatsu* (1853–1868—literally, 'the end of the *bakufu* government'), during which time the system suffered a fatal crisis. The arrival of the Russian missionary was only possible because Japan was at that time opening up to foreign trade—an event associated with the beginning of the Bakumatsu period.

From the 16th to the 19th centuries, Japan had pursued a policy of isolation from the outside world. It banned foreigners from visiting the country without special permission and almost entirely banned trade with them. Foreign missionaries were expelled from the country in 1587 and Christianity was banned in 1612. Starting in 1641, trade was permitted only with the Dutch and Chinese, but even that was severely restricted: All trade had to take place through the Port of Nagasaki, which was under the direct control of the *bakufu*. Only a single Dutch ship entered the port each year. European powers and the US were long content with this arrangement because they viewed Japan as a distant country and unattractive for trade. However, that situation changed in the mid-19th century.

A powerful US squadron led by Commander M. Perry arrived on the Japanese coast in February of 1853 to force the Japanese to negotiate. The *bakufu* government managed to postpone the decision for one year, but when the US squadron again approached Japan in March 1854, the first Japanese-American treaty was signed in Kanagawa. The treaty opened the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to trade with the US, and US citizens temporarily residing there were not subject to the restrictions imposed on the Dutch and Chinese in Nagasaki. Japan signed a similar treaty with Britain in October of that year and with the Netherlands some time later.

A Russian squadron under the command of Evfimy Putyatin entered Nagasaki harbour in August of 1853. Putyatin's task was to clarify the border between the two countries. Despite various delays that stemmed from the Japanese position and the beginning of the Crimean war, the first Russian-Japanese Treaty was signed in February 1855 in Shimoda. That document delineated the border between the Kuril Islands of Urup and Iturup and left Karafuto Island (Sakhalin)

undivided. It also opened the ports of Nagasaki, Hakodate, and Shimoda to Russian trade and permitted Russia to send a consul to one of them.[135]

To reward him for his role in securing that treaty, Putyatin was granted the title of count in 1861. He also became the Minister of Public Education and later a member of the State Council. Both Putyatin and his children supported Nikolai and his Mission. His daughter, Countess Olga Putyatina, arrived at the Russian Mission in Tokyo in 1884 and stayed for two and a half years, attending to the education of Japanese girls.

In accordance with the Treaty of Shimoda, it was decided to open a Consulate in the port closest to Russia, Hakodate. Iosif Goshkevich—who had taken part in negotiations with Japan in 1853 as part of Putyatin's mission in Nagasaki and served in the period 1854–1855 as a translator—was appointed Consul. He arrived in Hakodate with his family, a doctor, and other staff in October 1858 and the following year, Putyatin used contributions collected from Russian military vessels to build a wooden church dedicated to the Resurrection of Christ for Goshkevich's entourage and other Russian subjects. Naval hieromonk Filaret performed the first services in the church. Later, Vasily Makhov (1796–1864) was named consular priest. Makhov had already visited Japan as the priest on board the frigate *Diana* (one of the ships under Pyutatin's command that later sunk in the Port of Shimoda as a result of an earthquake) and had even written notes about Japan.[136] However, he was already 60 years old and unwell and was soon forced to leave. Goshkevich then asked the Foreign Ministry to send a different, younger, and more educated priest and the ministry's choice was recent graduate and hieromonk Nikolai.

For a person arriving from one of Europe's largest cities, Hakodate and its surroundings must have presented a rather wretched sight. At that time, the island now called Hokkaido was part of the Ezo (meaning 'foreigner') territories, which was a general moniker for the northern territories that had undefined boundaries and were inhabited by native Ainu tribes who effectively lived outside of Japanese rule. Only the southwestern part of the island was subject to the Edo government. It was called *Wajin-chi* (Japanese Lands) and covered the Japanese settlements on and around the Oshima Peninsula, where the Hakodate Port was located. In fact, the shogunate was only able to establish direct control over it in 1854. Before that, it was an appanage of the Matsumae clan, to which it had been given as far back as 1599 in exchange for the clan's

[135] Ikuta Michiko, "The legacy of the 18th and 19th centuries: from hierarchical and ethnocentric foreign relations to a western model of equal international relations," in Dmitry Streltsov and Nobuo Shimotomai (eds.), *A History of Russo-Japanese Relations: Over Two Centuries of Cooperation and Competition* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), p. 11.

[136] Archpriest Vasilij (Mahov), *Fregat "Diana" – putevye zapiski byvshego v 1854 i 1855 godah v Japonii protoiereja Vasilija Mahova* (St. Petersburg, 1867).

acceptance of the obligation to protect its borders.[137] After visiting the city in 1859, the first British diplomatic representative in Japan, Rutherford Alcock (1809–1897), described the town of Hakodate as 'little better than a long fishing village.'[138]

Dramatic events interrupted the formerly quiet life of the remote settlement during the initial years of Nikolai's stay. First, Japan's growing international trade brought new life to the port: Foreign ships began to arrive and an increasing number of foreigners, including priests, settled there. Second, the island witnessed the last fighting of the civil war between supporters of the emperor and those of the shogunate. After the defeat of the forces of the Tokugawa shogunate in the Boshin War (1868–1869) at the hands of forces loyal to Emperor Meiji, part of the former shogun's navy led by Admiral Enomoto Takeaki (1836–1908) fled to Ezo Island, along with several thousand soldiers. They were accompanied by French military advisors and in January 1869, proclaimed the independent Republic of Ezo. Its system of government was based on that of the United States and Enomoto was elected its first president. The authorities of the republic tried to appeal to foreign consuls in Hakodate to obtain official recognition but the emperor's forces soon routed the republican troops. The island was placed under the control of the government in Edo, which was shortly after renamed Tokyo. The Island Development Commission (Kaitakushi) was then created and the island renamed Hokkaido and divided into provinces. These decisions were made in part to stop Russian influence from spreading to the northern islands.

Nikolai witnessed the beginning of these events because he had left Japan for Russia in February 1869 and the Republic of Ezo was not defeated until April of that year.[139] None of Nikolai's diary entries in which he might have expressed his attitude towards these events have been preserved. However, he briefly described the civil war in Hokkaido in a memo he sent on June 12, 1869 to Foreign Ministry Asian Department Director Petr Stremoukhov (1823–1885),[140] in a similarly worded letter he sent to Holy Synod Acting Chief Procurator Yuri Tolstoy (1823–1889),[141] and in the article 'Japan from the point of view of the Christian mission' that he based on these two documents and published that year in the ninth (September) edition of the *Russkiy*

[137] Hitoshi Watanabe, "Introduction," in *Ainu Creed and Cult*, ed. Neil Gordon Monro (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 1–2.
[138] Rutherford Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in Japan*, vol. 1 (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1863), p. 268.
[139] Michael van Remortel, "Historical Introduction," in *Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the Orthodox Mission in Japan: A Collection of Writings by an International Group of Scholars about St. Nikolai, his Disciples, and the Mission*, ed. Michael van Remortel and Peter Chang (Point Reyes Station, CA: Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and St. Francisco, 2003), p. 8.
[140] Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja Direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P. N. Stremouhovu. In Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, p. 302.
[141] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 1, p. 124.

vestnik journal.[142] A comparison of these texts indicates that Nikolai, who was already in Russia when he wrote to Tolstoy, had not yet learned of Enomoto's defeat, but that news of it had reached him by September.

The situation in Hokkaido inevitably affected Nikolai's views and activities. One important factor in this was that Nikolai was located far from the centre of Japanese political events, but he knew of them and followed the course of the civil war with the help of foreign newspapers and various reports. In addition, he communicated primarily with the opponents of the emperor, who predominated in Hokkaido. This can also be seen from the letters and articles he wrote in the late 1860s.

It was not easy for Nikolai to understand the meaning of what was happening and predict the future. Some of his conclusions were correct, such as his conviction that the authorities would inevitably ease their policies on Christianity and permit it to be preached freely,[143] but he thought that the shoguns would do it, rather than the supporters of the emperor. Nikolai described in some detail the vicissitudes of the struggle between the supporters of the shogunate and the emperor, although his own sympathies lay with the shogunate. He characterised it as 'princes' struggling to fragment the country, while the shogun sought to consolidate it. Nikolai advocated a strong personal authority such as the shogun could wield if he were not hindered. He claimed that the decision by the last shogun, Yoshinobu, to relinquish power in early 1868 was met with 'deep disappointment and even grumbling from the greater half of Japan.'[144] At the same time, he considered the feudal princes, especially the 'southerners' (that is, the feudal lords from the southern provinces who supported the restoration of the emperor's authority), to be foreigners, and the emperor who succumbed to their influence as an opponent of the type of strong rule that was so necessary for Japan. In fact, the sympathies of the foreign powers were divided, and not all supported the emperor. Britain was his main supporter, while France supported the shogunate.[145]

At the same time, Nikolai could not accurately predict the prospects of the strengthening of the power of the emperor. Still, in a letter he sent to Metropolitan Isidore (Nikolsky, 1799–1892) of St. Petersburg in October 1868, he stated that the 'revolutionary' movement to restore the authority of the emperor had finally overthrown the shogunate.[146] A short time later, however, perhaps in reaction to the active resistance of the anti-imperial forces on Hokkaido, he became more circumspect in writing about the ultimate outcome of the struggle. In three separate documents in which he described these events (a note to Stremoukhov, a letter to Tolstoy, and the

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[142] Sila-Novitskaya, "Ot sostavitelya," pp. 27–80.
[143] Ibid., p. 75.
[144] Ibid., p. 76.
[145] Eugene Collache, "Une aventure au Japon," *Le Tour du Monde* 77 (1874).
[146] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 77.

article 'Japan from the point of view of the Christian Mission'), Nikolai predicted that the war would continue, although, in actual fact it did not.[147]

Nikolai described the emperor's supporters as feudal lords who, if victorious, would inevitably fall into a power struggle between them to take the place of the deposed shogun. At the head of the movement to restore power to the emperor, he wrote:

> There are several strong appanage princes and educated youth from different principalities. It can be called Japan's avant-garde in the field of civilisation: It is full of Platonic dreams of the future greatness of the country and is even thinking of introducing an English constitution. But it is really an unseeing tool in the hands of another power, and this power is two or three appanage princes (Satsuma, Chōshū, and Toca-Tosa), each of whom cherishes the hope of succeeding to the now obsolete throne.[148]

Even as he expressed the hope that 'the recent agitation will only subside once an individual bearing the mark of talent on his brow takes the stage and, in his own name and not in the name of another, becomes the head of the movement and, in a powerful gesture, points to a worthy goal and moves his people forward,' Nikolai doubted that the young Emperor Meiji could become such a leader. 'Not refreshed by the influx of fresh blood and fresh forces,' Nikolai wrote, 'The 25-centuries-old dynasty has, over the last 1,000 years, produced nothing but semi-idiots or the most insignificant individuals and now, in the person of its 15-year-old exponent, has not, according to foreign eyewitnesses, changed at all.'[149] Nikolai felt that it would be impossible for the new system of authority to consolidate around the emperor.

Nikolai did not embark on his missionary activities immediately for a number of reasons. First, such activity was formally banned and to carry it out covertly required that he at least exercise caution and get to know Japanese people thoroughly. At first, he mostly interacted with foreigners. As he later told Sergius (Stragorodsky), the non-Orthodox foreigners living in Hakodate did not initially have access to any priests from their denominations. Up until 1863, the only other missionary in Hakodate was the Catholic Mermet de Cachon, who had arrived in 1859 and was mostly engaged in teaching French. After his departure, it was not until 1867 that two more Catholics arrived in Hakodate—Pierre Mounicou (1825–1871) and Henry Armbruster

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[147] Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja Direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P.N.Stremouhovu. In Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, 302; Pis'mo upravljajushhemu dolzhnost' ober-prokurora Svjashhennogo Sinoda U. V. Tolstomu. In *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 1, 124; Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 79.

[148] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 77.

[149] Ibid., pp. 79–80

(1842–1896).[150] As a result, Nikolai served as the pastor for all Christian foreigners there, tending their sickbeds, attending family celebrations, and becoming the centre of a motley circle of Christian foreigners.[151] Only after some time, when more foreign spiritual figures from other Christian confessions had come to Japan, did Nikolai enjoy more free time in which he could study Japan, its language, and its culture.

A remark that Bishop Innokenty made to him in 1861 offers indirect evidence of the fact that in the early years of his time in Japan, Nikolai had significant contact with foreigners living in Hakodate and had time to read many foreign books. In August 1861, Nikolai met again with Innokenty, who was forced to stay in Hakodate as the result of a shipwreck that occurred when his ship, which had sailed for Kamchatka, was wrecked in a storm in which all passengers survived. The steamer that came for them docked in Hakodate. During his time there, Innokenty continued to give advice to the young priest. In a letter he wrote to Innokenty seven years later, Nikolai recalled the occasion when the bishop had found him reading a French book, and the experienced missionary had remarked: 'Drop all of these books that are of little use and start assiduously studying the Japanese language.' Nikolai goes on to note: 'I kept your advice sacred in my memory and tried to follow it. Japanese books opened before me. Japanese speech flows freely, though with errors.'[152]

The same attitude can be seen in the letters he wrote during this period to Goshkevich in which Nikolai described in detail the news and vicissitudes in the life of the small foreign community in Hakodate but relates little of the situation in Japan itself or of any meetings with Japanese people.[153] It was imperative that Nikolai learn Japanese, which he only began to study when in Japan. This took some time. Prominent Russian Orthodox missionaries have always preached among pagans in their own language, and Nikolai's patron Innokenty (Veniyaminov) was a prime example of this. It was almost impossible to preach Christianity without knowledge of Japan's ancient culture and the Japanese language was extremely difficult because no textbooks for studying Japanese had yet been written in a language that Nikolai understood. It took him eight years to learn all of this well enough to write a series of articles summing up his initial observations.

At first, it was even difficult to find a language instructor. His first teacher quit out of fear of persecution by the authorities. According to Sergius, Nikolai studied so many hours every day that his two—and, at times, three—teachers were exhausted. He read several classical Chinese

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[150] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, pp. 63, 73. Joseph Leonard van Hecken, *The Catholic Church in Japan since 1859* (Tokyo: Herder, 1963), p. 19.

[151] Sergij (Stragorodskij), *Na Dal'nem Vostoke. Pis'ma japonskogo missionera*, p. 97.

[152] *"Spasajte detej." Pouchenija svjatitelja Innokentija, mitropolita Moskovskogo, Apostola Sibiri i Ameriki* (St. Petersburg: Izdanie hrama Spasa Nerukotvornogo obraza, tipografija "Nauka" RAN, 1998), p. 172.

[153] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, pp. 39–65.

philosophers, works by ancient and modern Japanese writers, and Buddhist literature in an 'attempt to gain insight into the soul of the Japanese people.' He also walked the streets and listened to contemporary Japanese storytellers.[154]

In a letter he wrote in August 1863 to Aleksei Akhmatov (1817–1870), the chief prosecutor of the Holy Synod, Nikolai said that although he conducted services with the help of an interpreter, he spoke Japanese 'quite fluently' and only lacked knowledge of the Chinese script, which he was just starting to study.[155] Four years later, in a letter to Goshkevich, Nikolai reported that he was studying Japanese with ever increasing interest, had 'made great progress,' and was also composing 'lexicons,' phrasebooks, and translations.[156] In 1868, he wrote:

> When I arrived in Japan, I began studying the local language as much as I could. A great deal of time and effort has been spent in getting used to this barbarous language, which is positively the most difficult in the world because it consists of two [languages]: natural Japanese and Chinese, which are mixed together but are by no means merged into one. No wonder Catholic missionaries once wrote that the Japanese language was invented by the devil himself in order to protect Japan from Christian missionaries. It contains so many types of spoken language, ranging from an almost pure Chinese dialect to vulgar speech into which, however, Chinese monosyllables are inevitably intertwined! And how many different ways of writing, starting also from a purely Chinese book to books written with phonetic signs among which Chinese characters are inevitably confused! The mutual meeting and interweaving of these two languages that belong to two different families with grammatical constructions completely unlike one another has given birth to a vast number of the most incredible grammatical combinations, forms, particles, and word endings, often apparently meaning nothing but requiring, however, great delicacy in handling… So, by instinct, I learned at last to speak with some difficulty, and mastered that simple and easy way of writing that is used for original and translated scholarly works.[157]

After having learnt to speak a good level of Japanese, Nikolai began to preach and translate the Bible and liturgical texts, enabling him to conduct religious services in Japanese.

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[154] Sergij (Stragorodskij), *Na Dal'nem Vostoke. Pis'ma japonskogo missionera*, pp. 97–98.
[155] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 1, pp. 75–76.
[156] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, p. 62.
[157] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," pp. 247–48.

Nikolai's Mission in Hokkaido as part of the start of Western missionary work in Japan during the final years of the shogunate

Nikolai was one of the first Christian missionaries to arrive in Japan after it was opened to foreigners; only a few Catholics and Protestants had come before him. The circumstances of his arrival, daily life, and activities differed little from those of other early Christian missionaries in Japan from other countries and confessions, so it makes sense to look at Nikolai's Mission (especially during its initial stage) not separately, as most researchers have done, but in the context of the activity of all Christian missionaries in Japan at that time.

Of course, the Catholic Church had a long history in Japan before the ban on Christianity in the 17th century, but all attempts since then to gain a foothold in the country were severely suppressed. Two Catholic missionaries, Mermet de Cachon and Séraphin Girard (1821–1867), who formed part of the expedition led by Rear Admiral Guérin, arrived in Okinawa in 1855. At that time, Okinawa belonged to the Ryukyu Kingdom, a dependency of both China and the Japanese Satsuma *daimyō*. In 1858, both missionaries joined the delegation of diplomat Baron Jean-Baptiste Gros, who went to Japan to sign France's first treaty of commerce and friendship with that country. They were the first French missionaries in Japan in many years. Gustave Duchesnede Bellecourt (1817–1881) headed France's first official representative office in Japan, which was opened in Yokohama one year after the two countries signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1858. Girard, who was appointed administrator of the Vicariate of Japan, remained as its translator while Mermet de Cachon went to Hakodate, where he taught French and built the first Christian chapel before his departure in 1863.[158] He was probably the first foreigner in Hakodate and definitely the first Christian clergyman because when other French missionaries such as Louis Furet (1816–1890) and Mounicou—who were also part of Guérin's expedition—went ashore in Hakodate, they found no foreigners there.[159] Furet arrived in Nagasaki in 1859, Mounicou settled in Yokohama in 1860,[160] and another missionary, Bernard Petitjean (1829–1884)—who in 1865 famously discovered Japanese 'hidden Christians' (those who had secretly kept their faith since the 17th century) in Nagasaki—went to Yokohama in 1863.[161]

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[158] Richard Sims, *French Policy Towards the Bakufu and Meiji Japan* (Richmond: Japan Library-Curzon Press, 1998), 15; Johannes Laures, *The Catolic Church in Japan: A Short History* (Rutland: C. E. Tuttle Company, 1954), p. 208; Jean-Pierre Lehmann, "French Catholic Missionaries in Japan in the Bakumatsu and Early Meiji Periods," *Modern Asian Studies* 13, no. 3 (1979): p. 382.
[159] Meron Medzini, *French Policy in Japan During the Closing Years of the Tokugawa Regime* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1971), p. 13.
[160] Doron B. Cohen, *The Japanese translations of the Hebrew Bible: history, inventory, and analysis* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 39.
[161] Albert Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents in the Jesuit Archives in Rome: A Descriptive Catalogue: Japonica Sinica I-IV* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2002), p. 262.

The first Protestants—mostly Americans—arrived in Japan in 1859 as well. They included Anglicans Channing Williams and John Liggins of American Episcopal Church,[162] Presbyterian James Curtis Hepburn (1815–1911),[163] Duane Simmons (1832–1889), and Samuel Robbins Brown (1810–1880), and Guido Verbeck (1830–1898) of the Dutch Reformed Church. They settled in the Nagasaki foreign settlement or else in Kanagawa and later Yokohama, where a port open to foreigners was built. British Anglicans came much later: Reverend George Ensor of the Church Missionary Society arrived in Nagasaki only in January 1869.[164]

It is interesting to note how similar the circumstances were attending the appearance of missionaries of various Christian denominations in Japan in the second half of the 19th century. In every case without exception, such arrivals were only made possible because foreign states used their fleets to pressure Japanese ports into opening. One of the conditions that was common to five very similar agreements that Japan concluded with the five leading Western states of the US, Russia, Britain, France, and the Netherlands—signed in 1858 as the Ansei Five Powers Treaties—was to allow foreigners to settle in open ports. Priests were required for these foreigners' religious needs and the Japanese authorities permitted them to be invited to their newly opened consulates or representative offices and even to build churches, on the condition that services would only be conducted for foreigners in places in which they were allowed to reside.

The official envoys of foreign states actively facilitated the arrival of priests and as in the case of Nikolai, it was assumed from the outset that they would be missionaries, despite the ban on preaching Christianity to the Japanese. The ruling authorities probably agreed to this not so much because they viewed priests as agents of influence of their respective governments but because many of the Japanese officials themselves were deeply religious Christians and sincerely believed that believed that Christianity was part of the superior Western civilisation from which the Japanese should learn. In Russia, St. Petersburg Theological Academy graduate Iosif Goshkevich, who had earned a doctorate in theology with his dissertation 'A historical review of the sacrament of penance,' played this role.[165] The corresponding US figure was the first American consul in Japan, Townsend Harris (1804–1878), who is famous for having signed the 1858 Treaty of Amity and Commerce, frequently referred to as the Harris Treaty. Himself a deeply religious Episcopalian, Harris insisted that the treaty, which opened the ports of five Japanese cities to trade and granted extraterritoriality to foreigners, should include a certain Article 8 that stated:

[162] Liggins later claimed to be the first protestant in Japan. (See: John Liggins, "The First Protestant Missionary in Japan, Letter to the Editor," *The New York Times* (April 30, 1900), Retrieved from: https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1900/05/02/102591934.pdf.)

[163] Ion Hamish, *American Missionaries, Christian oyatoi, and Japan 1859-73* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 23–37.

[164] Ibid., p. 334.

[165] A. P. Kuznecov, *Vklad I. A. Goshkevicha v stanovlenie russko-japonskih otnoshenij v XIX veke* (St. Petersburg: SPBGU, 2007), p. 125.

'Americans in Japan shall be allowed the free exercise of their religion, and for this purpose shall have the right to erect suitable places of worship.'[166] Naturally, because foreigners could only settle in open ports, it was only there that churches could be built and services held. When he included this clause, Harris was taking advantage of the fact that a similar treaty that Japan had signed with the Netherlands in 1856 contained a similar article.[167] Analogous treaties that Japan signed with Russia, Britain, and France in 1858 granted all rights and privileges, including freedom of religion, to the subjects of those countries. Among the tasks assigned to French envoy Bellecourt was that of popularising Christianity and protecting its missionaries.[168]

As they sought to make use of these new opportunities, various countries' consuls and envoys began to actively hire missionaries to work not only as priests but also as translators, clerks, and doctors, partly because of their qualifications but also to provide cover for their missionary work. In addition, some missionaries began to arrive of their own volition on the pretext of teaching foreign languages or organising hospitals, all the while maintaining close communication with church organisations in their homeland. Of course, the connection with the state was closer in Russia because the Church was effectively subordinate to it, and so Goshkevich sent his request for a priest directly to the Foreign Ministry. Other envoys also cooperated actively with both the state and missionary organisations. In the US, every church had such an organisation, including the Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America that organised Verbeck, Brown, and Simmons's mission.[169] In France, the main organiser of all Catholic missions in Asia, including in Japan was the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris (Société des Missions étrangères de Paris), founded in the 17th century.[170] In Britain, the two main such organisations were the Church Missionary Society (mostly Anglican), founded in 1799, and the London Missionary Society (mostly Congregationalist), established in 1795. The Russian Orthodox Missionary Society was founded in 1865. Prior to that, the Holy Synod directly oversaw missionary work abroad. Nikolai was in direct contact with both the Synod and the Society which, according to its charter, was headed by the Metropolitan of Moscow. He asked the president of the Society, Innokenty (Veniaminov)—named Metropolitan of Moscow in 1868—to support the founding of the Mission in Japan.[171]

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[166] Amity and Commerce. Treaty and regulations signed at Yedo (July 29, 1858).
[167] Jason Ananda Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 89.
[168] Meron Medzini, *French Policy in Japan During the Closing Years of the Tokugawa Regime* (Cambidge: Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1971), p. 20.
[169] William Elliot Griffis, *Verbeck of Japan, A Citizen of no Country: A Life Story of Foundation Work inaugurated by Guido Fridolin Verbeck* (London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1901), pp. 61–65.
[170] Marcel Launay and Gérard Moussay, *Missions Etrangères. Trois siècles et demi d'histoire et d'aventure en Asie* (Paris: Editions Perrin, 2008).
[171] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, pp. 66–68.

The Russian government extended assistance to Nikolai but recommended that he not provoke the Japanese government. For example, in establishing the Mission in Japan, the Foreign Ministry noted that because it was under the patronage of the Russian Consul, the Mission 'must exercise extreme caution in its actions until the status of the native Christians in Japan is fully clarified.' [172] The governments of the other Western countries instructed their official representatives in much the same way. For example, the US Secretary of State instructed Harris 'to do his best, by all judicious measures, and kind influence, to obtain the full toleration of the Christian religion in Japan, and protection for all Missionaries, and others, who should go there to promulgate them.'[173] The French Foreign Minister wrote to his representative in Japan, Bellecourt:

> If the government of the Emperor is resolved, in conformity with the conduct it has already followed in China, of in no way provoking Japan by Catholic propaganda, it cannot, however, envisage its indifference were it to succeed in reaching the hearts of a population having so far remained inaccessible to the light and blessings of Christianity; above all it could not countenance abandoning the right of protecting the missionaries under any circumstances.[174]

State representatives protected the missionaries and frequently encouraged their efforts to spread Christianity, even though such activity was still illegal. And, although the Russian state provided the strongest assistance for its missionary activity abroad, other countries supported their missionaries by, for example, protecting their interests through diplomatic representatives or by including the need to protect missionaries and their freedom to act in high-level negotiations. At their posts, missionaries were in constant contact with official representatives of their respective countries, just as Nikolai communicated with the Russian Consul in Hakodate.

Another important factor common to the missionaries of all Christian denominations in Japan was that they were in regular communication with their counterparts in other countries of the region. China—which was much larger and wealthier than Japan and into which Christianity had much earlier made inroads—served as a base for the further development of missionary work in Japan. Almost all Protestants and Catholics who ended up in Japan had previously been engaged in missionary work in China, Korea, or Ryukyu and although Nikolai had not worked in China, he was well acquainted with the staff of the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in China that had been established in the early 18th century.

During the first decade of his stay, Nikolai's living conditions and activities did not differ greatly from those of other Christian missionaries in Japan. As their articles and books indicate,

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[172] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 1, p. 133. Footnote 1

[173] As quoted in: Hamish, *American Missionaries, Christian oyatoi, and Japan 1859-73*, p. 24.

[174] As quoted in: Lehmann, "French Catholic Missionaries in Japan in the Bakumatsu and Early Meiji Periods," p. 381.

with missionary activity still prohibited, most people engaged in preparatory work such as studying the country, its history, political situation, and the Japanese language, as well as compiling dictionaries and grammatical guides. Many helped to develop Japanese studies in their respective countries because very little was known about the country prior to their arrival. As a means of meeting Japanese citizens, acquainting them with Christianity, and gaining popularity, they 'found cover' by engaging in various forms of activity that were often beneficial in and of themselves. For example, from 1864, Verbeck taught foreign languages, politics, and science at the *Yōgakusho* (School for Western Studies) in Nagasaki.[175] Brown also taught Japanese to foreigners and opened a school for the Japanese students in Yokohama.[176] Hepburn went to Japan as a medical missionary with the American Presbyterian Mission. In April 1861, he opened a clinic at the Sokoji Temple in Kanagawa and later relocated it to Yokohama. There, along with his wife Clara, he founded the Hepburn School, which eventually grew into Meiji Gakuin University.[177] He and Simmons, who also started a private surgery practice in Yokohama at about the same time, are credited as pioneers of modern medicine in Japan during that period. Ensor also taught English in Nagasaki before leaving Japan in 1874.[178]

These would-be missionaries often tried to engage in secret catechism work but that placed them and—even more so for their Japanese students—at risk of repression by the authorities. The shogunate regime was originally overthrown under slogans that called for the rejection of everything foreign. The movement to restore the emperor to power arose largely out of dissatisfaction with the concessions that *bakumatsu* made under foreign pressure, including the Ansei Treaties. One of the main slogans of the movement—'Revere the Emperor, expel the barbarians' (*sonnō jōi*)—had its origins in Confucian theory of the late shogunate and was directed against foreigners.[179]

In this regard, in April 1868, the new authorities published and publicly posted a document that confirmed the strict prohibition against Christianity and offered residents a reward for reporting violations.[180] Although repressive measures against Christians were rare and depended largely on the situation and the attitudes of the local authorities, they were directed against representatives of all Christian denominations.

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[175] Griffis, *Verbeck of Japan, A Citizen of no Country: A Life Story of Foundation Work inaugurated by Guido Fridolin Verbeck*, pp. 121–24.
[176] William Elliot Griffis, *A Maker of the New Orient: Samuel Robbins Brown* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1902), pp. 35–44.
[177] Hamish, *American Missionaries, Christian oyatoi, and Japan 1859-73*, p. 59.
[178] Ibid., p. 33
[179] Kiri Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 116–20.
[180] Abe Yoshiya, "From Prohibition to Toleration: Japanese Government Views regarding Christianity, 1854-73," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 5, no. 2/3 (Jun.–Sep., 1978): p. 120.

Individual cases of persecution and even executions continued until the ban on Christianity was lifted in 1873. Even during Nikolai's stay in Japan, demonstrative executions of Christians were carried out in Nagasaki in 1865, 1868, and 1870. Of course, Nikolai knew of these acts of repression and reported them to the Foreign Ministry and Holy Synod, but also noted that the general attitude towards Christians was improving.[181]

Foreign missionaries who converted Japanese people to Christianity exposed them to the threat of repression and even death. Although extreme caution was necessary when even discussing Orthodoxy with locals, Nikolai did conduct secret missionary activities during this period. In a note to Stremoukhov, Nikolai said that before returning to Russia he had baptised three people—Paul Sawabe (Sawabe Takuma, 1834–1913), Ioann Sakai (Kawamata Tokurei, 1836–1881), and Jacob Urano (Urano Taizo)—and had prepared another eight for baptism.[182] Nikolai noted that the severity of attitudes towards Christians and those who had been baptised varied, depending on the political situation. His letter to Isidore reveals that there were no special obstacles to his secret classes for catechising the Japanese during the period when the shogunate and the pro-shogun forces of the Republic of Ezo controlled Hakodate. However, he became concerned for the safety of his students after learning that the emperor had been restored to power in 1868 and that he had confirmed the ban on Christianity, and upon learning that the persecution of Christians had resumed in Nagasaki. As a result, after hearing of the decrees by the new government and news of the arrival of a new, pro-Imperial governor, Nikolai quickly baptised three of the most well-prepared students and sent them away from Hokkaido in the hope that they would escape repression and spread the news of Orthodoxy throughout the country.[183]

Nikolai managed to escape any repression thanks to his decision to send the first converts out of Hakodate in 1868. However, some Orthodox believers were subjected to persecution in Sendai and Hakodate in 1872. The governor of Sendai ordered the interrogation of approximately 120 people, eight of whom were sent to prison, among them Nikolai's first convert, Paul Sawabe. In Hakodate, Kuroda Kiyotaka (1840–1900)—who had defeated the troops supporting the Ezo Shogunate and would go on to be a prime minister charged with purging Hokkaido of Ainu and Russian influence—also imprisoned catechists and fired several civil servants suspected of being Christians. The prisoners were later freed, but those who had come from other regions were expelled from Hokkaido.[184]

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[181] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 1, 84, 116–17, 200. Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja Direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P. N. Stremouhovu , pp. 294-297.

[182] Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja Direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P. N. Stremouhovu, p. 303.

[183] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," 254; Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja Direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P.N.Stremouhovu, p. 303.

[184] "Pravoslavnaja russkaja missija," *Russkij vestnik* 5 (1873): pp. 430–32.

Like his Protestant and Catholic colleagues, Nikolai was extremely cautious about preaching among the Japanese. For example, when he published a letter from Metropolitan Isidore in the form of an article in a magazine, he redacted a passage from the text that would likely have brought harm to newly converted Christians.[185] In a report to the Holy Synod in January 1872 about the Mission's activities, he asked that, for reasons of safety, it not publish news of the Mission 'for public viewing.' He wrote that this was the best approach until he could be sure 'that any danger to the Japanese for accepting the Christian faith had passed forever.'[186]

The social composition of the first Christian believers closely resembled that of other faiths and fit well into the generally accepted picture of missionary activity in Japan during the Meiji period. Helen Ballhatchet summarised it aptly:

> [T]he early converts included a significant number of young ex-samurai whose clan had not supported the winning side in the Meiji Restoration. The new regime dismantled the feudal order which had given their lives purpose and meaning, and they felt alienated and rejected as a result. They first came into contact with Christianity from a desire to study Western learning and thus make a new start in life; they were indifferent, or even hostile, to the Western religion itself. The early missionaries and foreign teachers who led them to Christianity in spite of such initial attitudes seem to have been, if not men with actual military experience, people of strong personality and puritanical ideals. Matching samurai stereotypes of courage and single-minded determination as they therefore did, they attracted the admiration and loyalty of their lordless pupils, who pledged themselves, through their teachers, to Christ. Conversion was often accompanied by the discovery of a new purpose in life, the task of spreading the new religion. This was a restatement of the samurai obligation to set a spiritual example to others, and also represented a patriotic mission to save the nation both morally and materially, through providing the proper basis for the adoption of Western civilization.[187]

The first converts to Orthodoxy in Hakodate matched this description perfectly. They came from samurai families[188] and quite naturally initially opposed the restoration of the power of the emperor, this being the predominant ideological position in Ezo. The first convert, Paul Sawabe,

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[185] Scherbina, "“Neschastnyi dnevnik.” Archiepiskop yaponskii Nikolai i ego zametki," p. 186.

[186] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 1, p. 181.

[187] Helen Ballhatchet, "Confucianism and Christianity in Meiji Japan: The case of Kozaki Hiromichi," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 120, no. 2 (April 1988): p. 349.

[188] Mitsuo Naganawa et al., "The Japanese Disciples of St. Nikolai," in *Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the Orthodox Mission in Japan: A Collection of Writings by an International Group of Scholars about St. Nikolai, his Disciples, and the Mission*, ed. Michael van Remortel and Peter Chang (Point Reyes Station, CA: Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and St. Francisco, 2003), pp. 140–81.

was a Shinto priest from a samurai family who taught Japanese fencing to Consul Goshkevich's son. He was extremely hostile to Nikolai and went to him, as Nikolai himself wrote, 'guided by a desire to express his contempt and hatred for the Christian faith.' However, he soon relaxed, became interested in Christianity, and eventually accepted Orthodoxy. Sawabe converted several of his acquaintances and fellow clan members to Christianity, including soldiers who had supported Republic of Ezo troops. Not all were natives of Hokkaido; they spread out around the country and began swaying their relatives and fellow clan members towards Orthodoxy. Ballhatchet described Nikolai as being very tall with an impressive appearance, strong personal qualities, conviction in the rightness of his cause, great powers of persuasion, and of course, completely detached from material considerations.

Nikolai as Student of Japan

Nikolai is rightfully considered one of the first Russian scholars of Japanese studies. His reports and articles on Japan's past and present—published in the 1860s after he had spent eight years there—played a significant role in acquainting Russians with that country. His role in developing Japanese studies was recognised by well-known Russian Orientalists with whom Nikolai corresponded and eagerly received and offered advice to in Japan. Nikolai communicated particularly frequently with professors of the Oriental Institute that had opened in Vladivostok in 1899.[189] In his recollections of Nikolai, the second director of that institute, Dmitry Pozdneev, noted that he always consulted with Nikolai when working to develop a system for the practical study of the Japanese language, that the Russian transcription of Japanese he used largely corresponded to that developed by Nikolai, and that Nikolai advised him on any changes he made to it.[190] Another Japanese scholar and future professor of the Oriental Institute, Vasily Mendrin (1866–1920), translated into Russian on the advice and under the guidance of Nikolai the extensive 22-volume *Unofficial History of Japan* by historian Rai San'yō (1780–1832), a work that Nikolai himself had studied in the 1860s and used when writing his articles.[191] In 1908, when the Russian government was considering a plan to introduce the study of the Japanese language in some primary and secondary schools in the Russian Far East, Russia's minister of public education, Alexander Schwartz (1848–1815), wrote to Nikolai and asked him as 'Russia's foremost master of Japanese' who was experienced in translation and establishing schools to recommend textbooks that could be used for that purpose and experts with enough knowledge to implement this plan.

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[189] Sablina, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaj Japonskij i Vostochnyj institut."
[190] Pozdneev, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaja Japonskij (Vospominanija i harakteristika)," p. 113.
[191] Ibid.

Nikolai strongly recommended Dmitry Pozdneev, who at that time was staying in Japan.[192] In 1909, Nikolai donated to the library of the Oriental Institute a complete collection of translations and essays in Japanese that the Mission had compiled and published.[193]

Russian missionaries had a tradition of studying their host countries, especially those in the East. For example, Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem head Bishop Porphyry (Uspensky, 1804–1885) and Archimandrite Antonin (Kapustin, 1817–1894) were prominent Orientalists and Byzantine scholars and Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing directors Iakinf (Bichurin, 1777–1853) and Archimandrite Palladius (Kafarov, 1817–1878) made significant contributions to Chinese studies. Nikolai's ties with the Russian academic community expanded significantly during the later period of his life in Japan, once he had become a well-known and authoritative expert on the country. However, he had carried out studies of the country's language and history as far back as the 1860s, when he needed to gain a basic understanding of the country and at a time when direct missionary work was forbidden. Subsequently, he concentrated on the work of the mission and the translation of sacred texts.

Other Christian missionaries operating under the ban on direct missionary work in Japan in the 1860s also focused their energies on studying the country's history, geography, nature, and language. In 1858, Louis Furet wrote a work on Japanese philosophy and, like Nikolai, published it in a Christian journal in France.[194] He also published meteorological observations gathered in Okinawa.[195] In 1860, Liggins wrote one of the first Japanese language manuals,[196] while Brown and Hepburn are known as pioneers in the study of the Japanese language, translating the New Testament into Japanese in collaboration with other missionaries.[197] They also published several manuals on studying Japanese as well as translations.[198] Mermet de Cachon wrote some highly

[192] Kopija pis'ma ministra narodnogo obrazovanija ot 29 oktjabrja 1908 g.; Kopija pis'ma svt. Nikolaja (Kasatkina) k ministru narodnogo prosveshhenija Aleksandru Nikolaevichu Shvarcu. In: *"Ja zdes' sovershenno odin russkij": Pis'ma Revel'skogo episkopa Nikolaja (Kasatkina)*, pp. 86–92.

[193] *Otchet o sostojanii i dejatel'nosti Vostochnogo instituta za 1908 god* (Vladivostok, 1909), pp. 45–46.

[194] Louis Furet, "Manuel de philosophie japonaise." *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, 1858, XVII, pp. 358–370.

[195] Patrick Beillevaire, "Pari gaikoku senkyō-kai no Rui fu~yure shinpu.— Kare no shōgai to Okinawa ni okeru kagaku-teki kansoku (1855-1862 nen)," *Chigakuzasshi* 127, no. 4 (2018).

[196] John Liggins, *One Thousand Familiar Phrases in English and Romanized Japanese* (Hurd and Houghton, 1867).

[197] Cohen, *The Japanese translations of the Hebrew Bible: history, inventory, and analysis*, pp. 36–41.

[198] Samuel R. Brown, *Colloquial Japanese: or, Conversational sentences and dialogues in English and Japanese, together with an English-Japanese index to serve as a vocabulary, and an introduction on the grammatical structure of the language* (Shanghai: Presbitarian Mission Press, 1863). Samuel R. Brown, *Prendergast's Mastery System, Adapted to the Study of Japanese or English* (Yokohama: Kelly, 1878); Arai H. Seiyo Kibun, "Annals of the Western Ocean," *The Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. New Series. A translation by S. R. Brown* 2 (1865); James Curtis Hepburn, *A Japanese and English dictionary: with an English and Japanese index. (*(London: Trübner & Co, 1867). Louis Furet, *Un missionnaire aux îles Ryûkyû et au Japon à la veille de la restauration de Meiji* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Cie, 1860).

regarded descriptions of the life and culture of the Ainu people,[199] while others like Nikolai left diaries, memoirs, and an extensive epistolary legacy.[200]

Nikolai on Japan and the prospects for Orthodoxy

As Nikolai himself later admitted, his expectations of Japan had been somewhat naïve, influenced as they were by his youthfulness and belief in the obvious superiority of Orthodoxy. He later admitted to Sergius (Stragorodsky):

> When I went there, I dreamed a lot about my Japan. I pictured her in my mind as a bride waiting for me with a bouquet in her hands. The message of Christ would dispel its darkness and everything would be renewed. I arrived and saw that my fiancée was sleeping in the most prosaic way and did not even think about me.[201]

Although these words had been spoken in a conversation with Sergius almost 30 years later, during the latter's first visit to Japan in November 1890, they probably did capture the feelings of the young Nikolai. Confirmation of this can be found in three articles that Nikolai wrote around the same time (1868–1870)—that is, immediately before or during his first return trip to Russia—and that were published in various Russian magazines. In these articles, Nikolai strove to acquaint Russian society with a summary of his initial activities and with Japan in general.

An analysis of these articles that takes into account the evolution of Nikolai's worldview leads to several conclusions that contradict statements made by previous researchers. First, it does not confirm the widely held opinion that Nikolai always had great respect for the traditional non-Christian teachings that were widespread in Japan, that he believed they had prepared the Japanese to accept Orthodoxy, or even that he wanted to create some kind of synthesis with Orthodoxy and subject the latter to deep indigenisation.[202] Chapter Four of this study takes an in-depth look at Nikolai's attitude towards the indigenisation of Orthodoxy and its limits. Although Nikolai did state that Japan's traditional teachings were useful, he only did so much later; initially, he was very critical of non-Christian teachings.

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[199] E-E. Mermet-Cachon, "Chez les Aïnos du fleuve Amour," in *À la découverte de l'Asie avec les Missions étrangères*, ed. Gilles van Grasdorff (Omnibus, 2008).

[200]*Father Mounicou's Bakumatsu diary / translated with an introduction by Paul C. Blum* (Tokyo: Asiatic Society of Japan, 1976); Y. Yoshida, "Louis Furet's reminiscences (translated by Nakamura, T.)," *Shishi Kenkyu Yokosuka* 6 (2007); James Curtis Hepburn, *The Letters of Dr. J. C. Hepburn (in English and Japanese)*, ed. Michio Takaya (Tokyo: Toshin Shobo, 1955).

[201] Sergij (Stragorodskij), *Na Dal'nem Vostoke. Pis'ma japonskogo missionera*, p. 96.

[202] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), pp. 37–38; Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, p. 12; Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*, p. 102.

Nikolai's decision to relocate to Japan was primarily the outcome of the policies that Russia and other Western powers were pursuing at that time. Russia's demands and interests in Japan differed little from those of other Western powers such as Britain, France, and the US. The only difference was that Russia was a neighbour and therefore might have been seen as posing a greater threat.[203] Nikolai also considered himself to be a representative of a higher Western civilisation that was bringing the truth to the Japanese pagans and although he did not consider other Christian denominations to be fully consistent with true Christian teaching, at this stage, he viewed them all as far superior to local teachings and therefore as exerting a positive influence on Japan.

Nikolai stated his attitude towards non-Christian Japanese religions very clearly in a letter he wrote to Metropolitan Isidore in 1868 while still in Hakodate. The metropolitan then published that letter as an article in the second 1869 issue of the *Christian Reading* journal produced by the St. Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy.[204] 'The extreme inadequacy of the Japanese religious teachings and the spirit of the Japanese people and government,' Nikolai bluntly claimed, 'all prevent the imminent and rapid progress of the Christian faith here.'[205] According to Nikolai, the difficulties inherent in spreading the Christian faith [note that here he is not talking specifically about Orthodoxy but about Christianity in general] stemmed from the perceived shortcoming of the local non-Christian religious teachings. Although he would later argue that these teachings had prepared the Japanese to adopt Christianity, here he makes no such claim.

In letters he wrote in the 1860s to Goshkevich, who had returned to Russia in 1865, and Innokenty, who by that time had become the metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomensk, Nikolai of course criticised Catholics and Protestants for misinterpreting Christianity. Although he also expressed regret that these denominations devote much more money and resources to missionary work than the Russian Church, he does not state here that they have a negative influence on the Japanese people or culture—an idea that appears in his diaries towards the end of the century.[206]

In his article 'And in Japan, the harvest is plentiful,' Nikolai clearly described the shortcomings that he felt characterised Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism and criticised all three harshly. He noted:

> The Japanese folk religion [Shinto] … could not stand up to Buddhism and in comparison with the Christian faith, falls into the dust before the very first dogma: The existence of one God, the Creator and Lord of the universe.' Buddhism, Nikolai

[203] Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[204] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," 247–55. Nikolai mentions the history of the publication of the letter in a note to Stremoukhov (Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P. N. Stremouhovu, p. 303)

[205] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," p. 239.

[206] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, pp. 39–68.

wrote, '[H]as reached the furthest absurdities in Japan such that it diametrically contradicts itself and is easily refuted on the basis of the simplest notions of common sense.[207]

Next, Nikolai divided all Japanese believers into four classes, none of which did he characterise as having the deep spiritual faith typical of Christianity. These classes were:

> Old men and women among the common folk who believe in countless Buddhas and bodhisattvas and pray to them without any rhyme or reason other than the one that Buddhist priests babble on about— to avoid hell after death; all of the common youth who are far from death, whose faith is weak and who feel no obligation to pray; ardent patriots from the educated class who despise Buddhism and stand up for Shinto even though they are not believers; and finally, the educated class generally that despises both Buddhism and Shinto and does not believe in anything but the impersonal Confucian heaven or the life spirit of their own invention, etc.[208]

When writing about the shortcoming of local catechists, Nikolai explained the negative influence of traditional teachings. He stated that although these teachings made people intelligent and 'educated in the Japanese sense,' as well as highly moral, sincere believers who were ready to sacrifice themselves for their newly adopted faith, they also deprived the people of many necessary things:

> What would seem to be missing for missionary work? What is very important for Japan, where even a commoner needs to be philosophically convinced, is a logical mindset, the ability to systematically grasp religious doctrine and, finally, plain memory—that, for every educated Japanese person, has been filled with the study of Chinese characters since childhood.[209]

Nikolai gave the example of one catechist to whom he had read the New Testament twice and told the sacred story of the Old Testament and the basics of dogmatic and critical theology and liturgics, all of which the catechist carefully wrote down. But after all that, the only thing left in the student's head was 'fragmentary information, without connection or order; everything heard from me and even written down is forgotten a hundred times, asked again a hundred times and again forgotten or confused.' Nikolai noted that despite his 'excellent ability to use the knowledge he really has learned, rare soulfulness in speech, and remarkable eloquence,' the Japanese student completely lacked scientific education and logical thinking. 'Yes, and could it be otherwise,' Nikolai concluded, 'when the basic education of a Japanese consists of the senseless memorisation

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[207] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," 239.
[208] Ibid., pp. 239–240.
[209] Ibid., pp. 250–251.

of Chinese characters according to Confucius and the reading of various empty texts without connection and direction?'[210]

Nikolai obviously entertained no 'sympathetic attitude to Japanese religions' and clearly contrasted them with Christianity, which he considered to be a system of a much higher order that requires logical and even scientific thinking to understand properly. Given that at least during this period, Nikolai considered local teachings to be extremely inadequate and an obstacle to the adoption of the Christian faith, it is all the more difficult to imagine that he advocated 'merging [Orthodoxy] with the existing foundations of religious faith.'[211]

Nikolai attributed the prospects of spreading Orthodoxy not to any positive influence by traditional religions but rather to an easing of the repression of Christianity and Japan's imminent opening-up to foreigners. He worried that this opening would prompt masses of Protestant and Catholic preachers to pour into the country but argued that their ineptitude and lack of familiarity with Japanese culture and traditions, compared to the high professionalism of Orthodox missionaries, would not lead to positive results.[212] He placed his main hope on Russia as the bastion of Orthodoxy, arguing that because the country was developing rapidly and systematically in the proper direction, it was capable of providing the necessary support:

> At a nod from the Tsar, millions are freed and the spirit of a new historical life pours into the great organism... A new dawn breaks in the activity of the heart of that organism—the clergy; that activity will be not only domestic, it will be global! God willing, I will not be abandoned and alone here, doomed to fruitless and solitary labour. It was with this hope that I came here and have lived here for seven years; my most fervent prayer is for its implementation and finally, I believe in it so much that I have submitted a petition for leave. If granted, I will go to St. Petersburg to petition the Holy Synod for the establishment of a Mission here.[213]

Nikolai developed these ideas in an article he published a few months later in the very popular secular journal *Russky vestnik*. He began the article by acknowledging the ways in which Japan differed from the view of ordinary Asian countries held by educated Russian society. Next, he described the popular notions about the 'Eastern states' that prevailed in Russia at that time. 'How do we understand the East,' he wrote. 'Absolute despotism from above and unresponsive servility from below, ignorance, stupefaction and, at the same time, imperturbable self-satisfaction and pride and, as a result, immobility….'[214]

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[210] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," pp. 251–52.
[211] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*, 102.
[212] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "I v Japonii zhatva mnoga… Pis'mo russkogo iz Hakodate," pp. 242–55.
[213] Ibid., pp. 256–258.
[214] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 27.

These views were not unique to Russia, to where they had arrived from Europe where such views had become widespread during the Enlightenment of the 18th century. Alexander Lukin explained: 'The idea of the futility, backwardness, and stagnation of Oriental… civilization came to dominate in Europe from approximately the end of the 18th century, at a time when Western civilization was starting to be seen as the only bearer of progress.' This view in various forms was generally shared by otherwise disparate thinkers such as Herder, Hegel, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx:

> These visions, which were a part of the dominant European Enlightenment belief that the European path of development was the only possible way of progress for civilization (be it in the sphere of religion, spirituality, or science and technology), became part of the European belief system and were widely expressed in the 19th-century European writings of all kinds. It came to Russia from Europe with other European ideas.[215]

When he wrote 'we,' Nikolai meant not only the Russian but also the European view, thereby presenting himself as a representative of European civilisation as a whole. In his opinion, these same characteristics of the East were usually attributed to Japan as a very ancient country that had primarily had relations with China, 'the backwardness and stagnation of which were proverbial.'[216] Nikolai criticised this view, arguing that he had found Japan to be very different. Despite claims of divine origin, the emperor was far from despotic in the generally accepted sense of the word. The emperor even:

> …gave the country a very good civil system, better than that which now exists, through no fault of the emperors. It brought military glory to the people by conquering the Korean states, brought them into relations with China, thereby giving the country at least the education that China had developed before it, and finally, sacrificing itself and its divine authority, it introduced to the empire Buddhism, a higher form of religious consciousness than the ancient religion of Shinto, the deification of the spirits of nature.[217]

Nikolai did not rate the rule of the shogunate as highly but admitted that it was not despotic because various segments of the population had been able to criticise it freely over the entire course of its existence. According to Nikolai, this proved that 'Eastern, voiceless servility' did not define Japan and that the Japanese were 'not at all stupid and ignorant people.'[218]

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[215] Alexander Lukin, *The Bear Watches the Dragon: Russia's Perceptions of China and the Evolution of Russian-Chinese Relations since the Eighteenth Century* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), pp. 70–71.
[216] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 27.
[217] Ibid., pp. 27–28.
[218] Ibid., pp. 31–32.

These and similar passages are usually cited as proof that Nikolai did not consider Western civilisation and Christianity to be superior to the Japanese way of life.[219] However, it is only possible to draw such a conclusion by taking these comments out of context. For example, in the same article, he stated that the events that followed Japan's opening-up to foreigners proved that the Japanese lacked the qualities of pride, complacency, and immovability 'to the degree that we attribute them to the Eastern people.'[220] In other words, Nikolai compared Japanese people not with Europeans but with the European idea of Eastern peoples, to which the Japanese were found to compare favourably. They were not as proud and self-satisfied as other Eastern peoples were or were rumoured to be (although Nikolai, who had never visited other Eastern countries, could not state so with certainty) but these qualities were also said to be characteristic of them to a certain extent. He explained that this pride stemmed from historical factors such as the fact that Japan had never been placed under foreign rule; on the contrary, Japan had been the victor in wars with neighbouring countries and peoples such as the Ainu, Korea, and China. 'It is true that the Japanese have a great deal of national pride and it could not be otherwise,' Nikolai wrote. 'In the 25 centuries that their empire has existed, they never once bent their necks under a foreign yoke; not even the shifting fortunes of war have given them cause to doubt their superiority over other nations.'[221]

Nikolai also complimented the level of Japanese education, but a careful reading shows that he still considered European education to be far superior. As a highly educated intellectual from Russia, he was familiar with the ideas of progress prevailing in Europe, including the Russian Empire. He also considered the Western world to be more civilised than Asian societies and viewed Japan's urge for modernisation in a positive light. This was essentially his attitude to the Meiji reforms as well; he viewed them as an integral part of modernisation, which his diaries show he considered to be essentially synonymous with Westernisation. Surprised by how eagerly the society was vernacularising and absorbing Western knowledge, Nikolai devoted many pages of his articles and diaries to descriptions of the main reforms of the Meiji period.

Nikolai was struck by the fact that despite the complexity of the written Japanese language, the number of literate people and readers in the country 'numbers not less than in any Western European state (not to mention Russia!)'[222] He noted, however, that although education in Japan was 'spread almost evenly across all strata of society,' it was 'neither high nor deep.' Even simple Japanese people were well-acquainted with the country's history and historical figures but knew 'practically nothing of other states.'[223] The best example of Nikolai's attitude towards Japanese

[219] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (from 1870 until 1880), pp. 38–39.
[220] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 32.
[221] Ibid., p. 32.
[222] Ibid., p. 31.
[223] Ibid., p. 30.

culture can be seen in how he assessed that country's desire to become acquainted with the West. He wrote:

> Barely 15 years have passed since Japan opened to Europeans and just look at how the spirit of the government and people has changed. The government aside, almost every appanage prince clambers out of the mud to obtain a steamer and European military weapons, train soldiers in European military tactics and acquire young people who are versed in European languages and sciences. How shaken up the people are, how apparent their backwardness has become to them, and how actively they have started to work to improve the situation! How much they want to see, know and learn from Europe! Those living in Japan know how devoted young people are to their desire to go abroad; it would not be an exaggeration to say that provided they had enough financial resources, half of Japan would have gone abroad to study. Is it similar to China, which has known Europe for centuries but still imagines that it is not China that should learn from Europe but just the opposite—Europeans should go there to become enlightened by its wisdom…[224]

While assuring the reader that the Japanese were 'not at all a stupid or ignorant people,'[225] Nikolai was convinced that their superiority over, for example, the Chinese lay in their ability to recognise their backwardness and begin learning from the more highly developed Western civilisation, whose military, scientific, and spiritual superiority he considered obvious.

Overall, Nikolai's attitude that Japanese people were inferior to the Western level of civilisation but the most developed among Asiatic peoples was very consistent with the views of other educated Europeans of that time. Assessing 'the kind and degree of civilization attained by the Japanese,' Rutherford Alcock wrote:

> …I should say that theirs was a material civilization of a high order… Their intellectual and moral pretensions, on the other hand, compared with what has been achieved in the more civilized nations of the West during the last three centuries, must be placed very low; while their capacity for a higher and better civilization that they have yet attained should be ranked, I conceive, far before that of any other Eastern nation, not excepting the Chinese.[226]

In a very popular book published in 1876 that described contemporary Japan, American orientalist and Congregational minister William Griffis (1843–1928) also presented Christianity as a 'mightier spiritual force' that should replace Shinto and Buddhism in Japan. Otherwise, he

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[224] Ibid., pp.33–34.
[225] Ibid., p. 30.
[226] Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of a Three Years' Residence in Japan,* vol. 1, p. 301.

wrote, 'little will be gained but a glittering veneer of material civilization and the corroding foreign vices, under which, in the presence of the superior aggressive nations of the West, Dai Nippon must fall like the doomed races of America.' However, if Christianity were to be accepted because the level of civilisation in Japan was obviously lower than in the West but higher than in other Asian countries, Japan had a good chance of succeeding and would 'in time take and hold the equal place among the foremost nations of the world,' and 'in onward march of civilization which follows the sun, the Sun-land may lead the nations of Asia that are now appearing in the theatre of universal history.'[227]

It is interesting that Nikolai contrasted the 'atheism' of the higher Japanese classes with the increasingly widespread atheism of Europe. He believed that the Japanese and Chinese people were 'justly reproached for atheism, or indifference to matters of faith,' but did not think that this was the same type of atheism that at times engulfs European society and that stems from the idealisation of science and its achievements. When discovering new scientific laws, Europeans place them above religious truths or even claim that those truths have been disproved 'in a fit of the uncontrolled joy that crowns success.' However, it then turns out that those scientific achievements have not only failed to disprove religious truths but have actually confirmed them. This can continue for a long time, but never 'will the nations exhaust divine wisdom, nor will human knowledge rise above religious truths, nor will human knowledge exhaust the ideals of holiness.'[228] The atheism and indifference to spiritual truths in Japanese society have opposing roots; 'Here, the atheism and indifference of the upper strata of society comes directly and positively from the inadequacy of religious teachings, from the fact that people have not fully exhausted them and they no longer satisfy them.'[229]

During this period, Nikolai clearly did not believe that the development of secular science in the West was somehow dangerous for religion and consequently felt that the teaching of the Western scientific method in Japan was a positive thing, including for the country's spiritual development, as long as Japan accepted Christian truths. Nikolai considered it beneficial for Japan to accept both Western scientific and spiritual teachings, with Orthodoxy, of course, being their highest form.

Naturally, this article contains no mention of the idea that 'inadequate' traditional Japanese teachings had somehow prepared the Japanese people to accept Christianity; on the contrary, Nikolai continued to criticise them sharply. According to Nikolai, Shinto was the lowest religious system in Japan, the most primitive type of paganism, inferior even to the Greek, because the

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[227] William Elliot Griffis, *The Mikado's Empire* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1876), p. 576.
[228] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 35.
[229] Ibid.

Shinto gods were 'simply weak mortals, even without those sensually attractive qualities with which the gods of Greece once inspired poets and artists to create inimitable examples of classical art.'[230] Such a religion 'can only belong to a very coarse and ignorant people … who stand at that stage of intellectual development when, impelled by the religious feeling inherent in man, they seek an object of worship but are unable to raise their minds above the surrounding world and are ready to pay divine honours to everything that will surprise and excite them.'[231]

Buddhism, according to Nikolai, stood much higher than Shintoism and had eclipsed it. He argued that the only reason why the latter had not disappeared entirely was because it was flexible and willing to coexist with other religions and assimilate some of their elements. Nikolai explained that Buddhism had succeeded because it was a multifaceted and developed system that far surpassed Shintoism spiritually:

> In place of the weak, doubtful authority of the gods, Buddhism holds up for worship a higher being who descended to Earth to save people; it contrasted the most subtle casuistry with crude, almost unformed concepts of morality; it flaunted the splendour of a liturgical setting before crude forms of external worship; it contrasted in its wide-ranging literature, then already translated into Chinese, with the oral communication of Shinto.

At the same time, citing the example of several Buddhist schools of thought (Zenshu,[232] Montoshu,[233] and Hokkeshu[234]), Nikolai described in detail how Buddhism—which had arrived not entirely in conformity with 'the spirit' of the Japanese—had changed on Japanese soil and created teachings that lay 'in agreement with the native characteristics of the people.'[235] To this end, '[T]he Japanese let no obstacle stop them until they achieved a totally self-contradictory result.'[236] Nikolai argued that the more complex Buddhist teachings had been changed somewhat on Japanese soil in accordance with local understandings, which had led it to generate internal contradictions and include more primitive elements of Shintoism. Nikolai not only criticised elements of Japanese Buddhist worship and ritual but actually ridiculed elements such as the desire to abstain from food, the practice of shaving one's heads, and the practice of sitting in the Buddhist *zazen* position. He described Buddhist rituals as 'insignificant formalities' and 'dreamed up,'

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[230] Ibid., p. 36.
[231] Ibid., p. 44.
[232] 禅宗.
[233] The official name is Jodo Shinshu (浄土真宗).
[234] 法華宗.
[235] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 50.
[236] Ibid.

ludicrous,' and 'fantastic' creations.[237] It is obvious that Nikolai evinced no special respect for Buddhism's role in the development of Japan.

As for Confucianism, the third pre-Christian doctrine to come to Japan from China, Nikolai noted that although its literature and philosophy were attractive and that it had taught the Japanese the skill of dialectical thinking, it had not penetrated deeply into Japanese society. It had become the domain primarily of the higher class of scholars (*jusha*) who engaged in teaching but did not occupy as high a position in Japan as in China, 'where the whole state is governed by pedants.'[238] Moreover, Confucianism in Japan had largely become a doctrine of morality. It did not provide answers to theoretical questions 'as inherent in the human soul as the concepts of morality' about the origins of the world and man, about the Supreme Being, or about the purpose of man. Thanks to Confucianism, Nikolai wrote, its Japanese followers:

> …have become higher than Shinto and Buddhism; it gave them the weapons of dialectics and developed a critical spirit in them that convinced them to treat these teachings with ridicule or contempt; but, having destroyed the previous religious beliefs, Confucius provided nothing in their place: the mind of his follower is a chasm covered with a light stubble of reasoning; at the first encounter with common sense, the fragile surface breaks and reveals a void.[239]

For this reason, according to Nikolai, Japanese Confucians became adherents of the latest Western learning more readily than those who followed other systems of belief. They were already accustomed to thinking critically and although they initially looked down on foreigners and their theories, when faced with more logical Western approaches, they made way for them and '[flew] upside down; their former idol [was] shattered, they humbly reduce[d] themselves to the level of students, and [became] sincere and fervent adherents of the new teaching.'[240]

Although he placed Confucianism above Shintoism and Buddhism in terms of critical thinking, Nikolai nevertheless considered it to be significantly inferior to not only Christianity—which he thought provided answers to the most important spiritual questions—but also to Western scientific teachings, whose arrival in Japan he saw as contributing to the country's progress. Nikolai drew a general conclusion that 'the Japanese people [were] too intelligent, developed, and sharp and their religions too backward and absurd to satisfy them.'[241] Only Christianity, he argued, could do this.

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[237] Ibid., p. 55.
[238] Ibid., p. 58.
[239] Ibid., p. 59.
[240] Ibid., p. 60.
[241] Ibid.

When he examined in detail the history of the persecution of Christianity in Japan, Nikolai noted that it stemmed not from hatred of Christianity per se but rather from fears of interference in Japanese politics by Christian Europeans. This had led to the view that Christianity was a weapon of foreign influence, but Nikolai wrote that the situation had since changed. Japan at that time displayed a deep interest in everything European and was unlikely to merely adopt the external aspects of European culture:

> The eyes of the Japanese are still fixed on the outer wrapping of European civilisation: steamships, guns, the outward aspects of constitutions; but all of these young people—thousands of them—now studying European languages, will they always be focused on guns and steamers? Won't they go further? Won't they look deeper into European history, and legal rights, and the internal structure of European states? And can they get rid of their familiarity with it, the basis of all sciences and all the state life of Europe, by attempting to transplant these sciences and this life to themselves?[242]

In Nikolai's view, Christianity is the foundation of European civilisation. He wrote the above lines upon seeing some easing of the ban on Christianity in Japan, but before it was officially permitted. He was right in predicting that Japan's desire to learn from Europe would eventually lead to a complete lifting of the ban on Christian preaching, although he did not connect this prospect with the strengthening of the power of the emperor, whom he held in low esteem at the time.[243]

Another article dealing with this period, 'Shoguns and the Mikado,' was published in 1869 in the 11th and 12th issues of the magazine *Russian Gazette* and was mainly devoted to an exposition of the history of Japan until the end of the Shogunate, based on several Japanese historical chronicles, and it offers some material relevant to this study. It is interesting, however, that the author criticised the typical European view of Japan at that time as a 'terra incognita' and depictions of the Japanese—as he stated at the beginning of the work—as funny, crouching figures in a dressing gown and topknot. After such a development, Nikolai asked, 'Who will, in the near future, promise this figure a place in the circle of civilised peoples?' Furthermore, Nikolai explained the extent to which Japan had already managed to modernise, based on assimilating to European norms.[244]

In Nikola's writings of this period there is no justification for the view found in numerous studies that he had from the very beginning sought to create a Japanese Orthodox Church

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[242] Ibid., p. 75.
[243] Ibid., pp. 75–80.
[244] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Sjoguny i mikado. Istoricheskij ocherk po japonskim istochnikam," pp. 81–82.

independent of the Russian Church, relying solely on Japanese converts to Orthodoxy.[245] In fact, during the early period of his activity, he made no mention anywhere of a Japanese Orthodox Church; in all of his letters, reports, and other documents, he spoke exclusively of the Mission.[246] He formulated a plan for the establishment of that Mission prior to his return to Russia in 1869 and once there, he issued instructions to send four hieromonks to work in different parts of Japan, although only one additional colleague was ultimately sent to the Mission at this stage.[247]

Nikolai first referred to a 'Japanese Orthodox Church' much later and in a very different context,[248] when he was forced to use Japanese catechists, probably for want of a sufficient number of Russian co-workers.[249] Nikolai's letters and reports were full of requests for new co-workers for the Mission but his hopes were only partially fulfilled because so few people wanted to travel to that distant country. In addition, the Holy Synod had difficulty raising the necessary funds. Neither did the Synod fully satisfy Nikolai's other requests, such as providing compensation for catechists who suffered from persecution. For example, in response to a report Nikolai submitted in 1871, the Synod demanded that the funds received 'be used only for the designated purpose,' that he 'not assume any obligations requiring ongoing expenses,' and that he 'not give the natives any promises of aid, but spread the Word of God by force of persuasion.'[250]

In a letter he sent to Metropolitan Innokenty in the autumn of 1868, Nikolai stated openly that he was forced to use Japanese catechists because he had too few Russian missionaries at his disposal. 'I ultimately concluded that there is no hope for Japanese preachers. It is necessary to have a clear and extensive knowledge of the Christian faith to teach others here,' he wrote. He attributed this to the education of the Japanese, with whom it was necessary to work differently than with illiterate savages. Nikolai believed that Japanese atheists 'stubbornly and with dialectical subtleties defend their views with some self-contrived life spirit, indifferent Confucian heaven, or concept of male and female origins. If such an atheist finally lets go of his convictions, then he wants to know about Christianity in all possible detail.' He felt that it was impossible to prepare at least the first generation with the requisite understanding of Christianity. 'All that can be expected from newly declared Japanese is catechism, mainly among the common people and under the direct supervision of a missionary. And for now, I am the only missionary—and that, in a private capacity.'[251]

[245] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity : Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*, 103.
[246] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 1, p. 126.
[247] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 1, p. 133.
[248] See Chapter 4 of this thesis for details.
[249] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 26.
[250] Ibid., p. 159. Footnote 1
[251] Ibid., p. 66.

Conclusion

A study of Nikolai's work during the first period of his stay in Japan clearly shows that it must be considered within the broader context of the spread of Christianity and Christian missionary work in East Asia, which in turn formed part of the massive influx of Western culture in Asia. Here, 'culture' should be understood in the broad sense, as the sum-total of political, economic, military, religious, ideological, artistic, and other elements. The fact that Nikolai undertook his missionary activity at the same time as other Christian missionaries and that he encountered similar problems and reached similar solutions indicates that his mission should be seen as part of the larger story of the spread of Christianity in East Asia. Unlike earlier attempts at missionary activity in the region that local authorities could easily suppress if they viewed Christianity as a political threat, the Western powers accompanied the same process in the second half of the 19th century with an assertion of their political and economic dominance. By that time, reformist circles in East Asia, including in Japan, had begun to view Christianity as an integral part of the Western civilisation that was necessary for modernising their countries and bringing them into the ranks of the world's leading powers. Nikolai's mission was initially seen as one version of this 'progressive' Christianity and even Nikolai did not consider himself a conduit of non-Western ideas; on the contrary, he viewed Orthodoxy as the pinnacle of Western civilisation and thus of all civilisation. Only later did the Japanese began to distinguish between the various branches of Christianity and Nikolai himself came to the conclusion that Western influence, as expressed in particular by the spread of Catholicism and Protestantism in Japan, was harmful to that country because it distanced the people from true Christianity, meaning Orthodoxy.

The articles Nikolai published during his first eight years in Japan reveal several aspects of his attitude towards Japan and his own activities. First, they show that Nikolai considered 'old Japan' to be an uncivilised country that was not part of the circle of civilised nations. He assessed its religions and philosophical teachings, both 'indigenous' Japanese (Shintoism) and those brought from outside (Buddhism and Christianity), as naive and primitive, attributing little of merit to the Japanese, with the exception of very general although rather primitive ideas about a higher being (Buddhism) and some inclination towards critical thinking (Confucianism). However, he described all these teachings as far inferior to Christianity and therefore unable to satisfy the needs of the Japanese people.

Second, Nikolai thought that there was a single European civilisation and that Russia was a part of it. Christianity was the most fundamental spiritual foundation of this civilisation, according to Nikolai, and its arrival in Japan would be extremely beneficial for the country. Naturally, as an Orthodox Christian, Nikolai considered Orthodoxy to be the highest form of

Christianity but at this stage of his intellectual development, he still did not strongly oppose the arrival of other denominations, considering them to be higher spiritual forms than the naïve traditional teachings and therefore their arrival in Japan to be part of the arrival of European civilisation and a positive phenomenon overall.

Third, Nikolai was optimistic about the prospects of Japan joining the circle of civilised countries and assessed the significance of this for the country's spiritual life as positive. Such a shift should lead to the rapid dissemination of Christianity since the Japanese were a talented people who had begun to strive towards Western civilisation and therefore towards Christianity, the very essence of this civilisation. As they went deeper, Nikolai thought, the Japanese would certainly move from merely borrowing the external, material forms of civilisation to assimilating its deepest, most spiritual forms; all that was needed was the presence and widespread preaching of the deepest form of Christianity—Orthodoxy—and everything else would fall into place.

One could say that Nikolai appears to be a moderate Westerniser; for him, the baptism of pagans was inextricably linked to bringing them into the fold of European civilisation, of which Orthodox Russia was a part. The special role of Russia lay mostly in its historic mission to baptise the Eastern peoples since Russia was spreading eastwards and the idea of bringing European civilisation to the peoples of Asia was widespread in Russian society at the time.[252]

Although they differed in some details, other Christian missionaries of the time held similar views. In fact, the only difference in Nikolai's views was that he considered Orthodoxy to be the highest form of Christianity, while missionaries of other denominations believed the same about their respective faiths. Moreover, the circumstances attending the arrival of various Christian denominations in Japan towards the end of the shogunate period, as well as the nature of their activities, were similar. This being so, Nikolai's mission can only be understood in the context of the general Christian movement in East Asia in the middle of the 19th century, of which the Russian Mission formed an integral part. In later stages of his thought and life, however, Nikolai's views became far more specific and went beyond the framework of the general European paradigm.

[252] Lukin, *The Bear Watches the Dragon: Russia's Perceptions of China and the Evolution of Russian-Chinese Relations since the Eighteenth Century*.

Chapter 2

The Second Period of Nikolai's Work. The Mission's Successes and Japanese Culture of the Late 1870s to the 1890s

The second period in the development of Nikolai's thought coincided with the early stages of the official work of the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Japan. In 1869, Nikolai travelled to Russia in order to convince the Russian authorities that it was both possible and necessary to set up a Mission, even though missionary work was formally forbidden in Japan. He no doubt believed that his letters and reports were insufficient and furthermore, it was preferable for the head of a mission to command a far higher position than that of a simple hieromonk.[253] This would be important in the event of liaisons with both the Japanese and Russian authorities, as well as with potential donors to the Mission's cause. The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission was established in Japan by decree of the Holy Synod in April 1870, when Nikolai was in Russia. Nikolai was appointed as its head and elevated to the rank of archimandrite. In February 1872, shortly after returning from Russia, Nikolai left his assistant, Hieromonk Anatoly (Tikhai), in Hakodate and moved to Tokyo, where a Russian Embassy had been opened. It was here that he started to set up the Mission and to preach openly. One can consider these milestones to be the start of the second period, but where it ends is somewhat harder to determine. A change in Nikolai's thinking started to appear more gradually in the latter half of the 1880s and came to a conclusion in the latter half of the 1890s.

Throughout this period, Nikolai continued to be optimistic about the prospects of Orthodoxy in Japan but for somewhat different reasons compared to before. This change can be

[253] A hieromonk, otherwise known as a "priestmonk," is a monk who is also a priest, usually an ordained priest who has received a monastic tonsure.

attributed to two factors. First, the Meiji reforms had pointed Japan's development in a Western direction, but this development had not yet led to very profound changes in religious affairs. Second, after the ban on Christianity was lifted in 1873, Catholic and Protestant missionaries flooded the country with huge amounts of money and opportunities, becoming competitors instead of Nikolai's allies in converting Japan to Christianity. In response to this development, Nikolai changed his attitude towards traditional Japanese religious teachings and tried to find kindred ideas within them, and his most positive comments about these teachings were made during this period. Nikolai attempted to show that they gave Japan the grounding to adopt specifically Orthodoxy as the pinnacle of world religion.

The main sources on this period are Nikolai's diary entries, which he recorded from 1870 and quite systematically from 1879; his professional and private correspondence; accounts by colleagues and visitors to the Mission; and an article by Nikolai entitled 'Japan and Russia,' published in the 11th issue of the history journal *Drevniaia i novaia Rossiia* [Ancient and New Russia] in 1879, in which he comprehensively set out his views on Japan, the prospects for Orthodoxy in the country, and the role that Russia could play in converting Japan to Christianity.

In 'Japan and Russia,' Japan is portrayed not as an inferior country but as even superior in some ways to Western states. It is no coincidence that this article is cited most often by researchers and religious figures who are attempting to portray Nikolai as an unwavering admirer of Japanese civilisation,[254] but such observers do not take account of the historical context and the evolution of Nikolai's views, which changed significantly over the course of his life.

Nikolai's evaluation of the situation in Japan

The 1870s to the 1880s was an extremely dynamic time in Japan's history. During the first two decades of the Meiji reforms, the foundations were laid for Japan's political and economic development that turned it into one of the world's leading powers, and a number of important reforms were carried out. In the political field, the new authorities used the unquestionable authority of the emperor to introduce a number of measures, which boiled down to centralised power and the elimination of feudal privileges.

Administrative reform involved the abolition of the *daimyo* feudal class and its hereditary land holdings and instead, the country was divided into prefectures to which governors were appointed. At first, these positions were occupied by former *daimyo*, but this was only a temporary

[254] Nakamura Kennosoke, "*Dnevniki Sv. Nikolaya Yaponskogo," in Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), 12. Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*, p. 103.

measure. The large social group of samurai, the hereditary military nobility and officer caste loyal to the *daimyo*, was also abolished. The former samurai, who numbered 1.9 million people (around 5 per cent of the population), were initially paid a state pension, but this form of payment was then turned into government bonds.[255] A state bureaucracy, dependent on the emperor and his ministers, was created in place of the samurai. Military reform led to the creation of a modern army based on universal military service and consisting not of samurai but rather conscripts subordinate to the government and loyal to the emperor.[256] A standard language was also introduced, replacing the many local dialects. All of these reforms were challenging and incurred the displeasure of the samurai, as well as some of the feudal lords who had lost influence; however, the uprisings that broke out from time to time were suppressed by troops loyal to the emperor since disgruntled feudal lords and their supporters were divided and could not unite. At the same time, the imperial government took a fairly soft line with its defeated opponents and did not repress them, even incorporating some of them into the new ruling establishment.[257]

The reforms to the economy laid the foundation for rapid economic growth. They began with the lifting of a ban on the export of rice and the consolidation of land ownership and tax reform, which stimulated the development of agriculture. In the financial field, modern banks were created, which invested in the economy using modern financial instruments.[258] The Meiji government conducted a policy of state support for the development of industry, beginning with light industry and particularly the production of silk and cotton fabrics, focusing later on the munitions plants, railways, mining, shipbuilding, and agriculture sectors, while state-owned enterprises were transferred into private ownership. Ships and railways were built, foreign specialists were invited to Japan, and Japanese citizens were themselves sent to study abroad. The state encouraged the creation of indigenous Japanese *zaibatsu* (business conglomerates) by rendering assistance to *seisho* (influential businessmen) and edging out foreign interests and it also promoted invention and domestic production through industrial exhibitions.[259] The country developed at a rapid rate, catching up with leading Western powers.[260]

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[255] Harry D. Harootunian, "The Progress of Japan and the Samurai Class, 1868-1882," *The Pacific Historical Review* 28, no. 3 (1959).
[256] Hyman Kublin, "“The "Modern" Army of Early Meiji Japan," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (1949).
[257] Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, Mass. : Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 363–70.
[258] Kokichi Asakura, "The characteristics of finance in the Meiji period (The period of take-off)," *Developing Economies* 5 (1967): pp. 274–300.
[259] Kenichi Ohno, "The Industrialization and Global Integration of Meiji Japan," in *East Asian Growth and Japanese Aid Strategy* ed. Kenichi Ohno (Tokyo: National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies GRIPS Development Forum, 2003), p. 54.
[260] Kozo Yamamura, "Success Illgotten? The Role of Meiji Militarism in Japan's Technological Progress," *The Journal of Economic History* 37, 1 (1977).

A very important feature of these reforms is that they were conducted on the understanding that it would be necessary to adopt not only the technology but also the institutions and values of the leading Western powers, since this was deemed essential to catch up with their level of development and not fall prey to them. The 1870s and 1880s were the most 'Western' period in Japanese history prior to World War II. The well-known public figure Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835–1901) spent time in Europe as part of the first Japanese Embassy team sent to the continent by the shogunate in 1862 and from that time onwards was considered a specialist on the West. In his popular book *An Outline of a Theory of Civilisation*, published in 1875, Fukuzawa wrote: 'In its current condition, Japan has absolutely nothing about which it can take pride in comparison with the West. Given that the country is short of natural resources, it can be proud only of its scenery. As for the fruits of human endeavour, there has never been anything about which to be proud.'[261] Dividing the world into the strong, wealthy countries of the West that he labelled 'mature civilisations' and the poor, primitive, and underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa, Fukuzawa proposed that Japan follow the example of the former.[262]

The Japanese authorities sent numerous missions to the US and Europe in order to both foster relations and discover exactly what had driven the progress of the world powers and made them stronger. The best known of these was the Ikawura Mission, a group of about 50 senior officials headed by Minister of the Right Tomomi Iwakura (1825–1883). Between 1871 and 1873, the members of this group travelled to 12 countries to study their political and economic structures. The group members were particularly interested in American education, British industrialisation, French jurisprudence, and German representational institutions.[263] The Japanese authorities had decided that they needed to develop in all these areas in order to become a great power on a par with the aforementioned countries.

In his article 'Japan and Russia,' Nikolai wrote a very positive assessment of such changes:

> Embodied by the Japanese people, the Mongol race is stepping conspicuously onto the stage of world history, no longer as a scourging and destructive force but as a beneficent historical figure. Barely 20 years have passed since Japan was opened up to foreigners and the country is unrecognisable: there is so much change and transformation! … [T]here is one fundamental state reform after another and adoption of the finest foreign ideas, all achieved with astonishing speed and ease. As one person, a 35 million-strong nation has woken up and set about its planned

[261] Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Bunmeiron no gairyaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1931), p. 24.
[262] *The Autobiography of Fukuzawa Yukichi, trans. Eiichi Kiyooka* (Tokyo: Hokuseido, 1948), pp. 252–53.
[263] Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 360.

work schedule and like an heir who has reached the age of inheritance, grasps a whole handful of the treasures of civilisation accumulated by other nations.[264]

Just as in the previous phase of his life, Nikolai continued to view Japan's adoption of the achievements of Western civilisation in a generally positive light, but his attitude towards the country's pre-Christian teachings changed somewhat. He had been looking for an explanation for Japan's rapid progress and had found it in the country's readiness for the new situation as a result of its previous social and religious development.

The reasons why Nikolai's views on Japan changed

The 1870s and 1880s were a time of vigorous growth in the number of Christian believers and of the whole missionary set-up. In 1869, the Mission did not even exist officially. Proselytising to Japanese people was forbidden and Japanese Catholics were still subject to execution in certain regions, while Orthodox Christians were persecuted right up until 1873.

In April 1870, the Holy Synod of the ROC fulfilled Nikolai's request and took the decision to establish a four-man Mission in Japan, although in reality, only one priest, Grigory Vorontsov (1838–1885), accompanied Nikolai to Japan since no others wished to go to such a distant country.[265] In 1871 they were joined by Hieromonk Anatoly (Tikhai), who remained in Hakodate after Nikolai moved to Tokyo. At the beginning of 1874—i.e. in the year after Christians were allowed to proselytise—Nikolai spoke of 275 believers in Hakodate and 87 baptisms in Tokyo. A school for boys and girls was opened at the Hakodate mission and three vocational schools in Tokyo: A catechism school, a translation school, and a theological school. There were also around 400 unbaptised believers in Sendai, but no one to baptise them.[266] In a report he submitted to the Holy Synod written in December 1878, Nikolai revealed that Japan had in that particular year 31 preaching districts, six Japanese priests, 78 preachers, and a total of 4,115 believers throughout 150 towns and villages.[267] Ten years later, the country was home to 215 parishes, 23 clergymen, of whom 19 were Japanese, 149 church buildings, and 16,195 Orthodox believers. The Mission had a seminary, catechism school, junior deacon school, women's school, and a school for boys and girls.[268]

No doubt influenced by these successes, Nikolai switched from very modest to completely overarching plans, going as far as to state his desire to see the complete conversion of Japan to

[264] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija i Rossija," p. 154.
[265] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 1, p. 145.
[266] Ibid., pp. 209–215.
[267] Ibid., pp. 291–292.
[268] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 2, p. 159.

Christianity and the adoption of Orthodoxy as the official state religion. He wrote openly about this in the article 'Japan and Russia' on which he worked shortly after returning to Russia for a visit in 1879. He mentioned writing the article several times in his diary during the second half of September of the same year.[269]

In the article, he predicted that the Japanese government would, as Vladimir the Great had in Russia, resolve the question of which religion would be preferable for the country and expressed the hope that Orthodoxy would be chosen for the role since only Orthodoxy, which embodied the 'true and untainted teaching of Christ,' would 'provide a solid, unshakeable foundation for state stability and prosperity' because it pervaded the minds, hearts, and lives of its followers. It would be beneficial to Russia too since if Japan and Russia were of the same faith, such a circumstance would 'undoubtedly strengthen the firm bond between the two peoples.'[270] In order to prove the feasibility of his plan to convert the whole of Japan to Orthodoxy to both the Synod and to donors—and, no doubt, to himself—Nikolai posited the theory that the Japanese were naturally prepared by virtue of their history and spiritual development to adopt Orthodoxy. In 'Japan and Russia,' we read that Japanese people everywhere were 'demonstrating a proclivity for Orthodoxy.'[271]

Nikolai believed that Orthodoxy offered a number of advantages in Japan because 'such a developed and enquiring people cannot like the oppressive yoke of Catholicism, which while preaching Christianity does not allow the teachings of Christ to be read in the original; this fact alone fuels mistrust and doubt in the authenticity of what is being preached.'[272] In Nikolai's opinion, the multiplicity and contradictory nature of Protestantism's various denominations were also unattractive to the Japanese. While the Japanese were 'weary of their own religious difficulties and emptiness, Protestantism of course cannot satisfy or put them at ease: It hands out the Bible but allows everyone to interpret it as they wish, i.e. the same practice as in paganism, leaving people to be guided by human opinions in matters of religion, rather than directing them clearly and unequivocally towards the Divine Truth.'[273] After all, Orthodoxy, 'which is all light and depth and which, handing everyone the word of God, enjoins people in the words of the Scriptures to "test the Scriptures," gives in the Sacred Tradition the living voice of the ecumenical Mother Church to those who have questions: A voice that explains everything and gives reliable guidance throughout life!'[274] Of course, Nikolai had expressed the hope ten years earlier that Japan would

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[269] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 1, pp. 84, 90, 91.
[270] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija i Rossija," p. 169.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Ibid.
[273] Ibid., pp. 169–170.
[274] Ibid., p. 170.

be converted to Christianity, which was understandable, since every missionary hopes that his Mission will be a complete success;[275] however, he had not expressed the idea so bluntly that Orthodoxy should become the state religion of Japan and, on top of that, in the near future.

On the other hand, Nikolai could see that there had also been growth in the number of adherents to other Christian denominations but at that time, he thought that with the appropriate effort and support of Russia and the Russian Church, there was every possibility that Orthodoxy would not only keep up with but even eclipse the other Christian denominations. While he desisted from portraying these other denominations as enemies of Orthodoxy, he wrote in a letter in 1873:

> The signs that God wishes Japan to be enlightened by the Gospel are becoming clearer with each year. Look at this young, dynamic nation. Does it not deserve to be enlightened by the Gospel? The wish to be enlightened and to adopt everything that is good from foreigners runs through the nation to the marrow of its bones. Shall this nation remain indifferent only to faith? No, not at all! Every day, all missionaries—including Russian missionaries—are receiving new people curious to know about Christ. The number of converts grows daily: It is said that the number of Catholics in the south alone has risen to 8,000, and who can calculate the number of Protestant converts when there are so many missionaries; the Protestants have such an abundance of resources and half of Japan is learning English? The Orthodox Church would have many converts too if there were resources to send out catechists.[276]

Nikolai contended that 'the Japanese nation is very developed and as a whole is not inferior in its development to the educated nations of the world.'[277] He made such an assertion because he believed that historically, Japan could be said to be on a par with Western countries regarding its level of freedom and in certain instances even surpassed the West since 'Japan's historical circumstances were surprisingly favourable for the development of freedom and an independent national spirit.'[278]

He now described Japanese history neither in an objectivistic manner nor even with irony, as he had done before, but with a clear wish to emphasise positive events. When he spoke about the pre-shogunate period, he painted an idyllic picture of a state that was on a level with Chinese civilisation due to the adoption of Confucian teachings, and which was similar 'to a family in which all members were equal before the law and before the overall leader, the emperor.'

[275] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija s tochki zrenija hristianskoj missii," p. 27.
[276] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, p. 84.
[277] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija i Rossija," p. 161.
[278] Ibid., p. 154.

Effectively, he agreed with the authors of Japan's historical chronicles who contended that everyone at that time had unimpeded access to the emperor, the people were happy, and they enjoyed the benefits of life peacefully and unhindered.[279]

Nikolai levelled criticism at the general European impression of the shogun as an Eastern despot 'before whom everyone bowed and was silent.'[280] According to Nikolai, during the period of feudal fragmentation, neither the shoguns nor the appanage princes oppressed the people but rather fought between themselves since 'only those who were loved and backed consciously by the people could achieve dominance in battle.'[281] Furthermore, they had to exercise extreme caution 'in order that those under their rule would feel the hardships of martial law as little as possible and would find full recompense either in the secure protection of their land and peace in their locality, in war indemnities from their foes, or at least, in military glory.'[282]

Nikolai drew an idealistic picture of a peculiar type of popular rule during the period of feudal fragmentation: 'Grief would befall anyone who lapsed temporarily to the point of treating his own people tyrannically; his fate would soon be decided because the people would abandon him and go over to the enemy, or even execute him.'[283] In Nikolai's opinion, the centralised power of the shogun did not amount to despotism in relation to the people since such power put a 'restraint' only on the princes, while it 'guarded closely the security, peace and privileges' of the people.[284]

Nikolai also observed that there had never been a 'peasant condition' (no doubt he was referring to Russian-style serfdom) or a history of personal slavery in Japan. He argued that the Japanese peasant had more land rights than peasants in England; despite the fact that the land in both countries belonged to the aristocracy, the Japanese peasants could not be evicted mercilessly from tilled land, unlike in England.[285] The comparison with England is particularly significant since Nikolai was clearly indicating that Japan was actually more 'civilised' in such matters. This opinion is supported by another noteworthy comment: 'the Japanese people were never an oriental people in the sense of being a mute slave with whom one could do as one pleases.'[286] It is quite apparent that the term 'oriental' is not used here in the geographical sense but as it relates to society and culture, in line with the generally accepted idea in 19th-century Europe that the 'slavish' East was stagnant and backward, in contrast with the dynamically developing, 'progressive' Western civilisation. By asserting the 'non-oriental' nature of Japan, Nikolai was actually saying that

[279] Ibid., pp. 154–155.
[280] Ibid., p. 156.
[281] Ibid., p. 155.
[282] Ibid., p. 156.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Ibid.
[285] Ibid., p. 157.
[286] Ibid.

typologically, Japan could be classed as a member of the 'civilised' world, on a par with Europe and the West.

The same held true in terms of education. Nikolai described with admiration the level of literacy in Japan, access to books, large number of libraries, and presence of a school in almost every village. When he compared Japanese to European education, he concluded:

> Of course, a European reader could always find the type of intellectual book that could not be found in Japan until recently; but, then again, a Japanese reader undoubtedly enjoys a far higher level of education and development than an illiterate European. On the whole, Japan is similar in this respect to America, where science might not reach such heights and depths as in the most educated countries of Europe, but is more widespread than anywhere in Europe.[287]

This comparison to the US is extremely interesting. In one respect, it indicates that Nikolai thought that Japan was still not a centre of civilisation regarding the extent of its scientific achievements but like the US was on the periphery; however, Japan was even more 'egalitarian' than the USA in that education was spread more broadly and, therefore, this periphery was a completely legitimate part of civilisation.

Nikolai even justified Japanese pride and the way that the Japanese regarded themselves as the greatest nation in the world. Despite the fact that Nikolai did not refer to Japan in such terms, he did express the opinion that the Japanese had grounds for such pride since they had always been victorious in wars and had never fallen under the control of other countries or peoples.[288] On the other hand, he continued to believe that Japan's encounter with European civilisation had been positive for the country. It had given Japanese self-esteem an unpleasant jolt since it had turned out that Japan was 'far from the only worthy nation in the world,' that 'there were many other very worthy nations, and [that] those whom Japan considered to be barbarians were instead far ahead of the Japanese in their intellectual and political development.'[289] This had given impetus to Japan's development; Japanese pride had given way to the task of closing the gap with other countries and consequently, great progress in all spheres of life had been made over the previous 20 years.[290]

Nikolai also re-evaluated the role of traditional religions in Japan's history in this period. He no longer considered them 'backward and ridiculous' but rather essential in preparing the Japanese for the adoption of Christianity. Nikolai's article contained no criticism of Shintoism,

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[287] Ibid., pp. 161–162.
[288] Ibid., p. 159.
[289] Ibid., p. 162.
[290] Ibid.

which he had previously claimed was the lowest of all the pre-Christian creeds common in Japan and one of the most primitive forms of paganism. In a remarkable change of tone, he wrote that 'Shintoism ha[d] rendered Japan a great service by preventing Buddhism and Confucianism from merging with and assimilating the Japanese spirit, which would have turned the Japanese into apathetic Indians or listless and lethargic Chinese.'[291] By preserving the Japanese spirit of independence, Shintoism had created the conditions for Japan to enter civilisation and exit the underdeveloped 'East,' in which China and India remained.

Another claim by Nikolai was that Shintoism, which a decade earlier he had assessed as primitive, had by 'modelling itself on its rivals developed a huge body of literature and produced a good number of sceptical national philosophers, whose depth and power of thought were hardly inferior to the European nihilists.'[292] Furthermore, in this letter, the aforementioned rivals Buddhism and Confucianism were no longer described as backward and ridiculous; Buddhism was said to be 'the most profound of pagan religions,' while Confucianism was 'the highest of pagan moral philosophies.' Nikolai believed that the Japanese owed their intellectual development and many of their moral values to these 'two teachers'; for example, their 'aversion to slavery' and its absence in Japan was attributed to the Buddhist teaching of the equality and fraternity of all people, while they owed their magnanimity, meekness, and politeness to Confucianism.[293]

It is worth considering why such significant changes occurred in Nikolai's evaluation of Japan, its culture, and its religion. Of course, one might conclude that Nikolai had come to know Japan better over the course of a decade, but this would be too simplistic. It is more likely that the situation in which Nikolai was placed had changed completely.

First, Japan had travelled a considerable distance along the path of Westernisation, approaching in terms of its economy and polity the standards that a 19th-century European would have considered to be indicators of civilisation, while other Asian countries had not been able to achieve this. At this stage of his intellectual development, Nikolai still considered Japan's movement towards the West to be a success, but the speed and intensity of this success had to be explained.

Nikolai started looking for explanations in Japan's history and in the moral and spiritual foundations of its civilisation, and came to re-assess the level of its social and political development in the past, as well as the role of its traditional or previously adopted belief systems. He referred to this fact at the beginning of the article 'Japan and Russia,' which he wrote in order to explain why the Japanese people had 'grabbed whole handfuls of the treasures of civilisation

[291] Ibid., p. 160.
[292] Ibid., p. 161.
[293] Ibid., p. 160.

accumulated by other nations' with such rapidity and zeal. It was logical to assume that 'such historical developments do not happen by chance' and that the Japanese people had been somehow prepared by their historical experiences for what was to come.[294] Nikolai came to explain Japan's success at Westernisation by offering a more positive evaluation of pre-Christian beliefs in Japan.

Second, Orthodoxy had spread in Japan unusually quickly following Nikolai's move to Tokyo, particularly after the official lifting of the ban on preaching Christianity in 1873. This new permission for Christian proselytising changed the situation completely. His missionary work became entirely legal, allowing him to develop his organisational and preaching talents to the full. Nikolai concentrated completely on missionary work, cut out any unrelated matters including academic activities, and focused exclusively on preaching, developing the Mission, and translating liturgical texts. He had written about this previously in 1868 in a letter to Metropolitan Innokenty of Moscow:

> I have been tempted many times to follow my academic interests in Japanese history and the whole of Japanese literature, which are completely untouched treasures. You have only to scoop up handfuls and find that everything is new and of interest in Europe, and the effort is never wasted on anyone. But academic study shall find many sons without me; let others provide it with the gift of their efforts and I shall devote mine entirely to the aspirations of the Mission.[295]

Third, the lifting of the ban on Christian preaching led to more active missionary work being conducted by other Christian denominations as well as the Orthodox Church and Nikolai began to fear these competitors since they had significantly larger resources at their disposal. Nikolai's numerous letters from this period, both official and private, share certain common features. There are almost no descriptions of the political, economic, and religious situations in these letters, with the exception of information regarding the plight of Christians, and first and foremost Orthodox Christians. Most were either requests for funds or donations for the Mission or reports on the Mission's work, including how funds were spent. At the same time, many of the letters revealed Nikolai's fears that the Mission's means, in terms of both material resources and organisational support, were inadequate in comparison with the backing enjoyed by Catholic and Protestant missionaries.

Nikolai began to express such concerns relatively early. He had written to Metropolitan Innokenty in 1868 about the 'phalanxes' of missionaries that the Protestants and Catholics had posted to Japan and posed the question: 'When will a 70 million-strong Russia find several thousand roubles and a few dozen people to carry out one of the Saviour's most important

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[294] Ibid., p. 154.

[295] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, p. 67.

commandments?' Nevertheless, on the whole, he expressed confidence that the Mission would be a success.[296] In an entry from his diary on March 4, 1871, he wondered whether, as a result of the activity and zeal of non-Orthodox preachers, it would come to pass in the future that 'Protestantism and Catholicism shall take over the world and the world shall end its existence with them,' adding that 'our character, which is forever static, listless, apathetic and incapable of embracing the spirit of Christ,' could not offer any resistance to it all. However, in the next breath he contradicted himself, arguing that the divine truth of Orthodoxy would again shine in the world.[297] In 1879, he noted proudly that in spite of the fact that the Orthodox Mission had been operating in Japan for only eight years and had only two permanent missionaries, 'the number of [Orthodox] Christians was two times greater' than that of Catholics and Protestants, who had hundreds of missionaries, were assisted by huge resources, and had been proselytising for over 20 years.[298]

From this, it is evident that concerns about non-Orthodox denominations were not particularly strong even towards the end of the period in question. Nikolai believed that the Orthodox Word of Truth was stronger than its rivals and that all it needed to dominate Japan was material and organisational assistance. He expressed these ideas ten years later in a letter written at the end of 1889 to one of the Church's donors, Stepan Makarov (1848–1904), the future commander of the fleet during the defence of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Noting the paucity of Orthodox missionaries in Japan and their lack of material resources, he observed nevertheless that 'in comparison to others, we are by no means in an unfavourable position vis-à-vis the Japanese government and the Japanese people in general.' He expressed his confidence that Japan, like all pagan nations, would adopt Orthodoxy sooner or later, and that the country could do so either straightaway or after having first had to 'pass through the poorly lit anteroom of Catholicism or Protestantism.' This would depend on whether the Lord's scales of justice would deem Japan to be worthy and sufficiently prepared to adopt Orthodoxy directly, which in Nikolai's opinion 'was not yet quite clear.'[299]

At the same time, Nikolai did not consider Japan's pre-Christian religions to pose any serious opposition to Christianity. Having prepared the nation for the adoption of Christianity, these religions had seemingly fulfilled their function and the clear advantages of Christianity would lead inevitably to its adoption. For Nikolai, it was not a question of whether or not the Japanese would adopt Christianity but rather to which kind of Christianity they would gravitate. In this regard, Protestantism caused him the most concern, although Catholicism also represented

[296] Ibid.
[297] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 74.
[298] Nikolai (Kasatkin), "Japonija i Rossija," p. 170.
[299] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, p. 206.

a threat due to its huge resources. He expressed such thoughts in many letters and notes from that time. For example, in a letter written to the Bishop of Irkutsk and Nerchinsk Veniamin (Blagonravov, 1825–1892) in July 1873 and published in the same year in *Irkutskie eparchial'nye vedomosti* (The Irkutsk Eparchial Gazette), Nikolai appeared rather sceptical about a possible future for Buddhists and Shintoists, arguing that in a short time to come, the whole of Japan would 'start to shine in the new brightness' of Christianity. However, as he requested assistance, he noted that only God knew whether this light would be 'true or darkened.'[300] In the mid-1890s, Nikolai noted in a letter in which he issued guidelines on how missionary work should be conducted that it was not Buddhism and Shintoism—which he labelled 'harmless corpses'—that should be condemned but Catholicism and particularly Protestantism. At the same time, he expressed the opinion that Catholicism had little chance of succeeding in Japan but that Protestantism was 'tempting' because first, it was the religion of countries with the greatest popularity in Japan—i.e. England, America, and Germany, which developing countries were trying to imitate; second, because it was 'seeping' into Japan along with the languages of these countries, given that English was being studied by everyone and German by those who aspired to become scientists; and third, because there were more Protestant missionaries in Japan and their teaching was simpler, clearer, and therefore accepted more readily by the Japanese.[301]

The fact that Shintoism was not seen to represent a threat can be explained by the fact that it had still not fully become the official state ideology at the time. During his missionary travels in the 1880s, Nikolai noted that although Buddhism was still strong in some areas and carried some influence,[302] like the country's pagan beliefs as a whole, it was on the decline[303] and unlikely to attract attention again in the future.[304]

Nikolai rarely mentioned Shintoism in his diary, usually in connection with viewing Shinto temples during his pastoral visits.[305] This is probably because he viewed it as a dying religion. For example, in his descriptions of a visit in June 1881 to a new Shinto temple in Morioka, he referred to it as the last obliging gesture by 'current and future generations to obsolete feudalism and, with it, Shintoism.' Throughout his travels in Japan Nikolai encountered numerous Buddhist and Shinto priests who he referred to as 'the enemy army,'[306] albeit one he did not consider to be very strong. In 1882 he noted how an official from Nagasaki had compared various branches of Shintoism with

[300] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 1, p. 203.
[301] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 3, p. 153.
[302] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, vol. 2, pp. 34, 52, 98, 204, 13, 23, 49, 412.
[303] Ibid., p. 109.
[304] Ibid., pp. 2–28.
[305] Ibid., pp. 163–164, 531, 676; *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* ed. Kennosuke Nakamura, 5 vols., vol. 3 (1893–1899) (St. Petersburg: Giperion, 2004), p. 84.
[306] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 211.

Christian denominations, stating that the Japanese 'while only half awake like to wave away the light streaming through the windows by holding a dead frog dried in the form of a fan.'[307] Here, he was obviously comparing the light to Christianity and the fan made from a dead frog to Shintoism. He elsewhere described the Shinto faith as 'dried up' and 'babble.'[308] Nikolai held that Shintoism was destined to die because like other traditional beliefs, it did not address the needs of the soul.[309]

However, Nikolai could not help but notice that the Japanese government was increasingly lending support to Shintoism. For example, in an entry dated September–October 1889, he stated that Shintoism was 'observed by the Court in all its aspects,' but he blamed Western influence for the renewed interest. He stated that after listening to 'foreign teachers and instructors' who were atheists and supporters of theosophy, some Japanese had decided that Christianity had outlived its time and that if they were to hold on to something of religion, 'it should be something of their own.'[310]

Nikolai also felt that Buddhism was becoming out-dated. The only thing that worried Nikolai was that the growing fad for Buddhism in the West was coming to Japan in the form of a 'progressive' Western trend that could help to revive an otherwise dying Japanese faith. Having read Schopenhauer in 1889, Nikolai noted: 'The Buddhist mindset has partially occupied some empty heads in Europe and America and from there it has returned to Japan. This Buddhism of sorts is the future religion of Europe in place of the Christianity that is disappearing there. … It is a sign that non-Orthodoxy means the death of the human spirit.'[311] For another example of this trend in the West Nikolai cited Theosophical Society co-founder Henry Olcott (1832–1907), whom he called one of 'the foreign infidels saying that Buddhism is higher than Christianity.' According to Nikolai, although the Japanese listened to such 'infidels' and looked with scorn at how they 'bow at the threshold of Buddhism,' they had come to 'imagine that they do not need Christianity at all and that it is indecent.'[312]

The threat that Nikolai identified was not from a dying Buddhism but rather from the influence of the de-Christianising West joining the non-Christian traditions of Asia and superseding spirituality both in the West and in Japan. The redemptive role of Orthodoxy was again mentioned not as a factor in bilateral Russian-Chinese cultural interactions but as one side of the Russia-Japan-West triangle of interaction.

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[307]*Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* ed. Kennosuke Nakamura, 5 vols., vol. 2 (1881–1893) (St. Petersburg: Giperion, 2004), p. 151.
[308] Ibid., pp. 303, 568.
[309] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 666.
[310] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 346.
[311] Ibid., p. 304.
[312] Ibid., p. 346.

Nikolai's unofficial views on Confucianism differed only slightly from his official statements. He wrote that Confucianism inculcates certain positive moral qualities but that those qualities are often abstract, divorced from real life, pertain only to the external, and far from true spirituality. In addition, he felt that with the advent of Western civilisation, even the positive features borrowed from Confucianism were being blurred. For example, he noted that positive features of Confucianism such as politeness and decency were disappearing in contemporary Japan.[313] In Nikolai's opinion, followers of Confucius were passionate scholars 'with hearts that have turned to stone,'[314] while after criticising one Japanese family for only formally honouring their parents, as called for in Confucianism, he concluded, '…as long as Christianity does not transform the Japanese, they will always have the base feelings, duplicity, and barbarism of the heart that so amazes us now.'[315]

Nikolai came to the conclusion during this period that adopting Western material culture would be beneficial to Japan since it would lead inevitably to the adoption of Christianity, one of the cornerstones of Western civilisation. He observed this interest starting to grow while living in Tokyo and, having begun to examine why there should be such an interest in Christianity, concluded that pre-Christian beliefs and ethics had prepared the ground for Japan to embrace the Christian truth. This represented a significant revision of his previous, less complimentary opinions. It was clear that somehow, such traditional beliefs had had a different effect on the Japanese than on other Asian peoples, who were not so open to Western innovations and the Christian religion. In addition to explaining why Westernisation had been successful, Nikolai's positive assessment of Japan's pre-Christian teachings offered a reason as to why there had been a strong uptake of Christianity in Japan.

Russia during the 1870s and the evolution of Nikolai's thought

The 1870s and 1880s constituted a tumultuous period in Russia's history. Alexander II's reform efforts continued and the implementation of the last of the Great Reforms, that of the military, began in 1874, when the system of voluntary recruitment was replaced with universal conscription.[316] At the same time, the growth in revolutionary sentiment, the emergence of terrorism, and the 1863–1864 uprising in Poland triggered a conservative reaction, as a result of which certain reforms of the 1860s were restricted. Nevertheless, by the end of the 1880s, a plan

[313] Ibid., p. 453.
[314] Ibid., p. 281.
[315] Ibid., p. 129.
[316] P. A. Zajonchkovskij, *Voennye reformy 1860-1870 godov v Rossii* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1952).

had been devised to reform the autocratic system by means of extending the powers granted to the already existing State Council and by forming a consultative ‘General Commission’ that presented the possibility for representatives of the *zemstva*[317] to participate. This plan, which did not in itself guarantee a constitutional monarchy but could have been used as a stepping-stone towards one, never came to fruition due to the assassination of the tsar by terrorists in 1881.[318] Alexander II’s successor, Alexander III, made it his policy to restrict some of his father’s reforms and abolish others.

Alexander II was active in international matters during the 1870s and during this time, Russia returned to the policy of expanding the continental landmass of the Russian Empire, annexing Central Asia, the North Caucasus, the Far East of Russia, Bessarabia, and the regions of Batumi and Kars. In 1871, Russia reasserted its rights to the Black Sea that had been lost as a result of the Crimean War and succeeded in securing the lifting of a ban on its keeping a fleet there. In 1877–78, Russia defeated the Ottoman Empire in the Russo-Turkish war.[319] Alexander II was more cautious in his approach to policy with regard to the Far East because such territories were considered remote and difficult to control. Continuing on the course pursued in the 1860s when Alaska was sold to the US, Alexander II signed the Treaty of Saint Petersburg with Japan in 1875, according to which the island of Sakhalin would be recognised as a part of Russia, while the Kuril Islands would fall under the control of Japan. All of this was directly relevant to Nikolai, who was tasked with providing pastoral care to the indigenous, mainly Ainu populations of the Kurils who had previously converted to Orthodoxy.

Not everyone in Russia approved of this course of action; some thought that too many resources were being wasted on the acquisition of new territories, exacerbating the difficult economic situation in the country,[320] but these discussions led to internal reforms. Political liberalisation resulted in the emergence of an ultra-conservative opposition and a radical revolutionary opposition. Representatives of the radical movement demanded the abolition of autocratic rule and were prepared to fight against it by any means, including terrorism, while the conservatives advocated curtailing reforms and introducing firm measures against the radicals. The *Narodnik* movement,[321] which emerged at the end of the 1860s and consisted mainly of young people and students advocating socialist change on the basis of peasant communes, had split into

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[317] *Zemstvo* (plural *zemstva*) – an institution of local government set up in 1861 during the period of Alexander II’s reforms.

[318] V. R. Davtjan, "Konstitucionnyj proekt M. T. Loris-Melikova: predposylki i posledstvija," *Vestnik Volgogradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 2, no. 31 (2016).

[319] V. I. Vinogradov, *Russko-tureckaja vojna 1877—1878 gg. i osvobozhdenie Bolgarii* (Moscow: Mysl', 1978).

[320] M. N. Pokrovskij, *Russkaja istorija s drevnejshih vremen. Pri uchastii N.M. Nikol'skogo i V.N.Storozheva.*, vol. 5 (Moscow: izdanie t-va "Mir," 1911), p. 297.

[321] Sometimes referred to as the “Populist” movement.

revolutionary, liberal, and anarchist groups.[322] In 1883, former *Narodnik* Georgy Plekhanov formed the first Russian Marxist group, the ‘Emancipation of Labour,’ in Geneva.[323] The *Narodnik* revolutionaries pursued individual terror tactics and carried out numerous acts of terrorism against high-ranking officials and the tsar himself. Despite the efforts of the police, the terrorists had not been quelled before Alexander III’s rise to power and in March 1881, they managed to assassinate the tsar.

All these turbulent events are mentioned rather vaguely in Nikolai’s letters and diaries. There are no detailed diary entries for the 1870s, save for a period in 1879–1880 that describes his time in Russia. However, judging by the contents of the letters, one can deduce that during the 1870s, Nikolai was primarily concerned with the creation and development of the Mission and that the situation in Russia interested him only in terms of the extent to which it could contribute to the main objective in his life: the preaching of Orthodoxy in Japan.

In essence, Nikolai returned to Russia to further the cause of the Japanese Mission. The revival of public life prompted by the reforms resulted in an increase in the number of public and quasi-public organisations that sought to promote Orthodox missionary work. Although previously, missionary work had been conducted exclusively by the Holy Synod, a new group called the Orthodox Missionary Society was established in Moscow in January 1870. According to its charter, it fell under the patronage of the empress (the wife of the reigning emperor) and under the ultimate supervision of the Holy Synod, with the Metropolitan of Moscow being the society’s chairman and chairman of the board. At the diocese level, local committees were created that were headed by the local eparchial bishops and with the permission of the Holy Synod and the consent of a local bishop, the society was granted the right to open new missions and operational districts, churches, schools, hospitals, and other establishments.

The Society’s board membership included officials, representatives of the clergy, and public figures. A Barnaul merchant, Afanasy Mal’kov, played an active role in its formation. The board’s primary objective was to assist missions within Russia’s borders, starting with its eastern territories, but it could also render assistance to those abroad. This was a new public organisation under the patronage of the government and whose existence would have been unlikely before the reforms.[324] Apart from the Orthodox Missionary Society, whose resources were relatively limited, there were various private donors who had expressed an interest in financing the Japanese Mission, many of whom held high positions in society. Nikolai maintained correspondence with many of

[322] A. A. Galaktionov and P. F. Nikandrov, *Ideologi russkogo narodnichestva* (Leningrad: Izd-vo LGU, 1966).
[323] G. S. Zhujkov, *Gruppa "Osvobozhdenie truda"* (Moscow: Socjegiz, 1962).
[324] Efimov, *Ocherki po istorii missionerstva Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi*.

these people but was unable to meet them in person, which would surely have led them to offer more help.

During his stay in Russia, Nikolai was promoted to the rank of bishop, which elevated his status in the eyes of the faithful and created a more favourable environment to establish better working relations with clergy and officials from other countries. This yielded new opportunities, including the possibility of raising funds for the mission. Among a number of rights and privileges held only by bishops Nikolai was now able to personally ordain Japanese priests; previously, this had had to be done by bishops visiting Japan, which complicated matters significantly. It was still impossible to ordain a bishop in Japan since in accordance with the Apostolic Canons to which the Orthodox Church adheres, two or three bishops are required to conduct the ordination of another bishop, and gathering the required number in Japan would have been highly unlikely.[325]

Nikolai's main reason for visiting Russia for a second time was to seek help to develop the Mission. Evidence of this desire can be found in the very detailed diary entries written during his stay in Russia between 1879 and 1880 that consist almost exclusively of descriptions of meetings he had with various benefactors and government officials with whom he discussed the issue of support for the Mission, and it should be noted that considerable support was forthcoming. On March 7, 1880, by a decision of the Holy Synod, he was appointed Bishop of Reval and vicar[326] of the diocese of Riga, with secondment to Japan. This was necessary since during the period of the Synod (1700–1917), an elevation to the rank of bishop and transfers of high-ranking clergymen to other dioceses were carried out via an imperial decree to the Synod, which would issue the corresponding decision in accordance with the decree. Then, the Synod would conduct a nomination ceremony, and only after that would the episcopal consecration take place in a church.

The speech Nikolai delivered on March 27 during the episcopal nomination ceremony was met with great interest in society. Many public figures had come to hear Nikolai; the acquaintances present, as mentioned in Nikolai's diary, included member of the Advisory Board to the Minister of Public Education, geographer, and historian Ivan Kornilov (1811–1901); poet and translator Senator Nikolai Semenov (1823–1904); Groom of the Chamber Vladimir Sabler (1845–1918); diplomat Baron Roman Rosen (1847–1921); professor at St. Petersburg University and oriental specialist Kaetan Kossovich (1815–1883); and archaeologist Pyotr Giltenbradt (1840–1905). As for members of the clergy, Nikolai mentioned the well-known publisher of religious literature and Archpriest of the St. Petersburg Naval Cathedral Ivan Yakhontov (1819–1888) and his fellow

[325] The Ecclesiastical Canons of the Same Holy Apostles. *Retrieved from:* https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf07.ix.ix.vi.html

[326] In the ROC, "vicar" is a title for the deputy senior bishop of a diocese (similar to an auxiliary bishop in the Catholic Church or a suffragan bishop in an Anglican Church). A vicariate is part of a diocese governed by the vicar.

students from the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy priests Fyodor Bystrov (1835–1913) and Ioann Demkin (1837–1916), both of whom had helped the Mission. A number of newspapers carried reports about Nikolai's speech, which was published in its entirety in *Tserkovno-obshchestvennyi vestnik* (The Church and Social Herald).[327]

On March 30, Nikolai was consecrated as a bishop at the Holy Trinity Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky Lavra.[328] The service was conducted by Metropolitan of St. Petersburg Isidor (Nikol'sky, 1799–1892), who at the time was the most important member of the Holy Synod and the Chairman of the Office for Affairs of the Orthodox Clergy, Consolidated by the Imperial Court; that is, the top religious figure in Russia. High-ranking members of the ROC hierarchy attended the celebratory feast held to mark the occasion. The title of Bishop of Reval[329] and the position of the vicar of the diocese of Riga did not imply any practical connection with the city of Reval or the diocese of Riga, being merely a formal title. At the same time, for some unknown reason but most probably due to the small number of religious believers and the general lack of readiness, a separate diocese was not created in Japan (which was done much later, in 1906). Nikolai denied that this course of action had been chosen in order to avoid irritating the Japanese authorities, who in all likelihood would not have objected. In response to a question by the Anglican William Ball Wright (1843–1912), Nikolai said that it was due to a reluctance to appoint a Russian subject as a bishop of another country.[330] No doubt his opinion on the matter changed subsequently, given that in 1906, he was elevated to the rank of Archbishop of Tokyo and All Japan. During his stay in Russia, Nikolai became acquainted not only with the top hierarchy of the ROC but also with members of the royal family, high-level officials, aristocrats, philanthropists, writers, and public figures. He also dined with Grand Duchess Ekaterina Mikhailovna (1827–1894) and was introduced to Emperor Alexander II at the imperial residence in Tsarkoe Selo.[331]

By this time, Nikolai had become a fairly prominent figure. In St. Petersburg, he took part in several religious services attended by the heir to the throne, the future Emperor Alexander III and his wife Tsarevna Maria Fedorovna (the Danish-born princess Marie Sophie Fredrikke Dagmar), who had a personal audience with him and donated several items to the Mission from the Anichkov Palace, the residence of the heir to the throne. Nikolai described her as the kindest and most humble woman in the world.[332] The royal court priest, Nikandr (Nikanor) Bryantsev (1824–1888), told Nikolai later that this audience had been a most extraordinary event since

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[327] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 235.
[328] Ibid., pp. 237–238.
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[330] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 120.
[331] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 312.
[332] Ibid., p. 131.

Nikolai had been the only man ever afforded this kind of honour, apart from Metropolitan Makary of Moscow.[333] Nikolai requested that the Chief Procurator of the Synod, Konstantin Pobedonostsev (1827–1907), organise a meeting with the heir to the throne, but this meeting appears not to have taken place.

Nikolai also met with high-ranking officials from the Synod and the Ministry of Foreign Affair, various influential people who were in a position to provide assistance to the Mission, and all kinds of public figures. During a conversation in Moscow, Metropolitan Makary agreed to send 23,800 roubles from the Orthodox Missionary Society each year to the Japanese mission and an additional 2,000 roubles from the Moscow Episcopal See.[334] A general missionary meeting (the Society's highest body) was convened on the occasion of Nikolai's trip to Moscow, where Nikolai presented a report on the mission. His speech inspired great interest and was later published in *Moskovskie vedomosti* newspaper.[335]

While in Moscow Nikolai met numerous prominent cultural figures including the entrepreneur, philanthropist, and two-time leader of Moscow City Administration Sergey Tretyakov (1834–1892); writers Ivan Turgenev (1818–1883), Dmitry Grigorovich (1822–1900), Ivan Aksakov (1823–1886), Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821–1881), and Mikhail Katkov (1818–1887); musician and composer Anton Rubinstein (1829–1894); professor of philology and future Vice-President of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences Yakov Grot (1812–1893); the eldest son of the writer Alexander Pushkin, Alexander Alexandrovich Pushkin, who was an aide-de-camp to the tsar and would soon become an army general; and many others. The *Novosti* newspaper, which was aimed at a mass readership, wrote about him as follows:

> As we know, the Right Reverend Nikolai, Bishop of Reval and head of the Japanese Orthodox Mission, is currently in Moscow. Residing at the Savvinskoe Methochion, he is participating in various religious festivities in Moscow and performing the liturgy at the invitation of a number of different churches. Muscovites have taken him to their hearts for his simplicity, courteousness, and graciousness. … In private conversations, the Right Reverend Nikolai has discussed the state of the Orthodox Church in Japan and his stories are so engaging that his audience can listen to him tirelessly for hours on end.[336]

It is interesting to read Nikolai's description of the events marking the unveiling of a statue of Pushkin at the start of June 1880, which became a very important moment in the public life of

[333] Ibid., p. 132.
[334] Ibid., p. 94.
[335] *Moskovskie vedomosti* (May 14, 1880).
[336] *Novosti*, June 2, 1880. Cited in: F. M. Dostoevsky, *Sobranie sochinenii v 15-ti tomakh*, vol. 15 (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 1966), p. 816. Footnote 2.

the country. He described the day on which the monument was unveiled, June 6 (18), as a day full of profound, indelible impressions during which he 'saw the most outstanding vision in the world before him, the cream of the intelligentsia.'[337] In the morning, Nikolai attended a memorial service held in a church at the Strastnoy Convent, opposite the location at which the statue had been erected. After the service, Metropolitan Makary delivered a speech on the significance of the poet's contribution to the Russian language. Nikolai observed the unveiling ceremony from the bell-tower of the convent. 'I saw glory personified; there is no other glory on Earth; I just wish there had been more people there. Nevertheless, Pushkin stood with his head bowed either as if he were guilty before the people or were thinking about the fuss of everything that was taking place; that is, about the glory,' he wrote in his diary.[338] Nikolai then moved on to Moscow University where he listed to speeches given by its rector, Nikolai Tikhonravov (1832–1893),[339] noted historian Vasily Kliuchevsky (1841–1911), and Western literature specialist Professor Nikolai Starozhenko (1836–1906). On June 6 and 7, he heard talks by famous writers and public figures at a meeting of the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature at the Assembly House of the Nobility.[340]

After his time in Moscow, Nikolai returned to St. Petersburg, and then went on to travel around a number of cities in Russia, visiting Nizhny Novgorod, Samara, Syzran, Ryazan, and Rzhev, from where he went to his home village of Bereza to see his relatives. Everywhere he went he met with local bishops and well-known public figures and visited religious and educational establishments and monasteries. For example, en route to his home village, he made a special visit to the estate of the famous teacher and educator Sergey Rachinsky (1833–1902) in Tatevo. In September, having visited Kiev, he took a ship from Odessa back to Japan accompanied by Deacon Dmitrii L'vovsky, who had been sent to the mission to direct liturgical singing and along the way, they visited Istanbul, Port Said, the Suez Canal, Penang, Singapore, and Hong Kong.

It is notable that in his descriptions of his highly eventful visit to Russia, Nikolai wrote about it almost tangentially, without the kind of emotions he started to express more vocally in his diaries at a later period. Perhaps his only strong feeling can be seen in his recognition that everything occurring was somewhat trivial and futile; he wrote constantly of his desire to return to Japan, where his life's work lay. A common thread running through the pages of the diary of this period is the idea that these visits, meetings, banquets, and even the high-ranking title of bishop were only useful insofar as they made it possible to raise funds for the Mission. In September 1879,

[337] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 294.
[338] Ibid., p. 293.
[339] Ibid. The name "Tikhomirov" is given erroneously in the printed edition of the diaries.
[340] Ibid., p. 294

having just arrived in Russia and recalling that he sometimes missed his homeland when in Japan, he wrote:

> That very same constant thought about Japan and the Mission! Having warmer and broader feelings, I am developing a better understanding of the Mission: that means that the Mission is the most important thing forever and everywhere; just the Mission and Japan. I cannot hide from them and shall not find any other joy on this Earth better than the Mission and Japan. So what exactly did I miss in Japan? What was my soul seeking? You cannot run from that which has become rooted to the soul! And my joy on Earth consists of one thing: that matters run smoothly at the Mission. Yes, perhaps, that is my only genuine joy on Earth! Oh, Lord, let me return there more quickly and never experience any yearning there or a desire to go to Russia.[341]

In January 1880, he noted: 'A dull and dismally spent day. How dull and dismal my whole stay in Russia has been. I was bored quite often in Japan, but am almost always bored in Russia. Which place is better? The place where there is real work to do. Let me remember and feel this when I am back in Japan.'[342] Quite a few similar entries can be found in the diary.

The longing to deal with important matters was not the only cause of dissatisfaction; Nikolai's notes from the time of his second stay in Russia lead us to conclude that he was dissatisfied with the lack of assistance he received. Although many Russians assisted the Mission and Nikolai collected quite significant sums, he nevertheless suggested that Russians, both in the form of the government and as private individuals, did not display the enthusiasm on which he had been counting. He pointed this out repeatedly. For example, when he praised the priest Vasil Yakovlevich Mikhailovsky, who would speak about the Japanese Mission during church services, thereby persuading simple parishioners to donate to the mission, Nikolai concluded:

> Lord, what good Christians Russians are! However, the spirit of empathy with the Missions has not been awakened; they do not know about it! If but half of Russia's priests spoke out as V. Yakovlevich did, then of course, a million [roubles] would be collected for the Mission; and this would not be harmful to Russia but to its benefit, awakening religious sentiment. The priests do not know exactly how to awaken the spirit of piety! A better time shall come when people with an active

[341] Ibid., pp. 96–97.
[342] Ibid., pp. 134–135.

religious sentiment shall rise up and then, it will be different from the way it is now!

We shall rejoice in heaven![343]

On January 19, 1880, he made a diary entry in which he recorded his indignation at having to constantly request money for a just cause, at times receiving rude replies and experiencing plenty of moral anguish, but he was prepared to shoulder this burden 'so that there might be Christianity in Japan.'[344] The following month, he remarked once again that he was 'sick of this begging which, to add insult to injury, is so fruitless!'[345]

Nikolai believed that there was no task more important in the world than spreading the true faith because only the adoption of Orthodox Christianity could put right all aspects of life, and more importantly, it would bring about the true spiritual development both of the individual and of the state (see Chapter 4). However, he could see that many people both in Russia and Japan did not understand this; political, economic, and other minor objectives were prioritised over this fundamental goal. Because he thought that a true Orthodox Christian could not possibly disagree with him on this issue, he began to search for the cause of people's passivity and gradually evolved from a state of slight displeasure to believing that true Orthodoxy was being actively undermined in Russia by various harmful influences. Among these influences he identified non-Orthodox Christianity (Catholicism and Protestantism), Western positivism and materialism, which had spread throughout the intelligentsia, and 'nihilistic,' atheistic, and revolutionary ideas imposed on Russia by foreigners and even Russian non-Orthodox believers and ethnically non-Russian people.

The importance of shedding light on the dangers of Catholicism and Protestantism appeared several times in the diaries, but far from everyone understood this assertion. For example, in response to the news that the courtier and poet Prince Nikolai Meshchersky (1829–1901) had spoken of the fundamental differences between Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodoxy, Nikolai commented that he was surprised that such a theme was being discussed by aristocrats, revealing that he considered most of the aristocracy to be incapable of coming to a correct judgement on such an issue.[346]

During a visit to Count Sergey Sheremetev (1844–1918), Nikolai began to criticise Catholics and noticed that some guests stood up and left. He concluded that they were probably Catholics and did not appreciate his words: 'It serves them right! Orthodoxy shall not be leaving the battlefield.'[347] On February 6, 1880 in response to an acquaintance's story about a German-born member of the Academy of Sciences who had spent large sums of money on publishing a

[343] Ibid., p. 101.
[344] Ibid., p. 135.
[345] Ibid., p. 170.
[346] Ibid., p. 95.
[347] Ibid., pp. 143–144.

book of little importance, Nikolai wrote that those who burdened Russia with unwanted gifts were in the wrong: 'What is happening in Russia, at least on the basis of yesterday's and today's events? I wish I could be in Japan sooner!'[348] On February 5—the day before—an attempt had been made on the tsar's life and on the morning of June 6, Nikolai had taken part in a thanksgiving service to mark the Emperor's deliverance from harm. In doing so, Nikolai appeared to associate German influence not only with wasted funds but also with terrorism. In the following month, Nikolai wrote approvingly of how his acquaintance, the priest and member of the St. Petersburg Committee for Religious Censorship Archimandrite Gelasy, had 'berated Russia's current rulers, the favour shown to Germans, and so on.'[349]

Undoubtedly Nikolai was deeply concerned with the terrorist acts of which there were several during his stay in Russia. They were discussed throughout society, including the circle in which Nikolai moved. This is illustrated by a note from February 23, 1880 in which Nikolai provided a brief description of a conversation he had with some acquaintances. On this particular day, following an all-night vigil, he visited the home of Ivan Kornilov where he met a professor from St. Petersburg University, Mikhail Sukhomlinov (1828–1901), and a professor from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, the historian and publisher Mikhail Koyalovich (1828–1891). Nikolai wrote that the conversation had centred 'on Koyalovich's speech at the start of the Academy's academic year, then on the socialists, Loris-Melikov, and a Jew who had been executed.' At that point, a member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, Afanasy Bychkov (1818–1899), arrived and entered the conversation about the socialists. The conversation turned to Loris-Melikov 'swearing like a trooper' at the assassination attempt on the tsar and to the fact that the socialists had considered planting a bomb in the basement of the Theological Academy.[350]

For the entire evening, the conversation focused on the anti-state activities of underground forces and terrorists. By the 'Jew who had been executed,' Nikolai was almost certainly referring to the lone terrorist Ippolit Mlodetsky (1855–1880), a baptised Jew. On February 20, Mlodetsky had made an attempt on the life of the Chief of the Supreme Administrative Commission Count Mikhail Loris-Melikov (1824–1888). The Commission had been established on February 12 following an attack organised by the terrorist Stepan Khalturin at the Winter Palace on February 5, and had been vested with extensive powers. The explosion was also described by Nikolai in his diary. Mlodetsky was hanged on February 22, the day before the conversation in question, and understandably, many commentators were consumed by the topic. It is significant that Nikolai

[348] Ibid., p. 166.
[349] Ibid., p. 209.
[350] Ibid., p. 186.

drew attention to the fact that the terrorist was not Russian by nationality, although his religion was Orthodox Christianity.

Nikolai noted further that the discussion came round to 'Mirsky's escape' and wrote, 'Is it true?' This appears to relate to the terrorist Lev Mirsky (1859–1920), who had been imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress's Alekseevsky Ravelin following an attempt on the life of the Chief of the Special Gendarmes Corps, General Alexander Drenteln (1820–1888), in February 1879 and whose escape was apparently subject to rumour (in fact he did not escape). Nikolai said that his academic interlocutors' opinions on socialism were not the kind 'one would wish to hear from extremely learned people.' Perhaps this comment was provoked by the crude nature of the solutions suggested; Bychkov had compared Russia's socialists with Paris's Communards, saying that 'after around a thousand of them were shot in one go, everything quietened down.'[351]

On June 1 of the same year, Nikolai discussed the nihilists (as the radical revolutionaries were called) with Fyodor Dostoevsky, whom he met at the home of the Bishop of Mozhaysk, Aleksey (Lavrov-Platonov, 1829–1890), at the time the second vicar of Moscow Metropolis. According to Nikolai, Dostoevsky argued that the nihilists would soon be reborn into religion and would 'say at that point that they have moved beyond the realm of economics and onto moral grounds.'[352] Dostoevsky described this meeting on the following day in a letter to his wife: 'Yesterday morning, I called on Bishop Aleksey and Nikolai [of Japan]. It was very nice to meet them. I sat for around an hour, some or other countess arrived, and I left. Both spoke to me from the heart. They made it clear that I had paid them a great honour and made them happy by my visit. They had read my works. It follows that they appreciate those who stand up for God.'[353]

It is understandable that all these events and the discussions about them scared Nikolai somewhat. Shortly before, he had written:

> What a time it is now in Petersburg! These unremitting attempts on the life of His Majesty are instilling in everyone a sense of panic and dismay. And what lies ahead, God only knows! The sooner I leave for Japan the better, so that my eyes do not see, and my ears do not hear, all of this mess about which nothing can be done anyway.[354]

Life in Russia had disappointed Nicholas so much that in his own words, he 'was sick' of keeping a diary, and he wrote about events from July 1880 retrospectively in September, during his return journey.[355]

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[351] Ibid., pp. 185–186.

[352] Ibid., p. 288.

[353] Dostoevsky, *Sobranie sochinenii v 15-ti tomakh*, 15, 623.

[354] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), 288.

[355] Ibid., p. 312.

Nikolai's social and political views at this time are still not completely clear from the available materials of this period. They were in all probability not yet fully developed, but it is possible to make certain conclusions regarding how they had evolved in Russia. On his second and final trip to his homeland, he seemed to understand clearly that things were not going very well in the country that he considered to be a bastion of Orthodoxy: 'Everything is run down and ramshackle in Russia; it is no wonder that people are rebelling. Oh, so much needs to be changed and improved! We are not living or functioning; we are vegetating! There is panic and confusion here… and no wonder! Hmm! The situation is bitter, hurtful, and pathetic. Flattery, nastiness, and thirst for the water of life can be detected everywhere between the lines.'[356] Elsewhere, he noted that 'one cannot foresee an end to the troubles.'[357]

Nikolai attempted to find guilty parties to whom the unrest could be attributed but did not propose any specific formulae to improve the situation. The only thing he felt able to do was to return to Japan as quickly as possible and carry on with his life's work there. Nevertheless, it is still possible to draw certain conclusions about his views during this period. For example, he believed that it would be possible to reduce censorship or abolish it altogether and to fight opposition movements with words, rather than bans. He welcomed the words of Count Evfimy Putiatin that citizens should have the freedom to print anything, '…while in the meantime, the government should attract some of the best writers and through them publish a number of very good newspapers and magazines, which should be set up as cheaply as possible, for practically nothing, and which should contest everything preposterous while teaching the truth, both in religious and civil matters.'[358] At the same time, however, he spoke out against unlimited freedoms and the course of liberal politics in general. Commenting on Koyalovich's lecture in which the professor suggested that the government should 'mend its ways and become more modern,' Nikolai said that the speech should have gone in the opposite direction.[359] He also said that the newspapers were full of 'fawning gibberish' and 'half-veiled malevolence.'[360]

In Nikolai's opinion, freedom required limitations. Freedom, he wrote, 'is unimpeded movement and life within institutionalised limits; jumping beyond these limits means depriving oneself of freedom.' He explained his idea via an example from nature: A fish can be free and content only when in its natural environment, i.e. in water; but if the fish were to jump out of the

[356] Ibid., p. 176.
[357] Ibid., p. 178.
[358] Ibid., p. 174.
[359] Ibid., p. 178.
[360] Ibid., p. 179.

water under the pretext that it is free to do so, it would lose its freedom of movement and even die. Similarly, he believed that Protestants who had abandoned the true Church were not free either.[361]

The Japanese Mission as the centre of Orthodox missionary work in East Asia

After returning to Japan, Bishop Nikolai started to build the Mission with redoubled enthusiasm. His high rank gave him certain advantages, increasing his authority both among believers and within the power elites of Japan, but there is an extremely limited range of sources from which the evolution of his views in the 1880s can be assessed. His diaries from the time are mainly restricted to missionary trips around the country, meetings with local catechists and Christian believers, and sermons for potential converts, and they deal predominantly with the questions of how to spread Orthodoxy more widely and build a new, Japanese church. Only a small part of the diaries were written in Tokyo and deal with general issues. As in the 1870s, the greater part of Nikolai's numerous letters, both official and private, consists of reports on the mission's work, requests for funding, and advice to students and catechists. Previously centred in Hokkaido, his work moved to the more southern regions of the country. 'The last ten years were dedicated to northeastern Japan. The coming 10 y[ears] should be used primarily for the benefit of the southwest. This is the general idea for the next ten years,' he wrote in 1882.[362]

In the meantime, his endeavours, the successes of the Mission, and Japan's growing global influence put him in a completely new position. From a state of isolation in a rather remote, unappealing country in which success was far from a foregone conclusion, the Japanese Mission was turning into the centre of Orthodox missionary work in East Asia. Of course, by this time, the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in China, established by a decree of Peter I in 1712, had existed for more than a century and a half,[363] but it had several peculiar features. First, since its foundation it had focused on offering spiritual guidance to Russians who for one reason or another had ended up in China. Initially, these were imprisoned defenders of the Albazin fortress captured by Qing troops in 1685, as well as Russians who had arrived in Beijing as members of embassies and trade caravans. The mission's staff performed almost no proselytising among non-Orthodox Chinese. Although Peter I's decree of 1700, which ruled to send to Tobolsk an educated monk from Little Russia[364], already contained, in the rubric of the tasks assigned to the metropolitan, provisions for

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[361] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893). p. 306.
[362] Ibid., p. 115.
[363] S. L.Tihvinskij, "Predislovie. Istorija Pekinskoj Duhovnoj Missii v pervyj period ee dejatel'nosti," in *Istorija Rossijskoj Duhovoj Missii v Kitae*, ed. S. L.Tihvinskij et al. (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Svjato-Vladimirskogo Bratstva, 1997), 9.
[364] A region in Western Russia, now Ukraine.

the conversion of pagans in Siberia and China to the true faith,[365] the Qing government did not consider this to be part of the Mission's functions. Initially, in line with the laws of the Qing Empire, members of the Mission were considered not to be missionaries but rather Qing government officials, hired to serve the spiritual needs of Chinese Orthodox subjects, or more precisely, Russian prisoners recruited to the Qing army. Up until 1858, they were even paid salaries and subsistence allowances for their services.[366] In their spare time, the missionaries studied the country and its languages as well as compiling dictionaries, writing accounts of the country, and producing maps; however, proselytising amongst the local population was carried out with great care, and mainly among people who were directly associated with the Mission.

Second, the mission carried out diplomatic assignments—i.e. it also performed the actual functions of a Russian diplomatic mission. Up until 1863, the Mission was subordinate not only to the religious authorities but also to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sending it reports and training translators. It was only after the opening of a Russian diplomatic mission in Beijing Beijing in 1861 that the Ecclesiastical Mission was released from its responsibilities to the Foreign Ministry.

Third, up until the beginning of the 20th century, no head of the Beijing Mission had held the rank of bishop. It was only in 1902 that Innokenty (Figurovsky, 1863–1931), who was Mission head at the time, was promoted to the rank of bishop[367] and therefore from 1880 to 1902, Nikolai was the senior-ranking Russian missionary in Asia and possibly abroad overall. As a rule, Russian religious Missions abroad were headed by a clergyman at the level of an archimandrite.

Following the conclusion of the Treaties of Tianjin between the foreign powers and the Qing Empire in 1858, which permitted the conduct of missionary work, previously formally prohibited since 1724, the Beijing Mission began preparations for broad-scale proselytising amongst the Chinese population.[368] In November 1857, Evfimy Putiatin, who had headed the Russian diplomatic mission at the talks, wrote in a dispatch to St. Petersburg that 'the time has come for us to demonstrate greater zeal than before in the preaching the Gospel.' However, as was the case in Japan, the Foreign Ministry recommended that missionary work be conducted with 'caution and discretion' in order not to provoke hostility from the Qing government.[369] Preaching

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[365] Ibid.

[366] Hieromonk Nikolaj (Adoratskij), "Istorija Pekinskoj Duhovnoj Missii v pervyj period ee dejatel'nosti," in *Istorija Rossijskoj Duhovoj Missii v Kitae*, ed. S. L. Tihvinskij et al. (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Svjato-Vladimirskogo Bratstva, 1997), pp. 18–19, 61–72.

[367] Formally, Innokenty (Kul'chitskii, 1680?–1731) was appointed head of the Beijing Mission in 1721 by Peter I and promoted to the rank of bishop, but he did not arrive in China.

[368] Thomas H. Reilly, *The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom: Rebellion and the Blasphemy of Empire* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), p. 43.

[369] P. M. Ivanov, "Pravoslavnye missionerskie stany v Kitae v nachale XX veka," in *Iz istorii hristianstvo v Kitae* (Moscow: Kraft, 2005), p. 137.

was also delayed by the need to translate the entire set of liturgical texts into Chinese; although some had been translated earlier, the mission now paid much more attention to the study of China and translations of Chinese texts. It was only some time after this and almost a decade later than in Japan that catechists and priests appeared in the Beijing Mission.[370]

While many Catholic and Protestant missionaries in the second half of the 19th century had worked in China before going to Japan and the Chinese missions had provided them with support, Orthodoxy in Japan was if anything more advanced than in China due to Nikolai's efforts: The Japanese mission supported the Beijing Mission and the help became reciprocal only towards the end of the 19th century. This was reflected by, for example, the resolution of the important issue of the ordination of priests from the local population. As a bishop, Nikolai was able to carry out the very important function of ordaining priests, which the leaders of the Chinese Mission were unable to do. In the intervening time following the lifting of the ban on missionary work in China, the number of Chinese believers had increased and the need arose to ordain Chinese priests. Consequently, in 1882, in connection with a request from the head of the Beijing Mission, Archimandrite Flavian (Gorodetsky, 1840–1915), Nikolai received a decree from the Synod on the need to ordain the first priest and deacon from among the Chinese faithful.[371] In July, Nikolai ordained the first Chinese Orthodox priest, Mitrofan Chang (Chang Yangji, 1855–1900), who went to Tokyo for the ceremony.[372]

An important piece of evidence indicating that Nikolai considered himself to be the leader of Orthodox missionary work in Asia was his plan to develop Asia's missions, as put forward in a letter to Rear Admiral Stepan Makarov in 1890. Although Makarov did not have any formal association with missionary work at the time, he was a well-known military leader and public figure, having just received the important position of junior flag officer of the Baltic Fleet and enjoyed far-reaching influence in St. Petersburg. Most notably, he was well-acquainted with the Synod's Chief Procurator, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, and Vladimir Sabler, who had by that time taken up the position of Head of the Synod's Administrative Office, which Nikolai mentions in his letter. Like Putiatin, Makarov always supported missionary work and rendered assistance in collecting donations for the Japanese Mission.

It is telling that although he acknowledged Makarov's efforts to assist the Japanese Mission, Nikolai asked him to expand his horizon of activities and serve 'the Russian mission abroad in general'; that is, not to put himself to the fore but to devote himself to the Orthodox cause as a

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[370] Ibid.
[371] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 116.
[372] R. G. Tiedemann, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume Two: 1800 to the Present* (Leiden–Boston: Brill 2010), p. 205.

whole. He wrote: '... you, as an Orthodox Christian, cannot help but be saddened that Orthodoxy is not prominent in the world, even though the world is destined for Orthodoxy...'[373] Nikolai proposed four measures to revive Orthodoxy's missionary work in Asia. First, he believed that it was vital to send to Japan at least two well-educated missionaries—i.e. graduates of a theological academy and, preferably, tonsured monks who would agree to go to Japan for a long period, despite all the hardships. Second, he proposed opening a mission in Korea, since the Korean people were 'open to adopting Christianity.' Catholic and Protestant missionaries had been pouring into Korea and seemed to be attracting many converts there, while Orthodoxy was not even known in the country. Nikolai's third proposal was to 'transform the Beijing mission from a nominal body into a working mission and to develop its preaching capacity.' Nikolai meant that the Beijing Mission carried out almost no missionary work and was not doing any preaching among the local population. The fourth idea was to send at least one Orthodox missionary to India.[374]

It is interesting that a large part of Nikolai's programme came to fruition. As early as the 1890s, the Japanese Mission was reinforced by the addition of several educated and even distinguished new personnel. In October 1890, a graduate of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Hieromonk Sergy (Stragorodsky), arrived at the Mission. He went on to become a well-known theologian and became patriarch in 1943 (although admittedly, he did not stay in Japan for long). In 1897, another graduate of the Moscow Theological Academy was sent to the Japanese mission: Hieromonk Andronik (Nikol'sky), who was subsequently a religious writer, bishop, and hieromartyr. Finally, in 1908, Sergius (Tikhomirov) was sent to the Mission. He was already a bishop and became Nikolai's successor after the latter's death. In July 1897, the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Korea was established by decree of the Holy Synod.[375] Furthermore, Innokenty (Figurovsky), who was appointed head of the 18th Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing in 1896, launched a vigorous campaign to develop the spread of Orthodoxy in China's inner regions.[376] The only item in Nikolai's proposed programme that remained unfulfilled was the dispatch of a missionary to India. Instead, a Mission in Urmia (Iran) was established in 1898 to the ethnic Assyrians who had converted to Orthodoxy from the Church of the East and Chaldean Catholic Church.[377] It is difficult to determine the extent to which Nikolai's efforts contributed to the adoption of these measures, but it is highly likely that they played a significant role.

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[373] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 224.
[374] Ibid., pp. 225–231.
[375] Archimandrite Feodosij (Perevalov), "Rossijskaja Duhovnaja Missija. V Koree (1900-1925)," in *Istorija Rossijskoj Duhovnoj Missii v Koree. Sbornik statej*, ed. D. Pozdnjaev (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Svjato-Vladimirskogo bratstva, 1999), p. 181.
[376] P. M. Ivanov, "Pravoslavnye missionerskie stany v Kitae v nachale XX veka," pp. 136–52.
[377] S. Sado, "Rossijskaja pravoslavnaja missija v Urmii (1898-1918)," *Hristianskoe chtenie* 13 (1996).

Nikolai's thinking in the 1880s continued to evolve in a direction that had started taking shape over the course of his stay in Russia. He condemned the influence of foreigners in Russia even more harshly than before. In 1882, expressing doubt whether Russian diplomats (evidently fearing the Japanese government's reaction) would agree to his proposal to buy land for the construction of a church in Tokyo that would belong to Russia rather than Japan, Nikolai openly blamed the Germans for many of Russia's problems, at the same time showing no pity for the tsar:

> This is yet another of Russia's lesions! Her bedsore, her foul-smelling scab, which makes one suspect that Russia is sick and weak, while this is not the case at all! Oh, these Germans, with a half-German tsar at their head! When shall Russia rid itself of this throbbing head and these aching limbs? Future hopes lie with Konstantin Pobedonostsev; however, the matter should be handled cunningly, if it were to proceed [i.e. the purchase a piece of land for the church]; but such behaviour would be alien to the Russian character! And what can one do if the Germans are eating away at the body of Russia, like lice and bugs![378]

One might suspect that these ideas were influenced by the fact that Russia's envoy to Japan at the time was Kirill Struve (Karl von Struve, 1835–1907), a well-known diplomat and astronomer and the son of the founder of the Pulkovo Observatory. Struve was from a German Lutheran family, but had recently converted to Orthodoxy. However, Struve was not mentioned by name, and it is possible to imagine that Nikolai was already beginning to express the idea that Russia's entire diplomatic corps, or even the aristocracy as a whole, were under foreign influence, and to solve this problem he proposed was the extreme conservative, Konstantin Pobedonostsev. Nikolai would often express such thoughts in the later years of his life.

Nikolai did not think that foreign influence was Russia's only problem; he began to say at this time that Russians were insufficiently developed spiritually, and he sought an explanation for this in the country's history. In April 1889, he noted that due to the constant need to repel the external threat posed by all sorts of potential colonisers—Mongols, Poles, Germans, and Turks—as well as to battle against the harsh climate, Russians were still in the process of gathering material strength: 'We are rich in this kind of strength and they are afraid of us, as if we were bears; that is how they should relate to us.' But, Nikolai believed, as a result of this, Russians had not developed enough spiritually and in this respect were still poor.[379]

Nikolai's comments also contained elements of doubt—albeit not expressed particularly confidently in this stage—that the success of Orthodoxy would materialise soon in Japan. These

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[378] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 131.
[379] Ibid., p. 320.

elements of doubt were brought about by the rapid growth in the popularity of Catholicism and Protestantism in Japan. In January 1889, he wrote that although in Europe and America:

> …the Protestant world is coming round more and more to the idea of its ultimate worthlessness and is already renouncing the Divinity of Christ almost completely … the splinters of a disintegrating Protestantism are still being brought here in the form of missionaries, throwing themselves enthusiastically at Japan in large numbers; and in this situation, the Japanese, like children playing with dolls, are starting to play with enthusiasm at being pastors, teachers, preachers, and deacons, all with unlimited freedom to interpret the Holy Scriptures as they wish and create as many new sects as their hearts desire.

Later, Nikolai argued that all would be well if the Japanese prodigal son were to take occasional liberties and come to his senses after experiencing spiritual poverty, but immediately expressed doubt as to whether this would come to pass. He concluded: 'Is the Japanese spirit really worthless? … No, I do not believe so. The Japanese too have much that is good and dear to God, therefore God shall not allow them to die in darkness and semi-darkness.'[380]

Towards the end of this period in which he voiced concern about Catholicism and Protestantism, we can see the first signs of features that are characteristic of the next period of Nikolai's thoughts: He expressed pessimism and hinted that there were unwelcome developments in the political situation and in the fact that traditional religious teachings were now regarded in a negative light. In a letter to Archbishop Veniamin of Irkutsk and Nerchinsk penned at the end of the 1880s, Nikolai wrote that preaching in the country 'continues, but rather sluggishly due to two hindrances.' The first was the 'wave of political excitement' that occurred between the adoption of the constitution and the opening of parliament. Nikolai's appraisal of Japan's history and the roles of the shogun and emperor makes it clear that he supported strong, authoritarian powers, albeit allowing a certain amount of freedom and debate, because he believed that this kind of power was most conducive to supporting the spread of the one, true religion from above. It is no coincidence that he considered the political instability associated with the adoption of a constitution and the creation of parliament to be a setback, albeit a temporary one.

The second hindrance was the increasing assertiveness of Buddhism. Buddhists in Japan had begun to demand that they not be forced to listen to Christian preaching and oblige followers to break off relations with their Christian neighbours, throw stones at them, and even set fire to their property. However, Nikolai assessed this was the 'death throes' of Buddhism, from which Christians were protected by the Japanese government. In Nikolai's opinion, the main obstacles to

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[380] Ibid., p. 307.

Christian preaching in Japan were posed by people who had been instrumental in agitating for Buddhism, namely 'European and American renegades and atheists' who had become leaders of public opinion and had taken up positions as university professors, government advisers, and journalists at leading newspapers.[381] By 'renegades,' Nikolai obviously meant Westerners who had renounced the Christian faith. It is interesting that the Russian Church of the late 19th and early 20th centuries called these 'renegades' positivists, nihilists, and atheists, especially if they had been Christians by birth or had come from a Christian family. For example, in a slightly later article (from 1916), an inspector from the Moscow Theological Academy, the future Archbishop and Hieromartyr Ilarion (Troitsky, 1886–1929), referred to 'nihilists and *raznochintsy*[382] of the likes of Dobroliubov and Chernyshevsky' as 'renegades of the clergy,' no doubt because both of these radical writers had been educated in theological seminaries.[383] A commentary on a letter by Nikolai published in a journal compared Japanese atheists to the Russian positivist philosopher Vladimir Lesevich (1837–1905), adding that having progressed from using words to committing deeds, they 'have become opponents of Christianity and are fomenting [the revival of] dying Buddhism. As a result, a pagan government is required to protect Christians from Christians.'[384]

At this stage of his thought, it is not yet possible to see Nikolai's emerging idea that Buddhism and Shintoism had contributed to the Japanese interest in Protestantism and materialist values. He considered Buddhism, Shintoism, and Confucianism to be useful, or at least harmless, due to their weakness and decrepitude; however, Western influence was giving impetus to their negative aspects.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the second period in the evolution of Nikolai's ideas. The changes in Nikolai's thought processes regarding history, the religious development of Japan, and the prospects of the Orthodox mission are linked with the evolution of a whole set of historical conditions including Japan's successful achievements in the realm of modernisation, the permission granted to Christians to preach, and the success of the Orthodox Mission. The main features of Nikolai's thinking in this period and how they differ from those of the first are listed below.

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[381] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), pp. 213-14.

[382] *Raznochintsy* were intellectuals who did not belong to the gentry (i.e. commoners).

[383] Heiromartyr Ilarion (Troitsky), "Grekh protiv: Dumy ob intelligentsii," in *Tvoreniia: v 3 tomakh* (Moscow: 2004), p. 488.

[384] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 214.

1) Just as in the first period, Nikolai believed that the advent of the achievements of Western civilisation in Japan was generally beneficial for the country. At the same time, the increased competition from Catholicism and Protestantism forced him to treat these rival proselytisers with greater caution. He started to criticise their perceived negative contributions to Japan more actively and to increasingly emphasise the advantages of Orthodoxy because he believed that only Orthodoxy could provide a genuine spiritual foundation for Japanese society.

2) Nikolai changed his attitude towards traditional Japanese beliefs, now perceiving them not to be a source of highly damaging elements from a legacy of paganism but as harmless or even useful beliefs that established a moral and cultural foundation for the adoption of Orthodoxy. It was during this period that Nikolai made the point strongly that Japanese pre-Christian culture had been highly developed, since it not only enabled him to explain his own success in spreading Orthodoxy but also and more importantly, gave him confidence in his plans to bring about the imminent and complete conversion of Japan to Orthodoxy.

3) Towards the end of this period, Nikolai started to experience doubts over whether these plans could be fulfilled, but the doubts were as of yet not serious and the hope of succeeding remained. He did not express clear doubts as to whether the Japanese were capable of adopting Orthodoxy at this stage, but statements and comments from the late 1880s reveal one idea that typifies the third period in the development of Nikolai's ideas: the connection between representatives of Western heterodoxy, their Japanese followers, positivists, materialists, and atheists of all hues who, in conjunction with Japan's Buddhists, Confucians, and Shintoists, were impeding the triumph of Orthodoxy. This development could be compared to a similar process under way in Russia, but given his expressions of doubt prompted by the growing popularity of Catholicism and Protestantism, the political troubles that had flared up in Russia, and the weakening of enthusiasm in Orthodoxy, Nikolai always came to the conclusion that the Japanese would overcome any temporary difficulties and before too long arrive at the true faith. Throughout the second period of the development of this thought, Nikolai believed firmly in the possibility that Japan would convert fairly shortly to Orthodoxy.

Chapter 3

The Third Period of Nikolai's Work. Mid-1880s–1910s: The Plight of Orthodoxy in Japan

The Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan has consistently been viewed in the literature as an isolated religious phenomenon that relied on Nikolai as its gravitational constant. Although it is difficult to overestimate the role of Nikolai as the central figure in the Mission, in reality, Orthodoxy can be seen as part of a long and dramatic history of Christian receptions in Asia, rather than as a sporadic spiritual occurrence. In broad terms, by the last quarter of the 19th century, East Asian countries such as China, Japan, and Korea had followed similar stages in their development: From extremely limited interactions with the outside world through the West to openness. Christianity often played a key role in the way it was achieved and determined how modernisation unfolded, largely triggered by these developments. For instance, East Asian countries often first opted to define themselves in opposition to Christian influences, emphasising the importance of their respective existing religious teachings on both the governmental and personal level. On the surface, this was largely the case in Japan, as Nikolai observed in the third period of his life there: State Shintoism was instituted following the government's creation of the Bureau of Shrines in 1900.[385]

However, a more granular representation of the particular historical context in which Nikolai was placed shows that this was not a revolutionary change; it was rather a result of a great many crucial socio-political processes in which competing trends were tearing Japanese society apart in various directions. This dynamic was mainly unfolding along the lines of the triangular framework previously proposed, whose vertices were Russia and Russian Orthodoxy, Japan and

385 Susumu Shimazono, "State Shinto and the Religious Structure of Modern Japan," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73, no. 4 (2005): p. 1081.

its religious traditions, and the West, with its Western Christianity, namely Catholicism and Protestantism.[386] This chapter shows how these processes influenced Nikolai's thinking and led him to come to a stark reassessment of his views on Russia, Japan, and the world, and to be disillusioned about the prospects of Orthodoxy in Japan. The aspirations of this missionary who had secretly planned to convert the Japanese Emperor and make the whole nation Orthodox clashed with new developments that shattered these dreams.

Between the 17th and 19th centuries, Christianity in East Asia went through several phases: Initial acceptance and limited diffusion, rising suspicions, active and long-lasting persecutions, and finally, unenthusiastic reconciliation with it as an integral part of the Western civilisation which, however, did not make respective governments ready to absorb it or acknowledge it as a part of their own spiritual foundation.[387] As noted in the first chapters, Nikolai arrived in Japan shortly before the last phase had started and developed a belief that it was still possible for Orthodoxy to occupy a central place in the Japanese religious battleground. By the time of his death, he had become a local celebrity,[388] was easily recognised on the streets of Tokyo, was frequently interviewed by journalists, and eventually became so well-known in Japan that Emperor Meiji himself, who was reportedly very impressed with his persona, offered his condolences on Nikolai's passing.[389] The internal life of the missionary in his last decades was far less sanguine, however, as he suffered a series of major frustrations that not only made him question the intentions of his converts but led him to abandon all hopes of Orthodoxy becoming a state religion in Japan, or even occupying a significant place in Japanese society.

Following his arrival in Japan, Nikolai's philosophy underwent two major turns. This chapter examines the second one, which eventually led the missionary to display a more pessimistic assessment of the prospects of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Japan and the predicament of Orthodoxy in that county and in the world in general. This period was arguably the most intense in his life and work; in the mid-1880s to the 1910s, he witnessed and reflected on pivotal social transformations both in Japan and in his own country. One such event was the Russo-Japanese war, during which the Mission suffered from attacks by Japanese society and from financial difficulties. Although Nikolai did not leave Japan during these decades, instead devoting most of his time to

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[386] For more on this, see: "Introduction," *Nikolai Yaponsky and His Mission*.

[387] For more on this, see: David Wolff et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective. World War Zero*, vol. II, History of Warfare (Leiden: Brill, 2005); John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert M. Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation*, Revised Edition (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1989); Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*; Michael J. Seth, *A History of Korea: from Antiquity to the Present* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011); John King Fairbank, *China: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press), etc.

[388] A. A. Markova, *Svjatoj ravnoapostol'nyj Nikolaj Japonskij* (Moscow: Blagovest, 2014), p. 67.

[389] Sergij (Tihomirov), "Pamjati Vysokopreosvjashhennogo Nikolaja, Arhiepiskopa Japonskogo (k godovshhine konchiny ego + 3 fevralja 1912 g)."

missionary work, he frequently met with Japanese state officials, public and religious figures, and foreign missionaries and diplomats and visited Orthodox churches he had established in various Japanese prefectures. He read the local press assiduously, which gave him a solid knowledge of the political and religious situation in the country. He was also sent Russian newspapers and books and was in constant correspondence with Russian diplomats, journalists, and academics studying the Far East. In the 1890s, Nikolai cooperated with compatriots who visited Japan or were assigned there as members of the Russian Orthodox Mission. Among these were prominent figures such as Andronik (Nikolsky), later an Archbishop and glorified as Hieromartyr and Sergius (Starogorodsky), who became Patriarch after his return to Russia. Both served the Mission for several years but needed to leave for various reasons. Metropolitan Sergius (Tikhomirov), who joined the mission to replace Andronik in 1908, was Nikolai's eventual successor and stayed in Japan up until his arrest for alleged espionage and death after torture in 1945. Another link to Russia came into being after the southern part of Sakhalin Island was ceded to Japan as a result of the Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). The Japanese government agreed to transfer four Orthodox churches in this area to the Orthodox Mission in Japan and several dozen of their parishioners, with the priest Nikolai Kuzmin, who was sent there from Vladivostok diocese in 1911, thus fell under the auspices of the Mission.[390] Overall, this phase is marked by Nikolai's acute awareness of political and religious turmoil in Russia, Japan, and the wider world. He evinced very negative attitudes about changes such as the spread of new sects and the popularity of L. N. Tolstoy and his philosophy in Russia and Japan. In 1912, Nikolai fell ill and passed away.

It is difficult to define the exact temporal boundaries of the third period in the evolution of Nikolai's views because they tended to occur gradually. Individual pieces of evidence can be found in Nikolai's diaries not long after his return from a trip to Russia in the first half of the 1880s. However, one can observe a substantive change in his writings in the last decade of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th. Unlike in previous chapters, the main source for this period are Nikolai's diary entries because for the most part, he was not willing to share in full his pessimism with the recipients of his letters and in particular with potential donors or Church leaders. On the contrary, for pragmatic reasons, he continued to attempt to convince them of the success of the Mission, while confining his doubts to his private diary. He stopped writing academic articles at this time, instead focusing on the practical matters of the Mission. Nevertheless, some important

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[390] Ju. S. Pestushko, Ja. A. Shulatov. Russko-japonskie otnoshenija v 1905–1916 gg. in *Rossiĭsko-japonskie otnoshenija v formate parallel'noj istorii*; A. V. Torkunov, M. Iokibje, eds. (MGIMO-Universitet, 2015), 230–231. Prjashnikov S. V. (Igumen Filaret). Organizacija cerkovnoj zhizni na juge ostrova Sahalin posle russko-japonskoj vojny. *Voprosy nacional'nyh i federativnyh otnoshenij* 9, no. 10 (55), 2019: pp. 1586–1595.

material on this period is contained in certain letters and documents, as well as in the testimonies of eyewitnesses and Mission staff.

The chapter comprises three parts. The first provides an analysis of the changes in Nikolai's thinking in this period, while the second and third discuss the political, economic, and sociocultural changes taking place in Japan and Russia that influenced his perspective either directly or indirectly. Extensive historical investigation is employed as a tool to demonstrate how compressed the modernisation process was in Japan and the extent of the turbulence of this period of pre-revolutionary Russia, as a result of which Nikolai witnessed various multidimensional transformations in both societies over the course of a relatively short period. One of the most important changes was the alleged inclination of the public towards 'materialism,' as Nikolai so often referred to it. This attitude developed quickly because Japanese modernisation occurred at such a rapid pace, the same pace at which Russia went through a series of events that ended in its war with Japan, World War I, and then the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The part of this chapter devoted to key changes that took place in Japanese society from 1880 onwards demonstrates how Nikolai's perception of his work and its prospects was affected by changes such as accelerating industrialisation and the irreversibility of Westernisation; the broad spread of secular and atheistic Western ideas that contradicted Christianity; the growth of religious freedom made possible only due to the recent lifting of the ban on Christianity and the subsequent popularisation of Catholicism and Protestantism; the formalisation of the Shinto cult of the Emperor; and the rise of militarism, leading to the deterioration of Russo-Japanese relations and ultimately to war. These and other factors shattered Nikolai's dream of Orthodoxy becoming a state religion of Japan or at least one of the most popular religions, triggering and exacerbating his pessimism.

The third part of the chapter analyses parallel changes in Russia and how they affected Nikolai's writings. This primarily involves a growth in antireligious sentiments related to the spread of Western secularism and various revolutionary theories, political instability associated with anti-government and revolutionary acts, an increase in sectarianism and pro-Protestant teachings—as Nikolai called them—the inability of the Russian government to support the missionary work of the Church, and its imperialistic policies in the Far East, which terminated in a war with Japan. These and other social tendencies, which increasingly came to Nikolai's attention through the press, correspondence, and private conversations with compatriots, mainly conservative circles within the ROC,[391] contributed to his adoption of a pessimistic attitude with regard to the prospects of Orthodoxy in Japan and even in Russia.

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[391] "Conservative" in the Russian political context of the late 19th and early 20th centuries meant supporting autocratic monarchy (often based on the theological principle of the tsar as an anointed sovereign) and the dominant role of the Orthodox Church as the spiritual basis of the nation, while criticising plans for limiting it through the introduction of

The conclusion of this chapter reveals that although at the beginning of his Mission Nikolai had hoped that Orthodoxy would spread rapidly throughout Japan, by the end, he had begun to think that this process would take much longer, perhaps hundreds of years, and would certainly not happen during his lifetime. The development of his views that are traced in this and previous chapters can be correlated to changes in his world outlook, and therefore has to be understood within the framework of the triangular relationship between Russia and its Orthodoxy, Japan and its religious teachings, and the West and Western civilisation. Nikolai did not necessarily experience the last of these because he had never lived anywhere outside Russia or Japan and could only view the West from inside as a growing influence on both. As a result, one of the vertices of this triangle was not known to him directly but rather through the prism of the two other angles, which is why two parts of this chapter address changes in Japan and Russia, particularly those changes that were inspired by Western influences. This chapter studies the specific events and processes that led Nikolai to reconsider his life's work and the future of Japanese society as well as the wider world.

Nikolai's views in the last period of his life: An overview

This chapter describes a major turn to pessimism that occurred in Nikolai's thinking. His growing pessimism was not so much the result of any change to his basic approach to the world but rather reflected the fact that the world was changing differently to the way he had anticipated; that is, in opposition to his ideals and vision.

Nikolai began to consistently express doubt about Japanese interest in Orthodox Christianity in diary entries written in the first half of the 1880s. This was initially sparked by the fact that the number of converts was not growing at the pace he had expected and had even been counting on. Nikolai started to observe this trend in the early 1880s, when for the first time he suggested that the future of Orthodoxy in Japan may be uncertain. Many pages of his diaries later on are filled with doubts as to whether the Japanese were truly interested in the religion. In 1883, he noted the apathy of his coverts during a sermon and reported that no more than 400 people had been baptised that year, while in previous years it had been at least 500. At the same time, the Protestants were experiencing a revival with more than 4,000 baptised in one year, while for all preceding years combined there had been only 5,000.[392]

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religious freedom, an elected parliament and constitution, the elimination of censorship and special rights for social estates, and the implementation of isonomy.

[392] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 830.

This apathy could be observed on both the personal and the state level because the government appeared to be looking for a religion that would serve the purpose of uplifting of the state, which was one of the goals of the Iwakura Mission.[393] According to Nikolai, at this time, not only did the Japanese authorities expect Orthodoxy to refrain from interfering in these matters but it had even lost the potential to do so; another troubling tendency he noted towards the end of the century was the fact that Russia had begun to be spoken of unfavourably in Japanese newspapers compared to other Western, especially English-speaking, countries. Orthodoxy, which was somewhat associated with Russia, had become stigmatised and the Russo-Japanese War would only exacerbate this situation. The attractions of Western materialism and the strong influence of traditional Japanese religions on individual personalities in Japan, as well as perceptions of Christianity, combined with historical developments that fell within the Russia-Japan-West triangle, moved Japanese society further away from true spirituality as Nikolai conceptualised it and led him to feel a major disappointment in his work, as well as more global disillusionments.

By the 1880s, Nikolai had developed a certain understanding of the meaning of the Church's existence, its Mission, its role in society, and its relationship with the state.[394] He believed that the Church should provide society with a spiritual foundation, acting in much the same way as it would towards an individual: By providing the basis for spiritual improvement, control over the passions, and the struggle against vices. The Church, in his view, was higher and greater than the state because it pursued heavenly goals, but it was not intended to interfere directly in state affairs but rather to articulate spiritual and moral guidelines. In other words, Orthodox belief could not be 'a spur rushing the kicking and spitting horse of the Japanese state.'[395] Helping people was merely a non-essential, earthly task of the Church but without it, society—much like individuals—would perish for the lack of animating spiritual goals. At the same time, the Church could not be subordinated to state objectives or it would be destroyed because the latter are often misaligned with or even contradict spirituality and morality.

Nikolai began to think that the Japan of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was moving in this direction; that is, trending towards the abandonment of moral objectives and the subordination of religion to earthly endeavours. Nikolai viewed the growing nationalism and secular materialism that had found expression in militarism, consumerism, and the idealisation of technological progress to be links of a single chain: A tendency towards the subordination of spiritual objectives to material and state interests. He understood this broadly as a tendency towards the domination of all things secular over religion, of non-Christian over Christian values, and generally of non-

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[393] See Chapter 2 of this thesis.
[394] See Chapter 2 of this thesis.
[395] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 287.

spiritual over spiritual goals. From that point of view, nationalism, secularism, militarism, atheism, revolutionary activities, and even greediness and profit-seeking behaviour among Japanese Christians were manifestations of materialism since they all placed the temporal higher that the eternal. This tendency deeply bothered Nikolai and made him question the true intentions of Japanese converts:

> Only a miracle performed by God can direct Japan to Orthodoxy! But are there any grounds that allow me to expect a miracle? Is Russia worth it, and is Japan? The first one sleeps on its precious Orthodoxy, and the second is ready to turn the sky itself into money or to cut a foreign jacket out of it… how immense, how inexhaustible are the forces and resources, material and non-material, of Catholic and Protestant Churches and how naked are we who have nothing at all but the truth, not even modest means or resources… So my life is wasted! So much Russian money has been thrown into the flames![396]

The outlook of the missionary was gradually being poisoned by painful doubts about the future of Orthodoxy in Japan, as the influence of Catholicism and Protestantism continued to expand, while Russia was passive and even caught up in fighting off unorthodox influences at home. Nikolai also started to note that the Japanese appeared only to be interested in the riches that foreigners could provide, rather than the spiritual education. In this period, for the first time he voiced an unsettling thought: Perhaps accepting Orthodoxy was not beneficial for Japan during a period in which the government merely accepted foreign religions that would help to uplift the country?[397] At one point, he was even under the impression that his efforts would leave no trace in Japanese history at all. This was a rather drastic change in his perception in that less than a decade before, he had concluded that Japanese society was ready to accept Orthodoxy in their search for a higher spirituality.

Even after his most despairing lines, however, Nikolai would invariably express his determination to stay strong and his hopes for a divine miracle.[398] As a deep believer, he tried to explain the seeming lack of success of Orthodoxy outside Russia by reference to some divine plan into which he was unable to gain insight. At the same time, he was certain that the Orthodox Church would eventually prevail in Japan, even though this would probably not happen in the foreseeable future, and he tried to maintain his patience. Nikolai thought it necessary to continue to pursue his goal calmly, 'with joyful certainty about the future victory,'[399] and this attitude reinforced his views

[396] Ibid., p. 286
[397] Ibid., p. 287.
[398] Ibid., p. 286.
[399] Ibid., p. 290.

on faith and its triumph in the years to come. In one of his letters to the famous theologian Archbishop Nikon (Rozhdestvensky), in response to the latter's report about political turbulence in Russia, Nikolai wrote that humanity was still at a very immature stage of development and that it might take 'many thousands of years until the genuine teaching of Christ and the reviving grace of the Holy Spirit find their way to all parts of this organism and all the peoples and individuals come to understand the teachings of Christ and come under its blessed influence…'[400]

A large part of the uneasiness Nikolai felt during the third period of this thought can be attributed to the fact that he doubted the intentions of newly converted Japanese believers. He was unsure whether they were working towards the greater future of Orthodoxy or to secure their own short-term financial stability and worried that their loyalty would vanish as soon as they were offered better compensation or more favourable working conditions. Nikolai once admitted that the Japanese Christians were 'making [him] despair' due to their materialistic nature: 'Will God ever be able to resurrect these [spiritually] dead men?'[401] At the same time, Japan and the Japanese were not the only subjects of Nikolai's criticism. On numerous occasions in his diaries he blamed the Russian people for not making the Mission as successful as it could have been, had they provided more support, prepared and sent more missionaries, or helped him with other resources. He also criticised the widespread popularity of unorthodox theories in Russia such as those of the novelist Tolstoy, who he called a primitive Protestant,[402] and the philosopher Vladimir Solovyov, who had once wanted to be a missionary in Japan himself.

Another potential obstacle limiting the spread of the only true religion was, according to Nikolai, the popularity of the West in Meiji Japan. Given that he had never travelled to the West, Nikolai could only observe the reception of the ideas of Western philosophers in Japan and analyse the repercussions they produced by reading the local press extensively and actively communicating with the locals. The growing influence of the West manifested itself first and foremost in the growth of Protestantism and Catholicism in Japan. Being an absolute believer in the virtues of Orthodoxy, Nikolai rejected the two other denominations on dogmatic and canonical grounds. From the point of view of dogmatism, he saw them as heretical or close to heresy and in 1898, he described Catholicism as 'the poison of the world' and predicted that it would eventually disappear like 'the heresy of Arius.' In the same entry he called Protestantism 'a disguised Gnosticism' that would suffer the same fate, while only Orthodoxy, the 'genuine teaching of Christ, [was] destined for

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[400] Archbishop Nikon (Rozhdestvenskij), "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij o konchine mira i grjadushhih sud'bah Rossii," in *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v vospominanijah sovremennikov*, ed. G. E. Besstremjannaja (Moscow: Sergiev Posad: Svjato-Troickaja Sergieva Lavra, 2012), p. 482.

[401] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 147.

[402] See Chapter 2 of this thesis.

invincibility.’[403] With regard to canon law, he thought that both Catholics and Protestants incorrectly interpreted the Christian teaching on state-church relations and the Church hierarchy.[404] The concept of the Church’s role in the state that Nikolai formulated in his diaries largely corresponded with the official position of the ROC, notwithstanding the Church’s ongoing debate at that time over certain details. He considered patriotism to be a pre-Christian sentiment that is naturally present in all people, just as their self-identity. Christianity, however, added to it the idea of love for one’s neighbour.[405]

Openly critical remarks about Western influences in Japan appeared in Nikolai’s diaries from the 1890s and continued to surface throughout the period examined in this chapter. On April 20/May 2, 1893, Nikolai explicitly blamed the West for the corruption of traditional Japanese values, which had in his view prepared the Japanese for the adoption of Orthodoxy. He wrote that Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shintoism had educated the Japanese to be kind and gentle and that this upbringing was still in effect in the remote areas of Northern Honshu, which had mostly been untouched by Western influences. In contrast, people in places such as Tokyo, Morioka, and Kagoshima, which he had visited, were becoming rude and ill-mannered because they were imitating Westerners in their behaviour.[406] This vivid example of the trilateral interaction between Japan, the West, and Russia influences lends further support to the tripod framework of this study.

Nikolai certainly did not wish to accuse Europe and America of exporting only wrong and immoral things to Japan; on many occasions, he acknowledged the positive aspects of their intellectual influence. He did, however, mention that he was acquainted with Japanese people who had studied abroad for a short time and, without having been able to deeply familiarise themselves with the foreign culture, had grasped only the superficial elements of its teachings and brought them back to Japan, infecting the youth with what they assumed to be Western knowledge. He gave as an example the complaint that some Japanese children had stopped showing respect to their parents having become acquainted with European practices, but concluded that this was not due to Western teachings but rather due to Japanese people’s hasty interpretation of those ideas.[407] In other words, although Nikolai had initially been appreciative of the desire among Japanese people to acquire Western knowledge, he later grew to criticise it as he realised that doing so had not led to people to become interested in Orthodox doctrine, and had even undermined the foundations from which such an interest could emerge. In a diary entry dated August 19/31, 1897, he reminisced about the early days of the Mission:

[403] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), pp. 776–77.
[404] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 248.
[405] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), pp. 127, 559.
[406] Ibid., p. 766.
[407] Ibid., p. 582.

> Everyone in Japan has drowned in materialism! Where are the times when many people came to serve the Church, and good people used to come? And was it not due to those old Japanese pagan leaders—Shintoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism—that we had those times? And now Japan, under the influence of the new civilisation of Christian Europe … is going down and down, as if it was leaden.[408]

It is apparent that Nikolai's observation of the eager acceptance of materialism by the Japanese had led him to return to the negative assessment of the influence of traditional Japanese teachings that had been characteristic of his thought at the beginning of his Mission. This reappropriation of his original view took place in the context of a remarkable shift. While he had initially critiqued traditional Japanese beliefs due to a perception that they were more primitive than Western spiritual traditions, he now held them responsible for the country's receptiveness to Western materialism, which was inferior to and incompatible with Orthodoxy. Nikolai's renewed criticism of traditional Japanese religion thus coincided with his perception that Western influence on Japan was negative. Instead of bringing a higher spirituality to Japan, Nikolai thought, the West had encouraged the traditional Japanese inclination towards materialism and the culture's lack of spirituality. He now increasingly considered Orthodox Christianity to fall outside Western civilisation, and even to be opposed to Western teachings.

Nikolai noted that there were other Western intellectuals in Japan such as Henry S. Olcott who either taught atheism, describing religion as a relic of the past, or praised traditional Japanese religions and especially Buddhism; such thinkers 'imagined that they did not need Christianity' or thought that it was 'indecent' to preach it.[409] This, he thought, was one of the major factors that had fuelled the growth of Japanese nationalism based on the state Shinto ideology, which emphasised the divine origin of the Emperor and was therefore incompatible with Orthodoxy, hampering its spread.[410]

At the same time, other Western missionaries had brought the promise of wealth and fostered education in their own language, which appealed to those in Japan who opposed mainstream political views. It was becoming increasingly apparent that the only Japanese coverts who would stay with Nikolai were those who had struggled to find affiliation elsewhere. The Japanese had:

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[408] Ibid.

[409] Ibid., p. 346.

[410] For more on this, see: 'Part 2. The political and social transformations in Japan that contributed to the change in Nikolai's world view,' which has been cut from the current version.

> …slammed a hat of Euro-American teachings on their heads, apparently for a long time to come, on the subject of atheism and opposition to Christianity. … Out of 200 serving the Church now, speaking candidly, I know no one who would not do so to earn an income. How sad is this naked knowledge! And how can it be avoided? ... what sluggishness, apathy, laziness, and, in addition to all this, unimaginable pride! Academicians—careless contractors, executors are soulless—everything and everything is obsessed with wages![411]

Another feature of Shintoism that Nikolai had admired during the second period of his work was its indispensability; the fact that it was so strongly rooted in the Japanese religious culture that it could not be wholly replaced by other powerful traditions such as Buddhism and Confucianism. Moreover, it had 'Japanised' both other traditions, which allowed for the peaceful coexistence of all three. He later grew resentful towards this feature of Shinto because he understood that highlighting features of Orthodoxy that the Japanese would find appealing would create a favourable atmosphere and thereby gain followers, but would make it harder for converts to follow the strict dogma of Orthodoxy. Protestantism, on the other hand, had more potential to spread in Japan: 'Orthodoxy can only convince them by its impressive powerfulness, conclusiveness, and invincibility, but will they want to listen, try to understand, experience, that's what it is about! The Japanese are very superficial, fidgety, unserious; in this sense, Protestantism would suit them better.'[412] This criticism is addressed not so much to the general population but rather those close to Nikolai; he felt that they were not interested in high theological matters and preferred to simplify the doctrine in order to make it more accessible.

Nikolai's diary entry of June 14/27, 1911 shows that he no longer viewed the influence of Protestantism positively in the context of a general exposure to European culture, as he had done in the first stage of thought, but now deemed it a harmful influence that promoted Western pragmatism and mercantilism. He wrote of a Japanese reporter who had come to interview him and turned out to be a believer in the 'new style' of Protestantism: 'He does not believe in the Trinity, or in the divinity of the Saviour, either.' After the conversation, Nikolai concluded that 'this decaying Protestantism … confuses the Japanese' and noted, 'It is much harder to bring such troubled people to the path than simple pagans.'[413] For Nikolai, Protestantism actually had the effect of removing the Japanese even farther away from true spirituality.

These and similar statements attest to a fundamental reversal in Nikolai's assessment of traditional Japanese teachings and their positive influence on Japanese culture, as well as to his

[411] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 346.
[412] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 297.
[413] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 774.

rejection of the idea of a special predisposition among the Japanese to adopt Orthodoxy, which Nikolai had expressed in the previous period. He now believed that materialism had both theoretically and practically captured the Japanese and saw more clearly that many of them had converted to Orthodoxy simply out of financial considerations, which greatly irritated him and led him to extremely pessimistic conclusions about the Japanese civilisation in general. On March 23/April 4, 1889, Nikolai confessed his anger about the continuous requests by Japanese Orthodox believers for money. This sentiment was yet another indicator of his now-constant feelings about the purposelessness of his work, given that he frequently fretted that he was 'robbing Russia… in order to serve the material desires of these unabashed people.'[414]

This characterisation of Japanese people in general and Orthodox converts in particular was a far cry from the initial favourable view of Japanese society that Nikolai had held for a long time. According to his own analysis, this change could be explained by the social transformations that had occurred in Japan, specifically by the shift from the turbulent post-revolutionary decade to a period of relative stability. It is also apparent that Nikolai linked the materialistic tendencies of the Japanese both to their newly acquired Western habits and to the revival of their own religious traditions. He understood that even when they chose to convert to Orthodoxy, this was often motivated by materialistic considerations.

Nikolai's view of the negative influence of materialism and its growing role were not limited to Japan but rather extended to the global context. He perceived Western mercantilism, secularism, new heresies, and cults to be gaining in influence throughout the world, including in Russia and weakened spiritually, his homeland could no longer provide the necessary support to the dissemination of Orthodox Christianity throughout the world and particularly in Japan. At this time, Nikolai's diaries begin to show a turn towards a rather pessimistic view of the future of Russia and in his political commentary, he aligned himself ever closer to the most conservative circles of Orthodox clergy. As a result, he came to the uncomfortable conclusion that a temporary global victory of Western materialism was very possible; mankind would have to live through this phase, and only then it would come to adopt the true faith.

These changes in Nikolai's world view can be correlated to far-reaching social changes taking place both in Japan and globally. Nikolai had observed that the modernisation and Westernisation of Japan were under way, but had begun to believe that although these processes would lead to a profound understanding of the technological and legalistic achievements of Western civilisation, they would not generate a similar appreciation for the West's spiritual dimension in its most complete form, Orthodox Christianity. Japan did not appear likely to adopt

[414] Ibid., p. 317.

Christianity in any form as an official religion; on the contrary, the authorities adopted pagan Shintoism. Furthermore, of the various Christian denominations that were proselytising in Japan, only the Western form—Catholicism and various branches of Protestantism—were growing quickly, while the number of Orthodox believers had increased at a slower pace, until its growth had finally flattened. The sense of a competition with Catholicism and Protestantism led Nikolai to become increasingly hostile towards these denominations, whose popularity in Japan he started to believe was not a feature of the arrival of a higher, European civilisation but rather part of the global trend towards materialism and secularism, which was alien to true Christianity.

Neither did Nikolai's hopes for a more marked political and cultural influence of Russia over Japan materialise. Both nations instead had seemingly embarked on the path of geopolitical competition, which led to a war between the two at the beginning of the 20th century and extraordinary difficulties for Orthodox Christians who wished to preach in Japan, where Orthodox Christianity was viewed as being a Russian religion, tied to the Russian state. No less grave was Nikolai's perception Russia itself was being transformed from a bastion of Orthodox Christianity into part of the materialistic world that favoured liberal secularism, revolutionary trends, and the dominance of various sects and heretical movements. He particularly disapproved of the growth in popularity of the teachings of Tolstoy, which had also been disseminated in Japan and had acquired some popularity, even among recently converted Japanese Orthodox Christians.

Nikolai's attitude towards the teachings of Lev Tolstoy

Nikolai displayed an ambiguous attitude towards Tolstoy. As an educated Russian, he held Tolstoy's literary works in high regard. In a diary entry on *Anna Karenina*, which Nikolai had read in May 1890, he called the book an 'outstanding work' whose characters are 'almost cast in bronze and stand out before one's eyes.'[415] He encouraged the translation of Tolstoy's literary works into Japanese, some of which were carried out by members of the Mission, primarily Konishi Musatarō and Senuma Kakusaburo.[416] These literary works and discussions of them appeared in the journals published by the Mission.

At the same time, as an Orthodox bishop and a devoted Orthodox believer, Nikolai found the writer's religious and philosophical ideas such as his open rejection of Christian dogma and the Church to be completely unacceptable. In Nikolai's view, Tolstoy's teachings were a form of radical Protestantism, or at best a Russian Christian sect, and he considered the growing popularity

[415] May 21/June 2, 1899, Friday 4–85.

[416] Ioann/John (Ivan Akimovich) Kawamoto (Senuma), Japanese name: Kawamoto (Senuma) Kakusaburo, 1868–1953.

of Protestantism both abroad and within Russia as evidence that people were unprepared to accept Orthodoxy as the true form of Christianity. This trend saddened the pastor and forced him to conclude that the worldwide triumph of Orthodoxy might be delayed indefinitely.

Nikolai was particularly irritated by the spread of Tolstoyism in Japan and Russia. In the case of Japan, it led him to believe that traditional Japanese ethical and religious teachings had not prepared the Japanese people to adopt true Christianity, as he had thought in the first decades of his time in Russia, but rather a distorted version in the form of Protestantism, Catholicism, and Tolstoyism, characterised by their materialist tendencies, pragmatism towards the earthly authorities, and primitive moral absolutism. Tolstoy's literary works and religious and philosophical ideas had risen in popularity among Nikolai's Japanese Orthodox students, some of whom did not entirely understand the difference between the writer's teachings and true Orthodoxy. Nikolai viewed the spread of Tolstoyism in Russia as evidence that even the stronghold of world Orthodoxy was unable to resist anti-Orthodox tendencies due to internal squabbling and ideological instability, and that it was becoming corrupted and incapable of fulfilling its historical role of supporting the triumphal advance of the true faith throughout the world. However, he did not see the popularity of Tolstoy among Japanese Orthodox believers to be a result of serious reflection that may lead to a fundamental change of religious ideas; he probably saw it more as part of Tolstoy's popularity in Japan as a whole.

As one of the major figures of the ROC, Nikolai naturally agreed with the official Church position towards Tolstoy and approved of his excommunication, given that his philosophy was a form of pantheism and Protestantism. Having read Tolstoy's article about the Russo-Japanese war (the forthright 'Think It Over!'), Nikolai criticised the writer's ideas as 'utopian' because the latter wanted to 'base all of life on religion, but has removed the foundation of religion; it is just as impossible to build a religion on pantheism as it is to erect a house on an ocean ridge—no, at least a raft could be built there, but on an imaginary void, nothing at all can be done.'[417] In a diary entry from 1908, Nikolai noted his agreement with Vladimir Solovyov, who had in one of his works compared Tolstoy with the Russian Old Believer sect of Dyromolyays (literally, 'hole worshippers'). Followers of this sect would cut an east-facing hole in the wall of their log cabins and would utter a prayer through the opening with the words: 'House of mine, hole of mine, save me!' Taking his cue from Solovyov, Nikolai evidently believed that Tolstoy had greatly oversimplified Christian teachings and was calling for people to pray to an empty place, instead of to the living God.[418]

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[417] *Dnevniki svyatitelya Nikolaya Yaponskogo* (2004), vol. 5 (1904–1912). St. Peterburg: Giperion. Vol. 5, p. 137.
[418] Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 452–453.

Nikolai went so far as to call Tolstoy 'the lowest type of Protestant,'[419] a follower of malicious heresy, an evil dog who never misses a chance to bark at his government and the clergy,[420] an enemy of the Orthodox Christian faith,[421] and an enemy of Russia.[422] As an Orthodox bishop, Nikolai had ample grounds for all of these characterisations. It was true that Tolstoy's ideas did contain elements found in the most radical Protestantism and he did reject the Orthodox faith professed by supporters of the official Church. In fact, his views diverged from official Orthodoxy much more than many teachings previously labelled heretical. Nikolai considered him an enemy of Russia because he promoted the idea of non-resistance to the enemy, which would lead to defeat, while the Orthodox Church, Nikolai believed, had always advocated defence of the fatherland. 'Patriotism is a natural feeling instilled by the Creator in man's nature like the feeling a bird has for its nest and the ram for its flock. Religion only sanctifies, deepens, and strengthens it. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."[423] These are the Words of God in this sense,' he wrote to a Japanese correspondent in August 1909, explaining his assessment of Tolstoy.[424] This is fully consistent with the official position of the Orthodox Church, whose leaders have called for the faithful to pray for the victory of the fatherland during times of war. Nikolai understood this perfectly well and assumed that during a war with Russia, Japanese Orthodox worshippers would pray for the victory of Japan and try to work towards it. Naturally, Russian Orthodox believers should do the same, and Nikolai considered Tolstoy a traitor because he advocated a refusal to take up arms.

At the same time, Nikolai was well aware of the influence and popularity of Tolstoy's views both in Russia and abroad. He learned of this influence from newspapers and in conversations with various interlocutors and his diaries are full of entries describing discussions about Tolstoy in which he argued with his opponents and tried to convince them that the Russian writer was wrong. For example, he mentioned that while visiting different churches in 1898, he met an Englishwoman in a hotel who 'venerated Count Tolstoy'[425] while in 1901, a Miss Ackerman of the US asked Nikolai to explain why Tolstoy had been excommunicated. He not only satisfied her request but orally translated the Holy Synod manifesto that contained the decision on Tolstoy.[426] Of course, the Russians with whom Nikolai spoke tended to show an even greater interest in the writer. The majority however, were mostly interested in his conflict with the Church.

[419] Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 289–290.
[420] Ibid., vol. 4, p. 833.
[421] Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 406–407.
[422] Ibid., vol. 5, p. 137.
[423] John 15:13
[424] Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 559–560.
[425] Ibid., vol. 3, p. 782.
[426] Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 438–439.

Some asked for clarification but most openly expressed their disagreement with the decision of the Synod, which caused significant distress to Nikolai. He was particularly upset that educated, influential, and even high-ranking officials expressed such opinions.

Several examples of this are given in what as follows. In March 1896, Nikolai learned that Russian marine agent in Japan Ivan Vasil'evich Budilovsky 'worshipped' Tolstoy and that he planned to 'correct the Gospel' after Tolstoy's example, even though 'he seemed to be deeply religious and pious.'[427] In January 1897, Nikolai spoke about Tolstoy with Russian Chargé D'affaires in Japan Alexey Nikolayevich Shpeyer and, obviously dissatisfied with his opinion, gave him a book about Tolstoy.[428] An entry from January 1901 states that Nikolai discussed the decision of the Synod concerning Tolstoy with Prince Pavel Nikolaevich Engalychev, a military agent in Berlin who had come to Japan[429] while in the summer of the following year, he wrote disparagingly of Professor David Nikolaevich Golovnin of the Moscow Agricultural Institute, who had claimed that 'Count Tolstoy has caused a religious revolution in Russia.'[430] In November 1904, Nikolai wrote of a war correspondent among the Russian prisoners of the Russo-Japanese war who did not get along with the other officers because he spoke in favour of peace and against war: 'It's clear that this man is a good-for-nothing; might he be a Tolstoyan?'[431] In December 1910, Nikolai claimed that in conversation, the Russian Ambassador to Japan Nikolay Andreevich Malevsky-Malevich had 'blamed the Synod and Church for [Tolstoy's] excommunication, he attributed the demonstrations after Tolstoy's death to it and predicted that many evils could stem from this act of the Synod.'[432]

It would be no exaggeration to say that the educated class as well as many senior Russian military and government officials disagreed with or did not understand the Church's motives in condemning Tolstoy and Tolstoyism and sympathised with his ideas. As detailed in Chapter Three, Nikolai saw this development as a testament to the spiritual degradation of Russia, the bastion of true Orthodoxy, and this troubled him deeply. In his opinion, this degradation had weakened support for his activities and postponed indefinitely the goal he had envisioned at the start of his missionary activity: Japan's complete conversion to Orthodoxy.

Nikolai compared Tolstoy's teachings to what he had observed in Japan and detected clear parallels. In Japan, he found the same desire for rationalism, abstract moralism, and religious eclecticism; in both late-19th-century Japan and in Tolstoy's teachings, there is a trend towards a

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427 Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 281.
428 Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 449.
429 Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 406–407.
430 Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 682–683.
431 Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 163–164.
432 Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 713–714.

rejection of the religious foundation of morality, a morality that should be based on a Christian faith in a personal God, and that without faith has no meaning. In a letter to Senuma Kakusaburo in 1894 in which he formulated his plan for developing the Mission's educational institutions, Nikolai praised the Japanese education system, calling it 'solid' and 'splendid,' but noted that its main shortcoming was its lack of 'religious instruction.' As a result, according to Nikolai, 'morality somehow tries to huddle together with natural law (what is it without God?), on fragments of Confucianism and Hindo-Buddhism; all this presents a very sad picture: the absence, in the eyes of any sane person, of firm foundations for the moral education of the Japanese people.'[433] In October 1898, in a conversation with the young Japanese religious scholar Anesaki Masaharu (1873–1949, also pronounced Anezaki)—who had declared, in the spirit of Tolstoy, that he believed in God but could not accept the dogma of God Incarnate—Nikolai explained that 'without faith in God Incarnate, faith in God is meaningless because such faith is completely unable to explain God's relationship to man or to comfort him.'[434] Nikolai also deprecated Japanese religious eclecticism—the Tolstoy-like practice of placing all religious teachings on equal footing. On one occasion, when speaking at Tokyo Holy Resurrection Orthodox cathedral in April 1911, Nikolai said of Japan: 'Here, Christ is crucified not on wood but on the ground; putting Him on a par with such earthly sages as Socrates, Confucius, and Buddha is to compare the Sun to a lamp… But this is only because it is difficult to look at the light from the darkness: They squint and therefore see little light, but when they open their eyes they will see, and it is here that the serpent will be crushed.'[435] Nikolai saw the trend that Tolstoy personified in Russia and the modern course of spiritual development in Japan as two links in the same chain, as part of a process that was undermining the foundation of both societies' proper development towards true Orthodox spirituality.

The political and social transformations in Japan that contributed to the change in Nikolai's thought

These documented changes in Nikolai's world view took place against the backdrop of dramatic transformations in the political, economic, and spiritual life in Japan and Russia and to a large extent were affected by them. The current chapter examines the factors that contributed to these transformations, placing a particular emphasis on those that guided the evolution of Nikolai's outlook and made him reassess his role within the proposed tripod framework of Russia-Japan-

[433] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Moscow: Penaty i kniga, 2019), 253.
[434] *Dnevniki svyatitelya Nikolaya Yaponskogo*, vol. 3, p. 795.
[435] Ibid., vol. 5, p. 753.

West interactions. The analysis conducted here makes it apparent that during this period of this life, Nikolai thought deeply about the Meiji Restoration and related shifts in most spheres of Japanese life, weighing them through the prism of developments in the Russian Empire at the time, at the same time as he attempted to comprehend what was taking place in Russia based on his experiences in Japan. He also acknowledged the influence of the West on both countries, deeming it almost entirely negative.

Interestingly, as Nikolai was growing increasingly disillusioned with the prospects of Orthodoxy in Japan, he was becoming ever more popular. Over the course of the third period of his life and work, he became widely recognised in Tokyo; many Japanese people knew who he was and where he was from, while after its completion in 1891, the Holy Resurrection Cathedral, unofficially known as *Nikorai-do*, became the headquarters of *roshia sekyō* (Russian Orthodoxy)—the name frequently used when referring to the Japanese Orthodox Church to this day, despite its autonomous status granted in from 1970s.[436] The impressive building of the cathedral was raised on Kanda Surugadai hill in the centre of the city, a site deliberately chosen because it overlooked the Imperial Palace. Nikolai's popularity extended beyond his easily recognisable appearance (he was tall and wore a distinctive cassock and a large, heavy cross on his chest). He also frequently gave talks, one of which—given in 1899 at the Young Men's Christian Association—was attended by Russian Japanologist Dmitry Pozdneev. According to Pozdneev, over 1,000 Japanese people were in attendance and Nikolai's lecture was interrupted with constant applause. Nikolai spoke Japanese clearly and eloquently, albeit with a slight accent and occasionally using northern expressions, but could nonetheless easily discuss Japanese history, culture, and philosophy, and concluded the lecture with an argument that Japan's traditions and experiences had prepared it for the adoption of Orthodox Christianity.[437]

Nikolai had connections in the Japanese government and was often invited to receptions and events. However, his influence cannot be characterised as political, as was the case with other Christian missionaries, who at certain times had attempted to interfere with political affairs, and even held government positions,[438] or their followers, some of whom became leaders of social reform movements in Japan such as socialism and the labour movement.[439] This is not to say that Nikolai was uninterested in politics—on the contrary, he wrote on political matters extensively in his diaries and discussed them with friends and colleagues—but he never strove to directly influence any political decision-making because he abided by clear priorities within the spiritual

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[436] Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to sono jidai*.

[403] Pozdneev, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaja Japonskij (Vospominanija i harakteristika)," p. 57.

[438] Prominent examples include Guido Verbeck, William E. Griffis, etc.

[439] Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan from Tokugawa times to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 110.

realm. These restricted his efforts to disseminating the 'true' faith that would eventually affect all spheres of Japanese life, including policy-making, in such a way that Japan would be able to make the 'correct' decisions, without his or anyone else's guidance.[440] One hoped-for by-product of his work was that Japan would adopt a friendlier foreign policy course towards Russia, but Nikolai's emphasis on spiritual matters meant that the Japanese viewed him as a purely cultural rather than a political figure, even during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905.[441] Nikolai's contribution to the popularisation of Russian culture in Japan was also remarkable. In his view, this was not a means of extending Russia's influence but simply a matter of disseminating the 'true' faith by introducing believers to the way that Christians in countries such as Russia lived, and he thought of literature as one of the most effective ways of doing so and promoted literary translations.

Prior to the Russo-Japanese War, Nikolai and the Mission had been frequently mentioned in Japanese newspapers in a positive light[442] but during the war, the Orthodox community briefly became a target of accusations that they were a pro-Russian force.[443] In reality, Nikolai encouraged Japanese Orthodox converts to pray for their countrymen, while separately praying for the victory of Russia. This approach, along with the fact that he chose to remain in Japan during the war, was admired by both Japanese believers and the country's government. The latter never shared the animosity that appeared in the press and even demanded that it be stopped.[444]

Nikolai's fame did not fade towards the end of his life, and his death was reported in all major Japanese newspapers and magazines. Some recalled his life and work and claimed that it was in the strength of his character that he was different to other foreigners in Japan. For instance, one of the most popular magazines of the time, Taiyō, wrote that Nikolai possessed qualities such as an 'altruistic self-sacrificing attitude' and 'indefatigable industry.' The author commented on Nikolai's decision to remain in Tokyo during the Russo-Japanese War against his government's advice and on the fact that he never left the capital, not even during the extreme summer heat when almost every other foreigner went to more temperate climes.[445]

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[440] See Chapter 4 for a further explanation.

[441] Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to sono jidai*; Nakamura, *Nikorai: kachi ga aru no wa, ta o awaremu kokoro dake da*.

[442] Naganawa, *Nikoraidō no hitobito : nihon kindaishi no naka no roshia seikyōkai*.

[443] Pozdneev, "Arhiepiskop Nikolaja Japonskij (Vospominanija i harakteristika)," pp. 123–50.

[444] Japonskaja pechat' po povodu konchiny arhiepiskopa Nikolaja. In *Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij v vospominanijah sovremennikov*, p. 26.

[445] *Taiyō* 4 (1912).

Modernisation and the irreversibility of Westernisation

By the 1890s, as a result of Meiji government policies Japan was following a path of European-style industrialisation and the country's economic development had started to yield significant results.[446] Industrial production grew at an accelerated pace as a result of the greater share in exports of goods with a high level of processing, displacing raw materials.[447] As a result of this economic development, a new Europeanised business community emerged in the country. At the end of 1893, in a speech to parliament, Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu summarised the country's development during the period of reforms and clearly viewed Japan's progress in the same was as his Western colleagues: As a 'breakthrough' to civilisation, which was, of course, primarily represented by Western countries. He commented on the unprecedented progress Japan had achieved in such a short space of time,[448] and the generous reparations that Japan had begun to receive in 1895 after its victory in the war with China that had contributed to the country's economic boom.

The development of a modern economy and the emergence of associated social strata had driven the Westernisation of the entire society. However, not all social innovations in Japan were necessary for modernisation but were rather a simple 'imitation of Western customs,' a sort of fashion statement generated due to the fact that 'the distinction between fundamental features of modern technology and mere Occidental peculiarities was by no means clear. If it was necessary to use Western weapons, there might also be virtue in wearing Western clothes or shaking hands in the Occidental manner. Moreover, the Meiji Japanese had good reason to adopt even the more superficial aspects of Western culture: The international world of the 19th century was completely dominated by the Occident...'[449] For these reasons, in the Japan of the second half of the 19th century, Western customs were widespread, often introduced by government orders on matters such as hairstyles, clothes, and dances. From May 1872, the Emperor himself started to wear Western clothing and a special decree was issued to encourage the rest of the population to do the same. In order to make such a step more palatable to the general population, the decree did not explicitly demand that the population switch to specifically Western clothing, but rather declared

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[446] Angus Maddison, "Statistics on World Population, GDP and Per Capita GDP, 1-2008 AD" (October 1, 2019 2010). Retrieved from: http://www.ggdc.net/maddison/Historical_Statistics/horizontal-file_02-2010.xls.
[447] Shinya Sugiyama, *Japan's Industrialization in the World Economy, 1859-1899: Export Trade and Overseas Competition* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: The Athlone Press, 1988).
[448] Tadashi Anno, *National Identity and Great-Power Status in Russia and Japan* (London: Routledge, 2018), p. 137.
[449] Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation*, p. 524.

a rejection of traditional Chinese (and by extension, Japanese) clothing.[450] From that time, wearing European clothes became a sign of loyalty to the government and its path of reform.

The authorities also demanded that habits that might be considered uncivilised by foreigners be given up. According to Alexander Meshcheryakov, the Tokyo police started to impose fines for certain violations of public order and decency such as being on the streets in a state of total or partial undress; tattoos; the presence of men and women together in bathhouses; the sale of pornographic coloured prints; men wearing women's clothing and vice versa (an exception was made for actors; this measure was directed against overly 'progressive' women, who strove to wear men's trousers); urination in improper places; and women cutting their hair cut to a short length. Particular attention was paid to streets where it was thought that foreigners might be located. Following Tokyo's lead, other local authorities began to introduce similar restrictions and throughout the country, there was a war on the 'bad' habits and customs of the past and traditional 'superstitions.'[451]

Such a clear instance of the Western influence West on Japan could not have gone unnoticed by Nikolai. He could hardly condemn Japan's economic development per se, but he did directly link many negative developments in the country to Westernisation and saw them as a consequence of the spirit of mercantilism, pragmatism, and atheism that had accompanied Westernisation.[452] Already in 1883, he wrote that he was 'disgusted' by the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in Japan in place of the traditional equivalent, observing that the government is 'aping Western Europe.'[453] It is arguable that the calendar change particularly irked Nikolai because the ROC was adamantly opposed to the Gregorian calendar. In Russia, it was not introduced during Nikolai's lifetime but only after the Bolsheviks had come to power in 1917. The fact that changing a calendar to the Gregorian version was widely viewed as a pro-Western move is confirmed by the title of the decree of January 26, 1918 that established the change; the decree literally translates to 'On the adoption of the West-European calendar in the Russian Republic.' The decree also claimed that the calendar was used 'by all cultured peoples.'[454]

In 1897, Nikolai called one of his disciples, Paul Yamada, a 'hopeless ape' who constantly mimicked Westerners. This had come about because Yamada had claimed that the depth of Orthodoxy could not be expressed in Japanese and often attempted to use long passages in English in his essays. This both saddened and amused Nikolai, who was convinced that Japanese language,

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[450] A. N. Meshcheryakov, "Yaponiya v period Meidzi (1868-1905): ot nachala reform do Russko-yaponskoy voyny" in *Istoriya Yaponii*, ed. D. V. Streltsov (Moscow: Aspekt-press, 2018), p. 321.

[451] Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation*, p. 525.

[452] Nakamura, *Senkyōshi Nikorai to Meiji Nihon*.

[453] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), pp. 830–31.

[454] "Nazad v Evropu: kak Rossiya pereshla na noyy kalendar'," *Gazeta.ru*, February 6, 2018. Retrieved from: https://www.gazeta.ru/science/2018/02/06_a_11638141.shtml

spoken by 40 million people, was perfectly sufficient for Japanese people to express 'anything and everything,' without any need for 'this English nonsense of Pavel Yamada.'[455] Another point in support of the triangular framework is that Nikolai used the same term 'aping' about Russia as well. Noting with regret in 1897 that nobody in Russia wanted to devote their life to missionary work anymore, he wrote: 'Isn't it true that God has left us for our aping, disbelief, crude materialism, hypocrisy and everything else He would scourge His dissolute servants for?'[456]

In 1904, he again referred to the Russian elite as a 'gathering of apes—followers and worshippers of either France or England or Germany or all else that is foreign,' while the Church was barely making ends meet: 'And in spite of all that, we have the highest opinion of ourselves: we are the only true Christians; we are genuinely enlightened and there [in the West] there is hopelessness and decay; we are so strong that we will win simply by throwing hats at them.'[457] [458] Nikolai observed that both Japan and Russia were engaged in the disappointing trend of blindly mimicking the West at approximately the same time.

The growing influence of Western secular and atheistic teachings

Western teachings spread along with Western habits and manners. Secular theories about the primacy of science and scientific knowledge and its superiority over religious scholasticism in generating progress gained immense popularity. The Meiji government encouraged the Japanese population to master Western and scientific knowledge in order to strengthen the country and preserve its independence. However, the Japanese attitude towards the content of Western teaching was pragmatic. The sources of this pragmatism can be seen in both the Western teachings of that time, which often contrasted the scientific with the religious consciousness, but also in the 'secular and agnostic tendencies of Confucian philosophy.' [459] Nikolai had noted the influence of Confucianism, which prepared Japan to adopt the secular, scientific world view imported from the West, and this was the cause of his disappointment in the effects of Confucianism. He thought that he could trace an evolution in Western civilisation from Christian values towards secularism, mercantilism, agnosticism, and even atheism and he began to attribute the strengthening of these

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[455] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), pp. 518–19.

[456] Ibid., p. 493.

[457] Meaning 'it will be an easy victory.' The expression originated during the Crimean War (1853–1856) shortly before Nikolai's arrival in Japan, when the Russian authorities thought they could easily gain victory over the enemy. The press wrote that defeating the Japanese would be as simple as "throwing hats" at them instead of bullets, but in reality, Russia ended up being defeated and suffering significant losses. Interestingly, the same expression circulated in the press during the Russo-Japanese War, which Russia also lost, contrary to the expectations of the government and the public.

[458] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 119.

[459] Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation,* p. 529.

trends in Japan to the rigidity of the Confucian tradition since ‘to penetrate the soul of Confucianism is as hard as for water to get inside a stone.’[460]

The penetration of atheistic teachings in Japan, associated with socialism, was no less important for Nikolai. However, this only became a feature of life in Japan by the end of the 19th century; in the 1880s, the first attempts to create socialist organisations had been resolutely suppressed.[461] After that, socialist and anarchist ideas began to spread; left-wing newspapers and magazines proliferated, even though many were closed down by the government.[462] In October 1896, Isō Abe, Kōtoku Shūsui, and Sen Katayama formed the Society for the Study of Socialism (社会主義研究会 *Shakai Shugi Kenkyukai*), which in 1901 was reorganised into Japan’s first socialist political party, the Socialist Democratic Party (社会民主党 *Shakai Minshuto*), outlawed two days after its formation. In January 1906, the Japanese Socialist Party (日本社会党 *Nippon Shakaitō*) was founded by members of various socialist groups, ranging from anarcho-syndicalists who favoured direct action and strikes to moderates who stood for social reform. Although the coalition split in 1908, various factions went on to create small, short-lived political parties. In June 1908, a crowd in Tokyo greeted the political activist and anarchist Koken Yamaguchi upon his release from a term in prison. These leftist activists, who were waving red flags with anarchist and communist slogans, were attacked by the police and several were arrested. On another occasion in 1910, dozens of leftist activists were arrested and questioned, and 12 were later executed on the charge of conspiring to assassinate the Emperor; this became known as the High Treason Incident.

For Nikolai, the spread of secular, atheistic, socialist, and anarchist ideas was part of a single process that, as he started to observe by the end of the 19th century, was taking place in both Japan and Russia: the West’s negative influence within the triangle. If this process was undermining the influence of traditional Orthodox Christianity in Russia, in Japan, it had destroyed the possibility of disseminating Orthodoxy and Christianity altogether. Nikolai began to look for reasons to explain the Japanese susceptibility to such ideas and found such explanations in traditional Japanese teachings, particularly in pragmatic Confucianism, which he felt was alien to a sense of deep religiosity. This led Nikolai to reassess Confucianism’s influence on Japanese society and to move away from his previous complimentary stance.

When in 1902 Nikolai was observing a ‘foreign-style’ internment and funeral reception, he pointed out that it looked very exquisite from the outside but there was no substance to it; it was

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[460] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 443.
[461] G. B. Sansom, *The Western World and Japan: A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), pp. 436–37.
[462] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan from Tokugawa times to the Present*, p. 113.

like 'hulls without grains.' In his opinion, the fact that such a ceremony had become a formality was a product of Western influence: 'Since there is no God, a dying soul vanishes into thin air like steam, but decency demands paying respects to the deceased.' This 'pointlessness' that had nearly vanished in Japan along with the 'complete decline of Japanese false religions' had now returned and regained power because it had been 'forced into the [Japanese] soul by European liberals and atheists.'[463] In other words, in Nikolai's opinion, secular Western teachings had given an extra boost to Japan's dying traditional pagan culture and ways of thinking, just at the time when the Japanese were ready to abandon them in favour of the supreme Christian religion of Orthodoxy.

In a diary entry from February 1901 in which Nikolai discusses the death of an influential Japanese writer and philosopher and the editor of the popular newspaper *Jiji shinpō* (Current Events), Fukuzawa Yukichi, he evaluated the positive aspects of his work and addressed some negative aspects. He said that Jiji's 'zealousness' as he promoted European civilisation was 'constructive,' but the fact that he advocated the 'new European atheism' was detrimental because his sharp pen would be the ruin of so many souls.[464] It is apparent that in Nikolai's writings, the term 'European civilisation' is synonymous with Christianity, its spiritual essence, which is contrasted with the growing atheism in Japan, another arrival from Europe.

In a subsequent diary entry, Nikolai admits to being deeply saddened by the fact that it seemed like no one wanted to buy religious books in Japan any longer and that the 'hellspawn of materialism had covered Europe and Asia in one flap of its wide dark wings.'[465] He also noticed that people had become interested in European revolutionary ideas, along with materialism. In a reflection on the execution of 12 Japanese anarchists in 1911, Nikolai noted with surprise that 'like in Europe, there have turned out to be anarchists in Japan who are plotting to kill the emperor.'[466] Taking into account the fact that political terrorism was widespread in Russia at that time, it becomes apparent that Nikolai considered its spread to represent a malign European influence that could be found all over the world, including Russia. (This matter will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter.)

Legislative reform and religious freedom

The most important change that took place during Nikolai's time in Japan and that influenced his world view was legislation on religion, which gave impetus to the growth and

[463] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 626.
[464] Ibid., p. 405
[465] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 705.
[466] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 727.

influence of Catholicism and Protestantism. The newfound religious freedom meant that Catholicism and Protestantism began to overshadow the Orthodox Church due to the much greater resources they had at their disposal. Christianity ceased to be persecuted in practice from 1873, the year in which the 1868 decree designed to suppress the spread of Christianity was repealed. However, it was only with the adoption of the Japanese Constitution in 1889 that religious freedom was guaranteed, albeit with certain qualifications. According to Article 28 of the Constitution, 'Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief.'[467] From this point onwards, religions could only be banned if they were deemed to undermine peace and order or called for the non-fulfilment of civic duties (e.g. compulsory military service).

After the persecution of Christianity was brought to a close, dozens of Catholic and Protestant missionaries arrived in Japan. According to the eighth volume of the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* published in 1913, in 1860 there were two Catholic missionaries in Japan, while by 1870, there was one vicar apostolic, 40 missionaries, 27 nuns, and 23,000 Christians; in 1890, Japan was home to 79 missionaries, 15 native priests, 27 Marianists, 59 nuns, and 42,387 Christians; while in 1900, there was one archbishop, three bishops, 115 missionaries, 32 native priests, 62,694 Christians, 93 religious men, and 389 religious women (foreigners and natives).[468] The number of Protestant believers grew even more rapidly. According to reports by the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1886 there were 25,500 Protestants of various branches in Japan. By 1890, this number had increased to 31,000, 527 foreign and 135 Japanese missionaries were operating in the country, and 274 churches had been built. In 1908, there were already 68,000 and by 1912, there were 90,000 believers and 1,865 churches.[469] In contrast, in 1878, the total number of Orthodox Christians in Japan was 4,215, and there were only three Russian missionaries. In addition, there were six Japanese priests, 27 catechists, and 51 catechetical assistants, while in 1912, the year of Nikolai's death, the number of Orthodox Christians was slightly more than 34,000.[470]

Given the extensive resources available to the Catholic and Protestant missionaries, whose efforts, were supported by both religious organisations and the governments of several countries,

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[467] William K. Bunce, *Religions in Japan: Buddism, Shinto, Christianity* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, 1973), p. 33.

[468] J. Balette and F. Ligneul, "Japan," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910). http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08297a.htm. Retrieved from: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08297a.htm on 1 October 2019.

[469] Fred Eugin Hagin, *The Cross in Japan: A Study of Achievement and Opportunity* (New York: Revell, 1914), 361–63.

[470] Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, 93, p. 98.

one could argue that the small Orthodox Mission worked much more effectively. However, the lag in the number of converts compared to Catholics and Protestants remained significant, and Nikolai's hope that Orthodoxy would become the leading Christian denomination in Japan, founded on his confidence in the advantages of Orthodoxy as the true and most spiritual form of Christianity, did not materialise. Naturally, Nikolai did not blame Orthodoxy itself or its doctrine but rather the passivity of the Russian government and 'mother Church' in supporting the Mission, while he increasingly criticised Japanese traditional beliefs, which he said had made the Japanese less receptive to the deep spirituality of Orthodoxy and more receptive to the mercantile and pragmatic spirit of Western civilisation.

Already in 1895, when interpreting statistics from a local church he noted that the initial interest in Orthodox Christianity had started to fade, which he said could be explained by the fact that his catechists were not skilful enough to sustain it.[471] Later, however, he linked it to the growth of nationalism and the missionary efforts of other Christian denominations, among other influences. In 1896, Nikolai summarised a story he had heard from a catechist from Fukuoka:

> Universalists are preachers of nonsense who came from America; [they] malign Christianity altogether… Catholics denounce Orthodoxy… Japanese ultra-patriots breed hatred towards Russia… But the strongest in Fukuoka are Episcopal Protestants, who are also not exactly friends of Orthodoxy…[472]

The start of the Russo-Japanese War marked the start of Nikolai's more vociferous criticism of Protestantism in his diaries because he associated it with England, which supported Japan in the war. Nikolai blamed Protestant missionaries for being 'wildly happy' to pray for Japan because they were allowed to preach in the country, even though they did not do the same in Russia, where English and American Protestants were 'amazingly antichristian' and 'drowning in the sin of misanthropy.'[473] Here Nikolai was criticising Protestant missionaries for supporting Japan simply because the authorities permitted them to operate there and preach their 'false' version of Christianity, whereas Russia remained closed to them. This is another instance of the triangular character of this story.

[471] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 229.
[472] Ibid., p. 426.
[473] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 126.

Strengthening the cult of the emperor and the transformation of Shintoism into a state religion

Another important aspect of the social development of the Meiji period, particularly towards the end of the 19th century, was the strengthening of nationalism based on a cult of the emperor and the transformation of Shintoism into a state religion.[474] From the very beginning, the Meiji government had combined Westernisation with a vaunted return to ancient and long-forgotten pre-Tokugawa customs, many of which were invented or borrowed from the West, and then presented as having existed in ancient times. There were several reasons for this. First, to the general population, innovations seemed more acceptable if they were presented as a restoration of old traditions; for example, the decree on the rejection of Chinese clothing did not contain a direct call to wear Western clothes but rather spoke of 'returning to the times of our ancestors and building a state that is respectful of the military.'[475] A. Meshcheryakov has noted that the Western suit and various types of formal uniform with badges of rank were presented (or the government wished them to be perceived) as a restoration of the military dress of the pre-Tokugawa period.[476] That Westernisation was carried out in the guise of a return to ancient indigenous customs justified it in the face of conservative opponents whose influence in society and parliament was quite significant, and sometimes manifested itself in political demonstrations and even uprisings.

Second, the objective of Westernisation was to strengthen Japan as a world power and not bring about its inclusion in the Western world as a junior partner. To this end, it did not make sense for the state to officially adopt any Western teachings since they would have been perceived as a preference for foreign interests. Moreover, these teachings typically presented the West as forming the entirety of the civilised world; for example, it would have been difficult to prove on the basis of Christianity or Western liberalism the necessity or possibility of assigning Japan an equal role in the civilised world, and despite its successes, Japan would always remain a 'junior student.' Another factor is that political successes, military victories against China and Russia, and the acquisition of colonies had given rise to a sharp growth in nationalism and a desire to return to home-grown traditions. The prevailing mood in Japan at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century was: Since we can win and successfully compete on the battlefield, perhaps our traditions are not so bad after all.

This situation led to an increased interest in home-grown traditions, a growing hostility to Western moral and social attitudes—which were considered to be excessively individualistic—

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474 Muramatsu Takeshi, *Nihonjin to tennō* (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyūjo, 1989).
475 Meshcheryakov, "Yaponiya v period Meidzi (1868–1905): ot nachala reform do Russko-yaponskoy voyny," p. 321.
476 Ibid., pp. 321–22.

and even to the rehabilitation of some Confucian traditions, even though the ideology of the early Meiji period had been based on the rejection of such Confucianism. Members of the Japanese elite increasingly supported a partial return to the humanitarian values of the Tokugawa period, in particular to Confucian moral attitudes based on collectivism and devotion to one's elders, leaders, and the state. The formula 'Japanese spirit, Western knowledge' (*wakon yosai*) that gained popularity represented the belief that Western scientific knowledge should only be gathered if doing so could ensure that traditional Japanese values were preserved as the national backbone.

One effect of this ideological evolution was that several prominent former liberals publicly renounced their previous beliefs. One example of this was the famous philosopher and political theorist Kato Hiroyuki, who served as the rector of Tokyo University and the president of the Tokyo (subsequently Imperial) Academy of Sciences. During the early Meiji period Hiroyuki had defended the idea of personal freedom and in the 1870s had participated in the work of the intellectual society Meirokusha and its journal *Meiroku zasshi*, which worked to acquaint readers with the religious, moral, philosophical, and political teachings of the West, the history of European civilisation, and discussions of methods of disseminating knowledge. Hiroyuki later abandoned the theory of natural rights and demands for the immediate introduction of a parliamentary system and in 1882, removed his previous works from distribution and sale.[477]

The prominent legal scholar Inoue Kowashi (1844–1895) in his interpretation of the imperial decree of education, which was published in 1890, stated that any true Japanese person 'must have a sense of public duty by which he values his life lightly as dust, advances spiritedly, and is ready to sacrifice himself for the sake of the nation.'[478] Itō Hirobumi sought a constitution based on the Prussian model. In his speech in 1888 he called the imperial house 'the axis of the nation' and claimed that without it 'the state will eventually collapse when politics are entrusted to the reckless discussions of the people.'[479] The prominent teacher and one of the founders of *Meiroku zasshi*, Nishimura Shigeki (1828–1902), gave a course of lectures in which he rebelled against the 'unthinking' copying of Western models and the loss of their national moral foundations of the Japanese, by which he meant Confucianism and the 'way of the warrior' (*bushido*). The loss of respectfulness and respect for elders in age and position, the absence of a sense of justice and courage, and the presence of shamelessness and luxury seemed to Shigeki to be features of the coming century and a monstrous whirlpool into which the West was dragging the country.[480]

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[477] "Modern Japan: An Encyclopaedia of History, Culture, and Nationalism," ed. James L. Huffman (1998), p. 111.
[478] As quoted in Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 76.
[479] Ibid., p. 129.
[480] Meshcheryakov, "Yaponiya v period Meidzi (1868-1905): ot nachala reform do Russko-yaponskoy voyny," p. 342.

The most important consequence of the growth in nationalism and traditionalism, which to some extent can be seen as a natural consequence of the strengthening of Japan's statehood, its economic successes, and military victories and subsequent national pride, was the transformation of Shintoism into the state religion. There are several reasons why the new state elite selected Shintoism for this role. First, from a political perspective, it was deemed a necessary path to attracting to the government's corner not only Westernisers but also traditionally inclined sections of Japanese society for whom Western teachings—primarily Christianity—were alien. Second, Christianity was viewed as both an example of the higher Western culture and as an instrument of the political interests of the Western powers, and therefore from the Meiji government's perspective, its adoption as a state religion or even its broad dissemination could lead to political dependence on foreign powers. Finally, the Meiji ideologists considered that Shintoism was the best tool available to promote the widespread acceptance of the divine origin of the Japanese emperor, who was key to legitimising the reforms. Christianity, for example, could be used to proclaim the monarch 'God's anointed' who ruled by divine right (Nikolai, for example, advocated this perspective), but could not consider the monarch to be a living god.[481] From the Meiji ideologists' perspective, Christianity had another obvious shortcoming: It proclaimed that one's highest loyalty was to God and not to one's secular ruler. The unification of the secular ruler and God in one person was only possible under Shintoism.

At the same time, the Meiji leadership wanted to Westernise (and therefore modernise) Japanese institutions and also—partly under pressure from Western powers—wanted to proclaim the freedom and equality of all religions, which was first and foremost understood as fully legalising Christianity, which had been specifically banned and persecuted. To resolve the contradiction between freedom of religion and the official cult of Shintoism, a special strategy was developed under which Shintoism was proclaimed not to be a religion but rather a state ceremony, for which it was necessary to clarify the concept of religion. Some elements were singled out from the plethora of sects and branches of traditional Shintoism on the basis of which a new system of 'state Shintoism' was created, at the centre of which was the cult of the Emperor and the worship of the state and its symbols. This cult was not officially a religion and therefore constitutional freedoms (such as the option not to observe it during state events) were deemed to not apply to it. All other branches of Shintoism and other religious groups were, however, officially designated religions.

Such a system was not implemented in one go. At the beginning of the Meiji period, the government tried to attract all Shintoists and even Buddhists to the state cult, which was helped by

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[481] Yijian Zhong, "Freedom, Religion and the Making of the Modern State in Japan, 1868–89," *Asian Studies Review* 38, no. 1 (2013).

the fact that Shintoism had over time grown so close to Buddhism that it was sometimes difficult to differentiate between them. In 1872, the government introduced the posts of Shinto and Buddhist preachers and assigned to them responsibilities of propagandising state values but in 1882, Shinto priests were forbidden to preach, and the state started to separate Shintoism from Buddhism in order to build a state cult on the basis of some elements of the former only. For the state cult, an element of Shintoism called Shrine Shinto (*Jinja Shintō*) was taken. This practice, which focused on worship in shrines, was different to other folk and sectarian practices generally known as Sect Shinto (*Kyōha Shintō*). The government composed new rituals and ceremonies for use at Shinto shrines and the duties and grades of priests were fixed. According to Shimazono, 'The system of rites and rituals admiring the Emperor and gods of Japan was important, on the one hand, and stories about the emperors and the unique spiritual traditions of Japan were needed, on the other. Along with shrines, schools, military forces, wars, festival days, events, and mass media (newspapers, magazines, books, and radio) played significant roles in the propagation. Above all, elementary schools played the greatest role.'[482] In 1900, a separate Shinto Shrine Bureau was formed, while the existing Shinto Shrine and Buddhist Temple Bureau was renamed the Religion Bureau, within the Ministry of Home Affairs. When Shrine Shinto and other religions were placed under the control of different government agencies, the separate system of State Shinto came into being.

As Susumu Shimazono has noted, by the end of the 19th century in Japan, 'the dual structure of religious life [had emerged] comprising State Shinto that administered "indoctrination" and "rites and rituals" on the state or national level, and "religions" in the narrow definition of the word that were concerned with individual persons' salvation, life and death concerns, and other aspects of daily living. Precedence was given to State Shinto when there was a need for keeping the framework for the spiritual system of the state. If individual religious organisations, sects, or religious leaders were to speak with an intention to change the framework for the spiritual order of the state, they would have to be prepared for oppression. Uchimura Kanzo's *lese majeste* affair in 1890 and ensuing controversies over a 'conflict between education and religions' are typical examples.'[483] The well-known Protestant figure Uchimura Kanzo, who worked as a teacher in a state school, refused to bow to the portrait of the emperor due to his belief that such an act would be tantamount to idolatry, for which he was dismissed. From the government's perspective, paying respect to the emperor was not the performance of a religious rite but a state ritual that was obligatory for all citizens irrespective of religious beliefs.

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[482] Shimazono, "State Shinto and the Religious Structure of Modern Japan," p. 1089.
[483] Ibid., p. 1094.

The transformation of Shinto into a state cult destroyed Nikolai's hope that the Meiji government would choose Orthodox Christianity as a state religion, or at least assign it serious state support. This naturally prompted Nikolai to abandon his previous positive evaluation of Shintoism and other widespread non-Christian teachings in Japan and to become more sceptical about the prospects for Orthodoxy in the country.

Military reform, imperialism, and war with Russia

The growth of nationalism in Japan was accompanied by a rise in militarism, which became an integral part of the rush towards political and economic modernisation. As has been noted, the objective of this deliberate trajectory was to turn Japan into a leading world power, avoid the fate of becoming a colony, and expand its own territory—a key part of the Meiji ideology. This approach considered Westernisation to be a means to an end and a concession to the West, necessary precisely and only to achieve this primary goal; political and economic systems were changed in order to guarantee Japanese independence and foreign policy power and to avoid the fate of the other Asian states. In a speech in which he advocated abolishing the unequal treaties Japan had signed with the Western powers, Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu said:

> The goal of treaty reform, or more accurately the goal of Japanese diplomacy, is to receive the rights befitting of every nation and carry out those duties to which every nation ought to commit itself. That is to say, the Empire of Japan, though located in Asia, wishes to receive special treatment from the Western powers beyond that which they have afforded to the other nations of Asia. Since that is the case, Japan must introduce domestic policies different to those of other Asian nations and the Japanese people must also demonstrate a unique spirit of enterprise beyond that of other Asian peoples.[484]

One of the main reforms pertained to the military and the creation of a modern and effective army. In 1872, a conscription system was introduced to increase the size of the Japanese army. This was finally implemented in 1880, when military service became mandatory for young men. In 1878, following the Prussian military model, an Imperial Army General Staff Office was created that reported directly to the emperor and engaged in strategic planning. Particular attention was paid to promoting the notion of a military spirit. In the new centralised army, all soldiers and officers had to renounce their loyalty to former feudal lords and obey only their immediate superiors and the emperor; indeed, insubordination to one's superiors was viewed as tantamount

[484] As translated in: "Constitutionalism and the wars with China and Russia," (October 1, 2019). Retrieved from: http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_2/Chapter%204%20Section%203,%204.pdf.

to disobedience to the emperor. Such views were disseminated throughout society, including through the educational system, which promoted the cult of the emperor.

In the era of colonial acquisitions, one of the main attributes of a powerful state and a sign of its equality with other leading world powers was the ability to expand one's territory and sphere of influence. In Japan just as in Europe, such territorial acquisitions were justified by the purported need to acquire resources for development and subsequently by a sort of civilisational mission, which in Japan differed from the West in its anti-Western, pro-Asiatic orientation. As a result, starting from the 1870s, Japan entered a period of continuous wars and military operations that achieved particular intensity in the 1890s, the period under review in this work. The first test of the new Japanese army was the Taiwan expedition of 1874, followed by operations in Korea and war with China in 1894–1895, and finally, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05. Japan was successful in all of them and this success promoted and radicalised official Japanese militarism and chauvinism. It is particularly important to note that Japanese interests clashed not only with Chinese but also with Russian interests. Japan attempted to oust Russia from Korea, Manchuria, and Sakhalin, entirely dashing Nikolai's hopes that Japan would become a country friendly to Russia. That Japan became one of Russia's main rivals could not but have had an impact on the attitude of the Japanese to Orthodoxy, which was considered 'Russian Christianity.'

This background naturally cast a shadow over public attitudes towards Orthodox converts and the work of the Church. In 1895, at the time of signing the Treaty of Shimonoseki following Japan's victory in a war over China, Japan witnessed a wave of anti-Russian sentiments. The public blamed Russia for putting pressure on Japan together with Germany and France and forcing it to abandon its plan to annex the Liaodong peninsula and for the first time, Nikolai had to arrange for extra security at the headquarters of the Mission, while local Orthodox churches were warned to expect a hostile reaction from nationalists. Furthermore, many students at Nikolai's schools were refusing to study and instead 'showed up to classes only to condemn Christianity and Russia.'[485] In February–March of 1896, Nikolai and his colleagues started to notice public frustration with Russia over the clash between its geopolitical interests with those of Japan in Korea and this 'interrupted sermons: [people were] throwing stones into the home of catechism, badmouthing us and suchlike.'[486] At this time, Nikolai even began to ponder the possibility of a war breaking out between Russia and Japan[487] and as the war approached, Nikolai hoped for the best but eventually accepted its inevitability. He blamed the Russian authorities for their desire to annex Korea but also denunciated Japan's nationalism and great power ambitions, remarking that Japan had an 'itch

[485] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), pp. 88, 94.
[486] Ibid., pp. 266–267.
[487] Ibid., pp. 270, 277.

for fighting a great European power to finally get a certificate that it had become a great Asian power'[488] and 'to get a swollen head'[489] from all its success.

The Russo-Japanese War had a particularly serious influence on Nikolai's views and his position in the country. As a supporter of the creation of an Orthodox Church for the Japanese, he recognised the possibility and even need for Japanese Orthodox Christians to pray for Japan's victory in the war but as a Russian and a Russian subject, was forced to stop conducting public services. It is noteworthy that throughout this period, he refused to leave Japan, despite the persistent proposals from Russian diplomats that he do so.[490] The Church continued to operate, in particular by giving guidance to Russian prisoners of war. During the war itself, the Japanese government did not raise any obstacles to its activities, deeming that religions that did not demonstrate clear disloyalty to state policy should be treated equally, and official representatives repeatedly assured Nikolai of this policy.[491] Moreover, security was provided for the mission in Tokyo by the Japanese authorities.[492] The general attitude towards Orthodoxy, particularly in the provinces, was rather hostile; there were cases of attacks on Orthodox believers by 'patriotic elements' and many Orthodox Christians preferred to conceal or renounce their faith.[493]

Discussions about loyalty arose at this time in the Church, which Nikolai took rather painfully. Despite the fact that he managed to preserve and sustain the Church throughout this difficult period, there could be no question of any growth in the foreseeable future, let alone of its transformation into the most influential religion in the country. Of course, this situation influenced his views. The position that Nikolai adopted during the war was determined by his general attitude to the relationship between the national and the eternal in the Church. He considered patriotism to be a pre-Christian sentiment that was naturally present in all people, just as much as one's conscientiousness,[494] but he thought that Christianity introduced the idea of love for one's neighbours.

However, in a letter he wrote to Japanese Christians drafted in connection with the war, he appealed to them not to forget that there is a higher consideration than love for one's country, that apart from the 'terrestrial motherland, we also have the Heavenly Motherland,' to which 'people belong without national differences, because all people are in equal measure children of the Heavenly Father and brothers.' This higher fatherland was the Church, and all its members were enjoined to grow, establish themselves in the faith, and 'pray fervently that the Lord swiftly restore

[488] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 794.
[489] Ibid., p. 863.
[490] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), pp. 8–11.
[491] Ibid., p. 12.
[492] Ibid.
[493] Ibid., pp. 56–57.
[494] Ibid., p. 127.

the disturbed peace.'[495] During this period of nationalist hysteria, not everyone in Japan approved of the position that there was something higher than love for one's country, since such an understanding could very possibly serve to limit the efforts to fight the enemy that the government was demanding of its people.

Nikolai understood this very well, as was shown in August 1904 by his refusal to follow the suggestion of a member of his congregation to pray not for victory but for peace, and to condemn Japanese soldiers for committing suicide, sacrificing themselves to inflict damage on the enemy. Nikolai explained that both sides who 'accept God's Judgement and His Will' could pray without sin for the victory of their country and were even obliged to do so. Despite suicide being strongly condemned by the Christian faith, Nikolai felt that the Japanese Church was still too weak to issue such statements that could be interpreted as a desire to 'weaken the heroic spirit of Japanese soldiers.'[496] He was evidently prepared to make certain concessions, which could be seen as a degree of tactical indigenisation, but this was the most he could do; there was no way that he would adopt a position that contradicted Orthodox doctrine, such as endorsing the war as such, accepting the idea of suicide, or recognising the priority of state objectives over church ones. It is in this regard that we should understand Naganawa Mitsuo, a Japanese expert on Nikolai, who has asserted that conservatism hindered the broader spread of Orthodoxy in Japan.[497]

During the Meiji period, as many scholars have noted, 'adherence to Christianity was not so much motivated by religious faith as by social and political considerations'[498]; members of the Japanese elite often viewed Christianity from a pragmatic perspective, deeming it an ideological instrument for Westernisation and modernisation, while ordinary people viewed it even more pragmatically. Nikolai's own experience had shown him this pragmatic approach to Christianity, which he called the tendency of the Japanese to look 'upon faith purely as a "cash cow".'[499] When speaking of the Protestant community in the city of Nobeoka, for example, he noted that 'many people were baptised simultaneously, but that those who were thought more about establishing relations with the British and about maritime privileges, and as a result they had now already scattered.'[500] He noted this tendency towards pragmatism and even mercantilism among Orthodox believers as well. Nikolai did not agree with this approach and condemned it, but recognised that many converts to Orthodoxy adhered to it.

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495 Ibid., p. 17.

496 Ibid., p. 125.

497 Mitsuo Naganawa, "The Japanese Orthodox Church in the Meiji Era," in *A hidden fire: Russian and Japanese cultural encounters, 1868-1926*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 168; Naganawa, *Nikoraidō ibun*.

498 Masaharu Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion* (Rutland, Vt: Charles E. Tuttle, 1963), p. 360.

499 *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 143.

500 *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 457.

In his observations of these trends, Nikolai noted that at the current stage of development in Japan when the authorities only favoured foreign faiths insofar as they were a resource for improving state life, ‘Perhaps it did not need Orthodoxy as it would be of no use. For this purpose, other Christian denominations that accepted all kinds of secular compromises were more suitable; there was no place for Orthodoxy here. Orthodoxy should be adopted as the Faith of Christ, and not as a spur to urge on the kicking and snorting horse of Japanese statehood.’[501]

Nikolai did not lose faith in the ultimate victory of Orthodoxy but came to postpone its arrival to an unspecified time in the future, once Japan ‘had settled down and calmed down, and there would be deeper and clearer visibility within,’ when she would realise that other religions do not satisfy her. However, this process might take several centuries and in this case, as Nikolai sadly noted, his life would lose its meaning because the current Japanese Orthodox Church would disappear; if some non-Orthodox form of Christianity were adopted as the official religion then ‘Orthodox believers would immediately rush to join them; that’s the kind of Orthodox Christians we have now.’[502]

Nikolai concluded that neither the state of Japanese society nor the tenacity of Orthodox believers had created adequate conditions for the immediate and broad spread of Orthodoxy in the country, while he also fully understood that other denominations of Christianity were much more flexible and capable of deeper indigenisation in order to boost their appeal. The pragmatic use of religion was much more consistent with the Protestant Missions, whose representatives considered themselves to be envoys not only of God but also of Western civilisation. According to Irwin Scheiner, ‘Secular and religious aspects of the West were so indivisible to them that Christianity assumed the character of Westernization and Westernization implied the necessity of conversion to Christianity ... They linked Western science to Western norms, which were directly attributable to Christianity.’[503] Starting in the 1880s, new Protestant movements began to spread in Japan based on so-called ‘liberal theology’ (Unitarian missions from America and German General Evangelical missions), and these often abandoned the central tenets of traditional Christianity: the Trinity, the authority of the Bible, and much else.[504] Usuki Nirei has observed that the ‘rise of liberal Christianity and the development of secular humanistic disciplines and writings were interrelated and both gained force in the general nationalist atmosphere and elevated cultural consciousness of

[501] Ibid., p. 287.
[502] Ibid.
[503] Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1970), p. 14.
[504] Yosuke Nirei, "Toward a Modern Belief: Modernist Protestantism and Problems of National Religion in Meiji Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34, no. 1 (2007): p. 165.

the late 1890s.'[505] This flexibility meant that they could adapt much more easily to Japanese realities and pursue a course of deeper indigenisation.

Nikolai's concern that another form of Christianity could spread widely throughout Japan did not come to pass. As Masaharu Anesaki has noted, the nationalist backlash that came about as a reaction to the Westernisation trend of the early Meiji period, expressed *inter alia* in the anti-Christian movement, was so strong that the 'prospect of wholesale Christianization proved a delusion.'[506] This affected all Christian denominations as well as Orthodoxy, the number of whose followers remained rather limited. Nevertheless, Nikolai deemed that Protestantism had greater potential under the new conditions and he had good reason for this assumption.

Nikolai was unable to act in the same way as his Protestant counterparts. In September 1909, in response to a statement by Anglican Bishop Cecil Boutflower that proud (i.e. nationalist and pragmatically inclined) Japanese people who adopted Christianity could demand changes and localised adaptations (i.e. deep indigenisation), Nikolai made his position clear: 'I was sent to preach Christ's teachings and I will not compromise even by a whisker. Let the Methodists, Congregationalists, and others renounce God the Saviour, the Trinity, original sin *et cetera* to please the Japanese; that is their business. For I know only Christ and Him crucified.'[507]

Nikolai loved Russia and as a patriot, rejoiced in her successes and suffered over her failures, but he experienced all these sentiments as a private person. In his persona as a missionary, he felt that he was not a representative of Russia or the West and not even of the Russian Church, but exclusively an envoy of the Orthodox Church—i.e. the true Christian church to which the Russian government and the Russian Church provided assistance as necessary to spread throughout the world. It was based on this vision that Nikolai worked to spread Orthodoxy in Japan. In an interview with a correspondent of *The Asahi shimbun* in January 1911, Nikolai repeated this idea: 'There is someone who can take care of the Motherland in the Motherland. I have to take care of the business here for which the Motherland sent me.'[508]

In the period immediately before and during the Russo-Japanese War, when the trend towards nationalism in Japanese society had become particularly pronounced, Nikolai formulated his position regarding the future of Orthodoxy even more clearly, revising some of his earlier views. Western influence expressed itself in the growth of secularism, atheism, and non-Orthodox Christian denominations and a tendency to subordinate religious and spiritual ideals to state and national objectives, which were all parts of the triangular framework within which the West was

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[505] Nirei, "Toward a Modern Belief: Modernist Protestantism and Problems of National Religion in Meiji Japan."
[506] Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, p. 360.
[507] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), 578. Cf. 1 Cor 2, 2.
[508] Ibid., p. 722

shaping religious life in Russia and Japan, leading Nikolai to the belief that Japanese society was not ready to adopt Orthodoxy.

Political and social changes in Russia and their influence on Nikolai's views

Similarly to Japan, the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century was a period of rapid economic growth and fundamental social change in Russia. Many of these changes were given impetus by the reforms Tsar Alexander II carried out in the 1860s, but which only yielded significant results a decade or two later. At the beginning of the 20th century, the country remained largely agricultural and the majority of its population was still peasants, but modern industry was developing rapidly, leading to the creation of a new class of industrial workers. The population as a whole was also increasingly.[509] In terms of its economic and governmental development and the general population's living standards, Russia lagged behind only the most developed industrial countries such as the United States, Britain, France, and Germany; if one looks at a number of indicators, its level of development was comparable to or more advanced than states such as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Italy, and Japan, according to certain sources.[510] The country was rapidly developing and confidently gaining ground in the global economy[511] but at the same time, the country faced the usual social problems that accompany industrialisation, in many ways resembling the problems of Japan, which had undergone a similar period of development. Working conditions for factory workers in Russia were by and large rather harsh and female and child labour were widespread. This background gave rise to a labour movement, and the nascent social democratic movement sought to use strikes and demonstrations to its advantage. The radical populist elements from which the Socialist Revolutionary Party emerged advocated radical reforms in the countryside and the abolition of landed estates, which they intended to carry out after the overthrow of the autocratic government, and they had taken power through revolution. They favoured the 'individual terror' method in order to accelerate the revolution.

The activities of the revolutionary movement led in turn to the consolidation of conservative forces, some of which used Russian nationalist slogans. In social life and the history of thought, this period is characterised by social stratification, extreme radicalisation, and the strengthening of both left-wing revolutionary and right-wing nationalist extremist movements while in political life, it was a period of turbulence. The reign of Tsar Alexander III (1881–1894) is usually referred to as

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[509] V. A. Fyodorov, *Istorija Rossii, 1861-1917*, Third ed. (Moscow: Akademiya, 2004), pp. 532–33.

[510] Alexander V. Lukin and Pavel V. Lukin, "Myths about Russian Political Culture and the Study of Russian History," in *Political Culture and Post-Communism* ed. Stephen Whitefield (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2005), p. 22.

[511] Fyodorov, *Istorija Rossii, 1861-1917*, p. 537.

a period of counter-reforms in Russia. At this time, the government succeeded in implementing measures to strengthen censorship and limit the autonomy of universities, the powers of local government, and the courts, but domestic policy was inconsistent and contradictory. Although the general course was reactionary, driven by a 'revision' and 'correction' of the reforms of the 1860s and 1870s, this conservative retreat was temporary; the government could simply not afford to ignore the new trends and pursued contradictory policies: Alongside counter-reforms, it adopted measures to develop the country's economy, made concessions on the peasant question, and completed army reforms; a new socio-political situation had developed in the second half of the 1890s that did not allow the government to implement in full the reactionary legislation it had previously adopted.

Upon coming to power in 1894, Tsar Nicholas II initially tried to pursue the conservative course of his father but the policy of expansion in the Far East led to war with Japan in 1904–1905. The extreme difficulties that were an outcome of the war and the growth of social tension prompted the revolution of 1905–1907, which in turn led the government to make political concessions in order to bring the situation under control. The manifesto of October 17, 1905 granted basic civil liberties such as the inviolability of the individual and freedom of conscience, speech, assembly, and unions. The manifesto also established representative bodies, the State Council and the State Duma. For the first time, legal political parties could be formed in Russia, from the extreme left to the conservative-nationalist. A new period in the history of the country had begun.

Nikolai's alignment with conservatism

It is apparent from Nikolai's diaries and other documents that during this period, he was increasingly sympathetic to the conservative forces in Russia that opposed liberal reforms, secularism, and Western influence on Russian society, and supported maintaining the religious foundations of public life and autocratic rule, even though previously he had not been opposed to the Westernisation movement and indeed positively assessed, for example, the influence of Western Christian denominations and science on Japanese society. This shift was not only driven by his Orthodox faith (even among Orthodox Christians there were supporters of very diverse political movements) but also by a change in his general approach to events in Russia and his experiences in Japan. Nikolai frequently noted in his diaries that Russia contributed little to the central mission of his life, missionary activity in Japan, and he gradually began to associate this passivity with the corrupting influence of Western secularism and its Russian supporters on the

Russian government, the Orthodox Church, and society as a whole,[512] and he believed that he saw this same influence at work in Japan. His observations of Japan and the news he received from Russia led him to form a single picture of world development that, he believed, ran counter to Christian ideals.

Nikolai criticised the frequent strikes, student demonstrations, terrorist acts against senior officials, and other anti-government protests and lamented their occurrence in his diaries, describing them as 'insurrections': 'Sad news from Russia: students and workers are rioting in St. Petersburg and Moscow… God, what does all this mean?' He wrote on March 26, 1901. He also considered 'sectarian unrest' to be equivalent to revolutionary activity [513] and mentioned particularly frequently the Shtundist movement, which was close to Baptism and whose practitioners initially considered themselves to be Orthodox.[514] In the late 19th century it had spread fairly widely throughout the territory of modern-day Ukraine and in several Russian provinces. For Nikolai, the political struggle that had encompassed the government and the dissemination of various unorthodox religious sects were part of a single phenomenon: An attempt by anti-Orthodox and anti-Russian forces to undermine the foundations of autocracy and the Orthodox faith as the basis of Russia's spiritual power.

Nikolai assessed the revolution that began in 1905 as a series of destructive uprisings. On January 12/25, 1905, he reacted to news that on January 9, troops had opened fire on a workers' demonstration:

> And in St. Petersburg, according to telegrams, there is revolution; many killed and wounded; factory workers have built barricades on Vasilyevsky Island and even on Nevsky. God, what is happening to Russia? Defeats externally, decay within. Will salvation be soon?[515]

A few days later, he again commented that the newspapers were bringing only bad news from his homeland, which was filled with 'insurrection, discord, [and] corruption,' while the situation in Japan was dominated by the defeat of Russian troops, many of whom had been taken as prisoners of war.[516] Nikolai connected the Russo-Japanese War with revolution and decay, but attributed the overall defeat to the internal weakness of Russian society.

An analysis of Nikolai's writing indicates that he generally considered autocracy, unfettered by representative bodies, to be normal and the most rational form of government, and that deviation away from this approach led to social weakness. For example, after a meeting held to discuss the

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[512] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 493.
[513] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 424.
[514] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 127.
[515] Ibid., p. 182.
[516] Ibid., p. 213.

deaths of Japanese workers in copper mines, Nikolai wrote that the Japanese parliament was 'indifferent' to the matter and that the emperor had not given the matter sufficient attention. 'Such is the behaviour of the vaunted government of popular representation! Would it be possible in Russia, under autocracy, for 300,000 people to perish before everyone's eyes like this? It is strange to even think about it,' he concluded. [517] In 1904, when discussing the Russo-Japanese War with the English Bishop Awdry,[518] who expressed his view that a defeat could be useful for Russia because it would stimulate positive reforms and the satisfaction of popular demands, Nikolai conformed to the spirit of moderate Russian conservatives who did not reject the idea of reforms but sought to postpone them to a later date, remarking that 'in Russia there is no discord between the tsar and the people; transformations are occurring gradually, but a body as huge as Russia cannot be transformed instantly.'[519]

It was precisely at this time that demands were growing in Russia for the creation of a supreme body of representative power that would transform the ruling autocracy into a constitutional monarchy. This eventually occurred in 1905 as a result of the revolution precipitated by the Russo-Japanese War, but the loudest demands for reform came not from the revolutionaries but rather liberal figures, most of whom actively participated in the *zemstvo*[520] movement and bodies of self-government. It was out of the *zemstvo* movement that the main liberal party of Russia of emerged, the Constitutional Democratic Party (Party of People's Freedom). In his diaries, Nikolai displayed a negative view of the programme advocated by the Russian liberals. Although he himself was far from the centres of political power and did not directly express political views, his sympathies are apparent from his assessments of the views and statements of his various interlocutors. Nikolai thought that it was liberal Westernisers who embodied the trend of secularism and, in alliance with Western Protestants, sectarians, and other apostates from true Christianity, were undermining the spiritual foundations of Russian statehood and weakening the country.

A diary entry that records a conversation between Nikolai and David Nikolayevich Golovnin, a railway engineer and associate professor of the Moscow Agricultural Institute who visited the Mission in August 1902, is illustrative in this respect. Golovnin was the great-grandson of the famous navigator Vasily Mikhailovich Golovnin, who in 1811 was sent to the shores of Japan to map the Kuril and Shantar Islands and the Strait of Tatary, but was captured by the Japanese on Kunashir Island and spent two years in Japan, publishing an account of his journey

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[517] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), pp. 581–82.

[518] William Awdry (1842–1910) was the inaugural bishop of Southampton and Osaka and subsequently served in south Tokyo.

[519] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 152.

[520] The system of local self-government in the Russian Empire, which was institutionalised by a reform of Alexander II in 1964.

and captivity that was widely read both in Russia and abroad. Out of respect for his ancestor Nikolai met the great-grandson with great cordiality, but the conversation disappointed him. Judging by his diary entry, Golovnin articulated views on the situation in Russia that were typical for a liberal professor of that time. He condemned the policies of Tsar Alexander III as reactionary and claimed that they had halted the 'course of the natural development of liberal ideas,' as a result of which 'Russia [was] on the eve of destruction, revolution [was] near at hand, everyone [was] in despair,' and the country had become 'lifeless.' Golovnin also spoke approvingly of Lev Tolstoy, who he claimed 'was bringing about a religious revolution in Russia.' Nikolai described these views as nihilistic, given that at that time in Russia, opponents of the government, including revolutionary populists and terrorists, were all described as nihilists. Nikolai also noted:

> I understood why students of various technological, Petrovsky,[521] and agricultural institutions are without exception so wretched and dull. Professors [such as Golovnin] are to blame for this. With a tear welling up and furtively wiped away over the ills of Russia caused by the oppression of liberalism! There was no point in arguing with the gentleman. I listened in silence and with a heavy heart we parted company.[522]

Nikolai viewed the cause of the student unrest from the perspective of the typical conservative spirit of the time: Liberal troublemakers of the older generation were to blame for leading students astray. By liberals, Nikolai meant effectively all pro-Western members of the intelligentsia who had been influenced by Western theories, above all by Protestantism and other non-Orthodox Christian schools, in addition to various sects and theories that were popular at the end of the 19th century and that were deemed to have corrupted the true teachings of Christ.[523]

The triangular framework advocated in this thesis is once again revealed by Nikolai's criticism of Western ideology, which he thought was undermining and corrupting both Japanese and Russian society, especially the intelligentsia; this conclusion can be found in many of his diary entries. In an entry dated July 30/August 12, 1902, Nikolai was indignant at the fact that at an international student missionary conference in London, dominated by Protestants, Orthodox Russia and Greece had been categorised as pagan countries that needed to be 'enlightened.' He remarked:

> Lord, how long will You endure the abuse of Your true Gospel? Help to revive Russia, which You entrusted with Orthodoxy! Unclean insects have covered this

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[521] Petrovsky Commercial College was a school in St. Petersburg from 1880 to 1918.
[522] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 683.
[523] Ibid., 2, p. 290.

> huge body and are sucking blood from it – like Lev Tolstoy and all this fetid intelligentsia, like bugs, kowtowing before the West. Help to cast off this evil![524]

In a later diary entry he went even further, comparing Russia to the Jewish people, abandoned by the Lord and having fallen into idolatry (in this case, the worship of anti-Orthodox, pseudo-Christian, and even atheistic teachings from the West). He doubted whether Russia deserved God's mercy since little 'God-loving' could be found there; 'the upper and intelligentsia classes are without exception corrupted by unbelief and sedition,' and 'even the clergy do not have much value in the eyes of God.'[525]

The conservative views Nikolai displayed during this period can be reconstructed by examining the personalities in Russia with whom he was in constant contact and about whom he wrote positively. The most obvious example here is Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev (1827–1907), a member of the State Council, extreme conservative, and one of the ideologists of the counter-reforms of Alexander III who served as Chief Procurator of the Most Holy Synod from 1880 to 1905. Most of Nikolai's correspondence with Pobedonostsev was of a business and official nature because the head of the Synod was largely responsible for financing and resolving other problems of the Mission. However, it is significant that even in Nikolai's personal diaries, in which he was not hesitant to express his views on other government or Church figures, there is absolutely no criticism of Pobedonostsev, about whom all comments are extremely favourable. For example, in an entry dated April 6/18, 1889 in which Nikolai proposed that the Orthodox Church adopt a more aggressive position vis-à-vis other Christian denominations, instruct all overseas priests to conduct missionary work, translate the best Orthodox theological literature into European languages to make non-Orthodox Christians better acquainted with the profundity of Orthodoxy, and then hold a global Christian conference in Kiev, and he concluded that all this could be achieved while Pobedonostsev was Chief Procurator.[526] In November 1902, Pobedonostsev regretted Pobedonostsev's possible resignation and called him a great friend, guardian, and protector of the Mission. In entries from 1904, Nikolai repeatedly praised the care Pobedonostsev showed to Russian prisoners of war, sending them religious books and paying for candles and other expenses.[527]

Another frequent correspondent of Nikolai in Russia during this period was Lev Aleksandrovich Tikhomirov (1852–1923). Tikhomirov was a very colourful figure in Russian public life of the late 19th and early 20th century. In his youth he had been a revolutionary and a

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[524] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 410.

[525] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 157.; *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 410.

[526] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), pp. 320–21.

[527] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), pp. 166, 73, 213, 33.

member of the Executive Committee of the *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will) organisation, which in 1881 had carried out the assassination of Tsar Alexander II. In 1882, wishing to avoid arrest, he had emigrated to Switzerland and then to France, where together with the famous ideologist of the *Narodnik* (Populist) movement Pyotr Lavrov he had published the *Newsletter of the People's Will*. In the late 1880s he had abandoned his revolutionary beliefs, returned to Russia, been pardoned, and become an extreme monarchist. After 1905, Tikhomirov developed a plan for the reform of the 'Duma monarchy' system and wrote for the conservative newspapers *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* and *Russkoye Obozreniye*, while in 1907, he was personally invited to visit St. Petersburg by Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin to take up the position of Member of the Board of the Main Press Directorate. In 1909 he became editor of the newspaper *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*. In his theoretical works, Tikhomirov developed the idea that absolute monarchy (autocracy) was the most appropriate form of government for Russia and proposed prohibiting 'anti-state elements' from representation in the State Duma.

At the end of December 1900, Tikhomirov sent Nikolai his pamphlet 'Christian Tasks of Russia and the Far East,' which had been translated into Japanese by missionary employees Ivan Senuma and Pyotr Ishikawa and published in the periodical of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan, *Seikyō Shinpo*.[528] From that time onwards he was in constant correspondence with Nikolai; he organised the collection of donations for the Mission, wrote articles about its problems, and published articles written by its employees. Nikolai spoke very highly of these activities and of Tikhomirov himself and when he learned of his appointment as the publisher of *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, he described it as very good news and Tikhomirov as someone very well-disposed towards the Mission.[529]

Another interesting figure about whom Nikolai wrote positively was Sergei Aleksandrovich Rachinsky (1833–1902), an academic, educator, 'enlightener,' and Moscow University professor who was a botanist and mathematician and the first translator into Russian of *On the Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin. In 1872, having been forced to retire at the age of 39 due to his independent views, Rachinsky returned to his family village of Tatevo in Smolensk province, where he founded the first rural boarding school in Russia for peasant children. In the 1880s he became the main ideologist of the parish school system in Russia, which began to compete with the secular *zemstvo* schools. Rachinsky came to the conclusion that religious education should form the basis of a school system and he criticised urban life and in particular the modern theatre, which 'satisfies the aesthetic tastes of our metropolitan intelligentsia. … The Russian people are a deeply religious people, and the first of their practical needs, along with meeting bodily needs, is

[528] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), pp. 388, 93.
[529] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 490.

communication with God. … They do not need the theatre but a Church worthy of its high purpose, and a school that reveals before them the treasures of the Church,’ he wrote in an 1881 article entitled ‘People’s Art and the Rural School.’[530] He attached particular importance to teaching Church Slavonic because he believed that if a person learned to read Church Slavonic he would understand both Dante and Shakespeare, and whoever mastered ancient church music would easily understand Beethoven and Bach. In one of his articles he called for the conversion of monasteries into educational centres[531] and naturally, conservatives and Church leaders such as Pobedonostsev were in full agreement with such views.

According to Nikolai, the Russian people did not need a Western, liberal, secular education but most of all an Orthodox religious one that would strengthen the spiritual foundations of their lives. Of the church leaders with whom Nikolai corresponded during this period, the most illustrative was John of Kronstadt. John (Ivan) Ilyich Sergiev (1829–1908), who served at St. Andrew’s Cathedral in Kronstadt for most of his life, frequently donated to the Mission (mainly in the form of church paraphernalia) at the beginning of the 20th century and sent Nikolai his own works, which were translated by the Mission and published in Japanese. Nikolai highly respected John of Kronstadt and recommended his works to Japanese believers as an example of true Orthodox literature. In a diary entry dated June 25/July 8, 1900, Nikolai called John ‘venerable’ and wrote that he was pleased to have received the blessing of this priest, which was all the more remarkable because by that time he had been a bishop for 20 years, while John was an archpriest—i.e. he occupied a lower position in the formal Church hierarchy.[532] John’s donation was exhibited in the baptistery ‘to show to Christians … the name of the servant of God, Father John of Kronstadt.’ [533] In an entry dated December 31, 1900/January 13, 1901, Nikolai wrote that the mission’s best translator, Matvey Ueda, had finished translating John’s *Diary* and was to embark on a translation of Saint John Chrysostom, implying that the works of John of Kronstadt could be thought of as equal to the works of one of the greatest Orthodox Fathers.[534] On October 6/19, 1901, Nikolai reports a seminary meeting at which its head, Ivan Senuma, spoke about the life and work of Father John of Kronstadt.[535]

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[530] A. A. Naumov and M. P. Rakhmanova, *Cerkovnoe penie poreformennoj Rossii v osmyslenii sovremennikov (1861–1918)*, vol. 3, Russkaja duhovnaja muzyka v dokumentah i materialah (Moscow: Yazyki slavyanskoi kil’tury, 2002), p. 349.
[531] Sergey A. Rachinsky, "Shkol'nyj pohod v Nilovu Pustyn'," 1887, (May 18, 2020). Retrieved from: http://az.lib.ru/r/rachinskij_s_a/text_1887_shkolny_pohod_oldorfo.shtml.
[532] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 279.
[533] Ibid., p. 284–285.
[534] Ibid., p. 389.
[535] Ibid., p. 540.

Having learned at the end of 1907 that Father John was seriously ill, Nikolai called the news ‘melancholy’ and wrote: ‘May God give him more time to live, for the benefit of our Holy Church!’[536] and after reading of his death in 1908, he called John ‘a prayer book of the Russian Land’ and a ‘benefactor of our Mission.’[537] On December 27, 1908/January 9, 1909, Father John of Kronstadt was celebrated in the liturgy in a memorial service held at the Tokyo Cathedral[538] Before the sacrament, Nikolai spoke ‘of the miracle carried out by Father John of Kronstadt on Lieutenant Alexeyev (now Mikhey, Bishop of Arkhangelsk): With his hand, in which he had just held a Chalice with Holy Gifts, Father John stroked Alexeyev’s slashed cheek, and it was instantly healed.’[539] The ability to work miracles in Christianity is a testament of saintliness, and the episode appears to indicate that Nikolai considered John worthy of sainthood.

John of Kronstadt was canonised much later by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (in 1964) and by the ROC (in 1990), but was a very controversial figure in Russian society of the late 19th and early 20th century, the last few decades of his life. He was highly respected in traditionalist, conservative, and ecclesiastical circles[540] and a group of influential admirers grew up around him who actively engaged in spreading the glory of his spiritual gifts. These admirers began to talk about him as a healer, prophet, and possessor of other gifts typical of an Orthodox elder.[541] There was even a movement of Ioannites who considered John to be the embodiment of Jesus Christ, which was not recognised by the official church or by John himself.[542] As a result of his fame, John received sizeable donations that he used for charitable purposes, further increasing his popularity.[543] At the same time, John was sharply criticised in more liberal circles for his extremely conservative views that bordered on overt nationalism. In 1905 he encouraged the formation and became one of the founders of the nationalist Union of the Russian People, which advocated the preservation of autocracy and campaigned against liberal reforms while in 1907, he joined the

[536] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 348.
[537] Ibid., p. 478.
[538] Ibid., p. 480.
[539] Ibid., p. 510.
[540] A. I. Yakovlev, "Svjatoj Pravednyj Ioann Kronshtadtskij i russkoe obshhestvo na rubezhe XIX—XX vv. K postanovke problemy" (paper presented at the "XIX ezhegodnaja bogoslovskaja konferencija PSTGU," Moscow, 2009), pp. 344–47.
[541] "Svjatoj Pravednyj Ioann Kronshtadtskij chudotvorec," *Sankt-Peterburgskie eparhial'nye vedomosti* 30-31 (2002).
[542] Nadiezhda B. Kizenko, *A Prodigal Saint: Father John of Kronstadt and the Russian People* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 228; N. P. Zimina, "Ioannity," in *Pravoslavnaja jenciklopedija* (Moscow: Cerkovno-nauchnyj centr "Pravoslavnaja jenciklopedija," 2011); N. P. Zimina, "K voprosu ob ioannitskom dvizhenii v Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi i vozniknovenii v konce 1920-h gg. katakombnogo techenija "arhiepiskopa" Agafangela (Sadovskova)," *Vestnik PSTGU* II. Istorija: Istorija Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi, no. 4 (37) (2010).
[543] N. N. Bol’shakov, *Istochnik zhivoj vody. Zhizneopisanie Ioanna Kronshtadtskogo*, Duhovnoe vozrozhdenie Otechestva (St. Petersburg: Carskoe delo, 1997).

Union of the Russian People and was elected a lifelong honorary member. He also patronised other nationalist organisations, in particular the Russian Monarchist Party.

Although he condemned the anti-Semitic Kishinev pogrom in 1903, after receiving criticism from nationalists he apologised to the Christians of Kishinev and stated that it was 'the Jews who were primarily to blame for the pogrom.' [544] Like Nikolai, John sharply criticised Tolstoy for corrupting Christian teachings and even admitted in his diaries that he prayed for his death. [545] In another letter he condemned the revolutionary unrest of 1905 and, claiming that it was the Lord's punishment for the fact that 'some people' were more immoral than the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, explained it by asserting that 'the culprits in all this are Jews who bribed our hooligans to kill and rob Russian people and plague them with fires.' [546] The diary entry dated September 6/19, 1911 in which he touches on the assassination of Pyotr Stolypin is particularly informative in this regard:

> And how unfortunate is Russia's fate! But in truth, the Russian people deserve it. The government is weak and does not curb revolutionaries and terrorists. And are the people not weak? Moscow, even Moscow sends Jewish and Socialist scoundrels to sit in the State Duma; St. Petersburg, which lives by the Tsar, is the complete enemy of the Tsar and the Milyukov scoundrels sit in the Duma.[547]

As was common among nationalist conservatives, John united Jews, revolutionaries, terrorists, liberals (such as Pavel Milyukov, the leader of the liberal Constitutional Democratic Party), 'intelligent' and pro-Western St. Petersburg, and even insufficiently traditional Moscow into a single group of the enemies of Russia.

Anti-Christian elements and Jews

Anti-Semitic sentiment was widespread among supporters of extreme Russian conservatism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including sections of the Orthodox clergy. It was a key part of the ideology of ultra-right movements better known under the generic name of the 'Black Hundreds,' which consisted of parties including the Union of the Russian People and the Union of Archangel Michael. Although many clergymen joined these organisations, others viewed them in a negative light.

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[544] "Pravednyj Ioann Kronshtadtskij. Pis'ma. Hristianam Kishineva" (May 18, 2020). Retrieved from: https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Ioann_Kronshtadtskij/pisma/ Letter 33.

[545] *Svjatoj Pravednyj Ioann Kronshtadtskij. Predsmertnyj dnevnik. 1908, maj-nojabr'* (Moscow, St Petersburg, Kronstadt: Otchij dom, 2006), pp. 60, 70.

[546] "Pravednyj Ioann Kronshtadtskij. Pis'ma. Hristianam Kishineva," Letter 39.

[547] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 795.

The spread of anti-Semitism among the clergy can be attributed to a combination of three factors or ideological trends. The first was the theological argument against Judaism as a religion, which had always been present in Christianity and was not specifically ethnically charged. In its most radical form, this argument held Jews—who were deemed to have spurned Christ—responsible for his death. This theory was common throughout Russian society and, according to some accounts, even extended to Emperor Alexander III.[548] The second factor was the growth of Russian nationalism that stemmed from the general growth of modern nationalism throughout the world during the 19th century. This developed partly as a result of a change in the official policy that Russia was a part of Europe; instead, Russia sought to promote its cultural and historical differences from the West following the revolutionary events that had taken place from the end of the 18th to the first half of the 19th centuries in France.[549] This new narrative, which emphasised Russia's 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality,' led inevitably to the diminution of the importance of the multinational nature of the Russian Empire and a reliance on the significance of the ethnic Russian people. The third factor in the growth of anti-Semitism was the incorporation of part of Poland into the Russian Empire as a result of the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 18th century, when one and a half million Jews living in the annexed territory became Russian subjects. This is how the so-called 'Jewish question' arose, as the Russian (Orthodox) population became disgruntled with the perceived economic competition it faced from the Jews. Throughout the 19th century, the government attempted to resolve the matter by introducing restrictions of varying levels of severity about where Jews could live and what they were allowed to do.[550] One should bear in mind here that Jews in the Russian Empire were defined by religion, rather than ethnicity, and a Jew (Judaist) who converted to Orthodoxy would receive full rights and was not subject to any restrictions. Any suspicion of Jews who had converted to Orthodoxy would be the result of pure anti-Semitism and was not supported by the Russian state in any way.[551]

Towards the end of the 19th century, interest in the 'Jewish question' reached a fever pitch, leading to ethnic conflict and pogroms. The first wave of pogroms took place following the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, fuelled by rumours that Jews had been involved in the

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[548] P. A. Zaiochkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse XIX stoletiia (politicheskaia reaktsiia 80-kh – nachalo 90-kh godov* (Moscow: Mysl', 1970), p. 40.

[549] Richard Wortman, "'Offitsial'naia narodnost' i natsional'nyi mif rossiiskoi monarkhii XIX veka," *ROSSIIA/RUSSIA* 3, no. 11: Kul'turnye praktiki v ideologicheskoi perspektive. Rossiia XVIII – nachalo XX veka (1999).

[550] M. B Vitenberg, "Vlast', obshchestvo i evreiskii vopros v Rossii v 80-e gody XIX veka" (Candidate of Historical Science 2008), 25; P. A. Zaiochkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia na rubezhe 1870 – 1880-kh godov* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1964), pp. 413–14.

[551] E. V. Abakumova, "Pravovoe polozhenie evreev v Rossiiskoi imperii v kontse XVIII – nachale XIX vv" (Candidate of Legal Science, 2014), pp. 6–7.

terrorist act and that an unspecified Imperial decree had called upon people to 'beat Jews.'[552] The government attempted to contain the social disorder, but these efforts were limited in nature because many high-ranking officials believed that the unrest had arisen as a result of Jews' 'detrimental' business activities, and that they had therefore brought the pogroms upon themselves. The measures that were taken were designed to address the possibility that the unrest could produce unforeseen consequences and undermine public order as a whole, just as much as they were to protect the property and lives of the Jewish population.[553]

Nikolai's stance on the 'Jewish question' did not in general diverge from the mainstream narrative and was largely in line with official policy, but his attitudes were closer to the right-wing, conservative fringe. Although many high-ranking Orthodox clergymen condemned the pogroms and did not agree with extreme, anti-Semitic interpretations of the situation, Nikolai nevertheless supported the notion that the Jews were responsible for their suffering during the pogrom. Metropolitan Makary of Moscow issued clear statements that 'Jews, as well as Russians and other tribes constituting the peoples of the Russian state, are subjects of one and the same sovereign and our fellow citizens.'[554] Metropolitan Platon (Gorodetsky, 1803–1891) of Kiev posited in 1881 that these pogroms could not be explained by the behaviour of the Jews but rather by the diminution of the Christian faith.[555] Generally, Platon evinced a liberal attitude towards non-Orthodox believers, including Jews.[556] Chapter Two detailed that Nikolai was well acquainted with Makary, while he had met Platon in Odessa in 1879 when the latter was Archbishop of Kherson, and he described Platon as 'extraordinarily kind and warm about the Mission,' even recommending two liturgical singing teachers.[557] It seems that while at that time Nikolai and Platon agreed with each other, later their views diverged.

Opinions about the 'Jewish question' were divided in society as a whole. Some newspapers and people of influence called for tougher measures against the 'foreign' Jewish element and for Jews to be fully assimilated, while others called for the easing or even removal of discriminatory measures.[558] There was even disagreement among conservative writers and commentators with whom Nikolai was personally acquainted. For instance, Ivan Aksakov considered the very 'existence of a Jewish tribe within Christian society' to be contradictory, since Christians and Jews

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[552] Vitenberg, "Vlast', obshchestvo i evreiskii vopros v Rossii v 80-e gody XIX veka," p. 40.
[553] Ibid., p. 65; V. D. Novickij, *Iz vospominanij zhandarma* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1929), p. 181.
[554] Makarij (Bulgakov), "Iz slova, proiznesennogo v Bol'shom Uspenskom sobore," *Moskovskie cerkovnye vedomosti* 21 (May 17, 1881).
[555] A. A. Petrenko, "Slovo mitropolita Platona," *Kievskie Eparhial'nye vedomosti* 7 (1882).
[556] "Misioners'kij imperativ ta projav ekumenizmu v dijal'nosti kiïvs'kogo mitropolita Platona (Gorodec'kogo)," *Gileja: naukovij visnik: zbirnik naukovih prac': istorichni nauki, filosofs'ki nauki, politichni nauki* 113, no. 10 (2016): p. 41.
[557] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 314.
[558] Vitenberg, "Vlast', obshchestvo i evreiskii vopros v Rossii v 80-e gody XIX veka," pp. 45–61.

would never be able to find common spiritual and moral ground.[559] Furthermore, as was customary among conservatives, Aksakov considered Jews to be allies of liberalism, which was destructive to Russia and that 'instead of helping unfortunate Jews to cease being what they are, i.e. detrimental to themselves and others, is trying with all its might to demonstrate that Jews are good just as they are and that they have never caused and never shall cause any kind of harm…'[560]

Fyodor Dostoevsky supported a similar theory; he spoke of the 'Jewry' in a religious and social rather than ethnic sense, mentioning the possibility of the 'Jewish idea embracing the whole of the world, as opposed to a "failed Christianity".'[561] Dostoevsky understood this idea to consist of materialist and capitalist trends in Western civilisation that would lead the world to catastrophe, and that the 'proletariat' would inevitably rise up against it and establish socialism.[562] 'Something new shall come to pass, something no one has even imagined. All of these parliamentarisms, all of the civic theories currently professed, all of the accumulated wealth, banks, science, Jews—all of this shall collapse in an instant and without trace, apart from the Jews, who, even then, shall know what to do, and shall even benefit from the situation,' he wrote in his diary in 1880.[563]

Another conservative publication, *Moskovskie vedomosti*, published by Mikhail Katkov, a supporter of autocratic rule, came out in defence of the Jews in the 1880s. It labelled the Jewish question 'anti-Jewish' and argued that the policy of introducing new restrictions on Jews would be senseless; it proposed that they be abandoned. Katkov suggested that one should not 'lunge at the Jews with raised fists' but rather 'examine carefully whether there is something in our legislation that is giving rise to a malice that is harmful to both the people and the state.'[564]

Although anti-Semitism was widespread in the government and in conservative social and religious circles in the late 19th century, it was not the only ideological norm and public figures and clergymen, including those of a conservative persuasion, were free to take any position they wished on the matter. Nikolai's adoption of a fairly radical anti-Semitic view was a personal choice that was in keeping with the general evolution of his ideas over the final period of his work.

Nikolai's attitude can be seen in a series of letters he exchanged with Bishop Nikon (Rozhdestvensky) of Vologda, whose work he held in the highest regard. Nikon also professed extreme right-wing views and was the honorary chairman of the Vologda branch of the Union of

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[559] *Obshhestvennaja hronika* 34 (1868).

[560] I. C. Aksakov, "O tom, kak by obezvredit' evreev dlja hristianskogo naselenija," *Rus'* 245 (Sept. 15, 1883).

[561] F. M. Dostoevskij. Dnevnik pisatelja. 1877. Mart. Glava vtoraja. III. Status in statu. Sorok vekov bytija. In: F. M. Dostoevsky, *Sobranie sochinenij v 15 tomah*, vol. 14 (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 1995), p. 98.

[562] D. V Grishin, "Byl li Dostoevskij antisemitom?" *Vestnik Russkogo Hristianskogo Dvizhenija* 4, no. 114 (1974).

[563] F. M. Dostoevskij. Dnevnik pisatelja. 1880 avgust. Glava tret'ja. III. Dve polovinki. In: Dostoevsky, *Sobranie sochinenij v 15 tomah*, 14, p. 463.

[564] M. N. Katkov. "Peredovaja stat'ja," *Moskovskie vedomosti* 110 (April 21, 1882). In: M. N. Katkov, *Sobranie peredovyh statej Moskovskih vedomostej. 1882* (Moscow: Izdanie S.P.Katkovoj, 1898), p. 195.

the Russian People. In a letter from April 1910, Nikolai compared Jews to insects or diseases that prey on a young organism, which is how he envisaged the Russian nation, standing ‘at the threshold of its historical life.’ Russia would grow stronger in the future, Nikolai said, and he thought the problem would be resolved in the same way as in Japan. He wrote:

> Jews would not make inroads into Japan, for example, because the Japanese have existed for more than 25 centuries and they are not a young and pliable organism but mature and strong. The Japanese are themselves able to teach the Jews about enterprise and pragmatism in all aspects of everyday life, and not the other way round; it is more likely that they would overwhelm the Jews and not tolerate a Jewish onslaught. The Russian nation is 15 centuries younger than the Japanese; that is why the Jews have a different attitude to the Russian nation.[565]

As with all members of the extreme right, Nikolai did not consider Jews to be menacing in their own right but rather as part of a union of forces that would try to harm Russia collectively, deflecting her from the path of development based on the principles of autocratic power and Orthodox Christian spirituality. Nikolai placed the Jews alongside other enemies of Russia:

> Many multitudes of insects are gnawing and shall gnaw at the soft, spongy body [of Russia] (foreigners, non-Orthodox believers, sectarians, and atheists) but over time, they shall be thrown off, the body shall be cleansed, and finally, it shall heal by its own strength, and God only knows how many centuries shall pass until the hideous sepulchral worm attacks the great, *by now* decrepit Russian organism, and tosses it into the grave.[566]

The situation in Russia, according to Nikolai, was so bad that even the Church was affected. He complained regularly in his letters that in both Japan and Russia the people being ordained into priesthood were not sufficiently talented, while the most impressive people were instead ‘going into politics, various ministries, and military service, leaving only the lower levels to the clergy,’ as a result of which ‘spiritual work is going badly and spiritual literature is mediocre.’ In order to prevent Russia’s decaying society from negatively influencing Japanese Orthodox converts, he eventually refused to send them to study in Russia, even at theological seminaries, since there they ‘turn into real demons and enemies of Christ.’[567] Such dark sentiments are clearly very different to the optimistic views of Russia and its role in the spreading of Orthodoxy throughout the world that Nikolai had held when he first set off for Japan. Russia, which Nikolai had previously considered to be the stronghold of genuine Christianity, was becoming weak and unsafe as a place for

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[565] Nikon (Rozhdestvenskij), "Svjatitel' Nikolaj Japonskij o konchine mira i grjadushhih sud'bah Rossii," p. 486.
[566] Ibid.
[567] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 4 (1899–1904), p. 212.

Orthodox education, and Nikolai had been forced to scale down his optimism at the prospect of Russia spearheading the dissemination of Orthodoxy to other countries.

It is remarkable to observe the extent to which Nikolai became antagonistic towards developments in Russia, Japan, and the West. In this third stage of the evolution of his thought, Nikolai's bitterness led him to break apart from the West-Russia-Japan triangle he had existed in for most of his life since his arrival in Japan. Sensitive and even reactive to events, news reports, and letters, Nikolai was eventually overwhelmed by history. His only consolation was his continued hope for the eventual spiritual victory of Orthodoxy, albeit at some distant time in the future.

Conclusion

This chapter has covered the significant turn that can be observed in Nikolai's outlook towards his missionary work and the prospects of Orthodox Christianity in Japan at the end of 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. This period marked Nikolai's transition to a distinctly pessimistic attitude towards his work and surroundings as a result of major changes that he perceived to be occurring in Japan and elsewhere in the world. Nikolai was a witness to the modernisation and Westernisation that was gaining momentum in Japan, but his hopes were dashed that it would steer Japanese society towards a deeper appreciation of Orthodoxy, the spiritual pinnacle of Western civilisation, and not only its technological and political aspects. Nikolai had begun to be aware that Japan had not come any closer to accepting any denomination of Christianity as its state religion, and had witnessed one of the country's traditional pagan traditions, Shintoism, take its place.

Even within Christianity in Japan, there was a clear trend towards its most 'Western' forms, as Nikolai saw them; Catholicism and various denominations of Protestantism were gaining followers faster than the Orthodox Church, whose following plateaued in the second period of his work. Nikolai did not attribute this comparative lack of success to the absence of resources at Orthodoxy's disposal but rather to a marked lack of interest in the spiritual side of this religion among the Japanese, for which there were two explanations.

First, he was convinced that Japanese people were more attracted to secular Western philosophies based on materialism. Second, he blamed traditional Japanese teachings. This was a new development in the second period of his thought because he had previously considered traditional Japanese beliefs to be a positive factor in spiritual development of the population and to have prepared it for the acceptance of Orthodox Christianity as the next and highest step in the spiritual hierarchy. Instead, Nikolai came to believe that Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism

contained materialistic elements that were more compatible with the politically oriented Protestantism and Catholicism than the deep spirituality of Orthodoxy. This negative attitude to traditional Japanese religious teachings was also present during the first period of his work, but while he initially thought that they simply contradicted Western spirituality altogether, he now deemed that they fitted well with some Western influences. According to this perspective, the Japanese appreciation of worldly, tangible things had been amplified as a result of new interactions with secular materialistic philosophies and heresies that had emerged in the West but had become popular in a number of countries including Russia. Nikolai's views on Orthodoxy also changed in this period; he concluded that Orthodoxy was not part of Western civilisation but rather stood in opposition to it.

The growing competition with the Catholic and Protestant Churches further complicated Nikolai's attitudes to these denominations. While he had previously considered them to be part of the same positive spiritual force of Christianity in Japan, he began to view them as materialistic, soulless, and in the end secular and even contradictory to the true Christian faith. More broadly, he was deeply saddened by the fact that the whole world, including Japan and Russia, seemed to be embracing pragmatism and consumerism. In was a source of deep disappointment to Nikolai that a spiritually weakened Russia could not possibly help to spread the influence of Orthodoxy throughout the world. Nikolai's hope that Japanese society would benefit from political and general cultural influence of Russia did not materialise, either. Russia and Japan even became geopolitical enemies who went to war, which had had a somewhat deleterious effect on the Mission. The war and subsequent surge of anti-Russian sentiments among the Japanese public generated a number unusual moral, financial, and other obstacles that hindered Nikolai's path to success. Another factor was the nature of social and political developments in Russia. The spread of liberal secularism along with revolutionary tendencies and the growth in various sects and heretic movements led Nikolai to believe that instead of being a bastion of Orthodoxy, Russia was even entering a phase of destructive materialism. Another hurtful development was that the philosophy of Tolstoy, which he deeply resented, had gained popularity in Japan and was drawing a number of Japanese Orthodox converts away from the Church.

This chapter has discussed the many challenges that Nikolai faced in this period that led him to reconsider many of his previous certainties and eventually abandon his long-standing dream of helping Orthodoxy to flourish in Japan. His disillusionment with the future of Russia drew him ideologically closer to the most conservative circles of Orthodox clergy and he came to the conclusion that materialism would almost certainly triumph over spirituality in the foreseeable future, before humanity would eventually come to appreciate the importance of the true faith—although this might not come to pass for hundreds if not thousands of years.

Chapter 4

Nikolai's Understanding of Church-State Relations and the Status of the Japanese Orthodox Church

This chapter examines Nikolai's views on Church-state relations and the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church. These two questions are inextricably linked because having founded and developed the Japanese Orthodox Church, Nikolai sought to build up its relations with the Japanese state, the ROC, and the Russian state, according to his understanding of the Orthodox ideal, and his views therefore had a direct bearing on his activities and the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church.

The topic of Nikolai's ideas about the status of the Japanese Church is poorly covered by the available literature, which predominantly adopts the simplistic view that Nikolai immediately tried to create a Church that was as independent from the Russian Church as possible. This view, however, relies on individual comments taken out of context. The issue is important both in itself and for those who wish to investigate how far the potential indigenisation of the Orthodox Church can be stretched, as well as Nikolai's views on the matter. According to Stephen Neill, Nikolai was determined from the start to build an Orthodox Mission that was 'entirely independent of the Russian state and its traditions.' To do so, Nikolai supposedly planned to draw laypeople into the administration of the Church 'in a way that was almost unknown in other Orthodox Churches'[568]—and yet these words refer to a time when the Orthodox Church in Russia was governed by a state body, the Holy Synod!

The Ukrainian researcher Yuliya Mazurika has noted:

[568] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 375.

Guided by the principles of early Byzantine missionary work and in line with Orthodox tradition and all that was best in Orthodox mission practice, Saint Nikolai's main and only aim was to establish a national Church that would incorporate the character traits and way of life of the Japanese people. Training clergy from the local population, introducing the Japanese native tongue for church services, and responsible self-government of the new Church are ideas that reflect a desire to ensure that the Church would penetrate the very heart of national life and become an integral part of it.[569]

The author of the most complete history of the ROC in Japan, Eleonora Sablina, has written:

> Archbishop Nikolai wanted Japanese Orthodoxy to become *the* Christian belief in Japan, just as Greek Orthodoxy is in Greece and Russian Orthodoxy in Russia. … As a result of Saint Nikolai's 50 years of work in a country that was at first hostile to Christianity, a national Japanese Orthodox Church was created, subsequently becoming a branch of world Orthodoxy.[570]

Natal'ya Sukhanova also believes that Nikolai's work marked the 'birth of a new national Church.'[571] 'Japanese Orthodoxy' and 'national Church' are dubious terms here since they completely contradict the Orthodox idea of the universal nature of the Church, and Nikolai—a highly educated clergyman—would have known that he could in no way have created a national Japanese Church in a political let alone in an ethnic sense. A new national Church in the Orthodox tradition can only be achieved by adapting certain local or national cultural traditions that do not impinge upon dogma or canons.

Finally, Sho Konishi has written about Nikolai's wish to create a Japanese 'national church' or even a type of 'Japanese Orthodoxy' that would in turn provide conditions for his students to follow schools of thought that rejected the Russian Church and the institution of the church in general:

> In line with Nikolai's understanding of Orthodoxy as a spiritual and cultural expression of a nation's people, the Orthodox Church in Japan was established to develop into Japan's national church. From its very earliest years, the new national

[569] Mazurika, "Sv. Nikolaj Japonskij i russko-japonskaja vojna 1904–1905 gg.: opyt primirenija skvoz' prizmu very," p. 169.
[570] Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, p. 15.
[571] Suhanova, *Istorija Japonskoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi v XX veke: put' k avtonomii*, p. 6.

religion in the making was called Japanese Orthodoxy (*Nihon seikyo*)[572]… Nikolai instilled in his students the idea that the Church in Japan was to be independent of the Church in Russia. Japanese Orthodoxy would be the national church, which, as a hybrid new religion, would incorporate and express Japanese cultural and historical tendencies along with universalistic aspects of Christian teachings.[573]

Interpretations such as these are based on a somewhat weak understanding of Orthodox Church doctrine and canon law, to which an Orthodox bishop such as Nikolai had to adhere. National Churches are not recognised in the Orthodox understanding of the Church. According to Hellen J. Ballhatchet:

> Nikolai was 'sympathetic towards the spiritual content of Japanese religions and seems to have had a fairly positive attitude to the adaptation of Japanese religious practices where appropriate. Nikolai also had a high opinion of the quality of his Japanese church workers and was ready to admit that the Orthodox Church in Japan had been built by them and not by foreign missionaries. It was perfectly right for their Church to be distinctly Japanese rather than a copy of Russian Orthodoxy.[574]

In reality, the situation was more complicated: Although Nikolai respected many of the Japanese priests and the people working in the Church, he was sharply critical of others and on the whole—and particularly during his third, pessimistic period—considered them to be inadequately prepared to take control of the Church for a long time to come. As a result, he regularly requested that the Holy Synod in Russia send him as many experienced Russian missionaries as possible. These arrivals, however, were few in number, not because they were deemed unnecessary but because it was difficult to send them all the way to distant Japan. Nikolai's position on the role of traditional Japanese religions changed over time, but he never supported the idea of adopting them as part of Orthodoxy since from his point of view, they were pagan and at variance with Christianity; however, it was possible to adapt certain non-religious practices that did not impinge upon dogma and the basic Orthodox tradition.

The Japanese researcher Nakamura Kennosoke has come closest to revealing Nikolai's actual position regarding this issue, having pointed out that when Nikolai said that foreigners should become superfluous as soon as possible, he did not mean that this would be soon and did not want to sever ties with Russia or stop using Russian missionaries. On the contrary, he

[572] The term that was usually used was 日本正教会, *Nihon Seikyōkai* (Japanese Orthodox Church), but even 日本正教 (*Nihon Seikyō*) can by translated both as "Japanese Orthodoxy" and as "Orthodoxy in/of Japan), alluding to its geographical location but not necessarily its difference from other "Orthodoxies."

[573] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*, p. 103.

[574] Ballhatchet, "The Modern Missionary Movement in Japan: Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox," p. 55.

frequently asked the Synod for new missionaries from Russia and thought that for at least 100 years the Japanese Church should continue to invite bishops from Russia and remain under the control of the Synod.[575]

In a Christian Orthodox theological sense, the Church is the unity of all believers, including those who have passed away "in true faith and holiness."[576] The head of the Church is Jesus Christ Himself, and in this respect, the true Church is universal (catholic); there are no divisions in such a Church on the basis of either nationality or the state. In administrative terms, the Church structure is hierarchical, whereby the highest administrative level is the autocephalous Church. From a canonical point of view, however, neither the ROC nor any other autocephalous Church is a national Church. Of course, historically, new national or state entities and their rulers have in practice sought to create independent local Churches on their territory, but such actions have had to be justified by, for example, administrative convenience or the need to maintain law and order. Furthermore, any attempt to establish a Church on national or ethnic grounds would be denounced in some autocephalous churches as the heresy of phyletism (or ethnophyletism). A resolution by the 1872 Council of Constantinople[577] stated:

> We reject and condemn tribal divisions; that is, tribal differences, national infighting, and disagreements in Christ's Church that are contrary to the teachings of the Gospel and the sacred laws of our blessed fathers on which the Holy Church is established and which while enriching human society lead us to Divine Righteousness. In accordance with the holy canons, we proclaim those who accept such a tribal division and who dare to use it as a basis for hitherto unseen tribal gatherings to be anathema to the United Catholic and Apostolic Church and to be out-and-out schismatics.[578]

If Nikolai were really trying to create a Japanese national Orthodox Church, he would have been (and perhaps even been declared) a heretic. The fact that the name of a country or people (Serbian, Georgian, Bulgarian) appears in the name of a number of local Churches does not, according to official doctrine, denote its national or state character but rather reflects the historical link between a Church and a particular people. Yet other Church names (Constantinople,

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[575] Nakamura Kennosoke, "Dnevniki Sv. Nikolaya Yaponskogo," in *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 26.

[576] Russia Orthodox Church, *The Doctrine of the Russian Church, Being the Primer Or Spelling Book, the Shorter and Longer Catechisms, and a Treatise [By G. Koniskii] On the Duty of Parish Priests, Tr. by R. W. Blackmore* (Aberdeen: A. Brown and Company, 1845), pp. 75–76.

[577] After it was captured by the Ottoman Empire, the city began to be officially called by its Turkish names Istanbul and Kostantiniyye, but the name Constantinople was still used in the Russian Empire and in the documents of Orthodox Churches.

[578] V. Teplov, *Greko-bolgarskii tserkovnyi vopros* (St. Petersburg: V. S. Blashov printery, 1889), pp. 120–21.

Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem) reflect the connection between a Church and the city in which the primate's episcopal see is located. The ROC is also called the Moscow Patriarchate; both conventions are valid.[579] Furthermore, there are other Churches that to varying degrees are dependent on local Churches; these can be autonomous, semi-autonomous, or self-governing in nature.

Nikolai's perception of the Church he was creating in Japan can be examined from both a dogmatic and an administrative point of view. The issue regarding dogma in Orthodoxy is quite clear. Orthodoxy is extremely fastidious about dogma and any deviation from it is considered to be heretical. All Orthodox Churches, regardless of their status, adhere strictly to the dogma laid down by the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed adopted in AD 381 and by the resolutions of the seven ecumenical councils that the Orthodox Churches recognise.

The main dogmas are: the Holy Trinity; the Fall of Man; the Atonement of Mankind from Sin; the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ; the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; the Ascension of Jesus Christ; the Second Coming of the Saviour and the Last Judgement; the Unity and Conciliarity of the Church and the Continuity of the Teachings and Clergy within it; Universal Resurrection and Life; the Two Natures of the Lord Jesus Christ, adopted at the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon; the Two Wills and Actions of the Lord Jesus Christ, adopted at the Sixth Ecumenical Council in Constantinople; and the dogma of the Veneration of Icons, adopted at the Seventh Ecumenical Council in Nicaea.[580] As an Orthodox priest, Nikolai could not have created a Church that diverged in any way from these dogmas or encourage believers to move away from them.

It is therefore impossible to interpret Nikolai's words about the significance of Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism in the development of Christianity in Japan (which he pronounced at several junctures during his life in Japan) as an attempt to force Christianity to 'adapt itself to the traditions and existing ethical foundations of the locality in which it was to take root' by undergoing 'a degree of indigenisation and merging with the existing foundation of religious faith in Japan.'[581]A merger with the foundations of Japanese religious faith and adaptation to prevailing ethics would inevitably have led to a revision of Orthodoxy's dogmatic and ethical foundations, creating a clear pathway to heresy. In his words, Nikolai had something completely different in mind: That Japanese religious teachings could help to hasten the adoption of the absolute truth of

[579] "Sviateishii Patriarkh Aleksii: 'Nuzhno ostavat'sia vernymi Predaniiu Tserkvi i stremit'sia luchshe poniat' drug druga'," (Jan. 17, 2001), Retrieved from: http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/77286.html.

[580] "Dogmaty Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi – vyrazhenie bozhestvennyh istin. Borisovskoe Blagochinie," http://www.blagobor.by/article/vera/dogma.

[581] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan*, p. 102.

Orthodoxy since to some extent, they had taught the Japanese people a sense of basic ethics that was compatible with Orthodoxy.

Nikolai's ideas about the relationship between the secular authorities and the Church

To come to a proper understanding of Nikolai's plans for the Japanese Orthodox Church, it is necessary to study his approach to Church-state relations as a whole. In a sermon he had planned to deliver in early 1889, when the Japanese emperor was to announce a constitution that would proclaim among other things freedom of religion, he wrote of the need to pray 'that the Lord would bestow the true faith on Japan, thus ensuring the happiness and well-being of the State.' This reflected his conviction that only the true Orthodox Faith would ensure the correct system of Church-state relations and in turn the prosperity of the country and a rich spiritual life for its inhabitants. He argued that Catholicism requires the subordination of the state to the Church and that Protestantism requires the opposite, and that both forms of Church-state relations are inappropriate and arouse disbelief that promotes the idea of a free Church in a free state. Nikolai noted, however, that 'only a person who does not believe that the soul exists independently of the body can argue that the soul should not have any relationship with the body.' From a Christian point of view, the state is not the last and highest form of human life but only a transitional form and, therefore, 'a person should keep the next life in mind just as the lower school looks to the middle school, and the middle to the higher.' 'The true attitude of the Church to the state exists only in Orthodoxy,' Nikolai concluded, 'where the Church is in the state as the soul is in the body.'[582]

Nikolai rejected both the secular model of the separation of Church and state as well as Catholic and Protestant models of Church-state relations, as he understood them. In a sermon he delivered in September 1891 in the village of Shōnai on the island of Kyushu, Nikolai told the Japanese 'pagans' gathered there that Japan needed Christianity not to accelerate its already rapid material development but rather to balance it with a deep spirituality: 'The Japanese people could, no doubt, become rich soon, but if they do not accept Christianity at the same time and do not curb their passions—which paganism has proven powerless to restrain—they will soon perish from luxury and a decline in morals.'[583] According to Nikolai, the task of religion is to contribute to a nation's spiritual rather than material development, to help it curb its passions in the same way it helps individuals to do the same. The passions represent an excessive preoccupation with material

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[582] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 311.
[583] Ibid., p. 463.

and worldly concerns and an indifference to the higher, spiritual aspects of existence and the life to come. Nikolai repeated this idea during a sermon delivered a few days later in the town of Hitoyoshi, saying that if it became wealthy, Japan would perish without Christianity because it was 'the faith that could restrain passion.' He went on to explain that a lack of faith would lead to a rise in vices as people indulged in all sorts of bodily desires at the expense of spiritual development.[584]

In his interpretation of the role of the Church in society and its relations with the state authorities, Nikolai strictly abided by the Orthodox tradition that dates back to Byzantium. His analogy that compared these relations to the relationship between the soul and the body was an almost verbatim reiteration of the ninth-century *Epanagoge*, a Byzantine law book that stated that 'the temporal power and the priesthood relate to each other as body and soul; they are necessary for state order just as body and soul are necessary in a living man. It is in their linkage and harmony that the well-being of a state lies.'[585]

The Byzantine doctrine of Church-state relations is based on the idea of a 'symphonia' or cooperation between secular and ecclesiastical authorities. These are in a state of harmony and synergy in the same way that the divine and human natures exist in Christ 'without separation, without division,'[586] as formulated in the Chalcedonian definition.[587] The preface to the sixth novel of the famous *Novels* of Justinian from the sixth century states:

> The priesthood and the Empire are the two greatest gifts which God, in His infinite clemency, has bestowed upon mortals; the former has reference to Divine matters, the latter presides over and directs human affairs, and both, proceeding from the same principle, adorn the life of mankind; hence nothing should be such a source of care to the emperors as the honor of the priests who constantly pray to God for their salvation. For if the priesthood is, everywhere free from blame, and the Empire full of confidence in God is administered equitably and judiciously, general good will result, and whatever is beneficial will be bestowed upon the human race. Therefore We have the greatest solicitude for the observance of the divine rules and the preservation of the honor of the priesthood, which, if they are maintained, will result in the greatest advantages that can be conferred upon us by God, as well as

[584] Ibid., p. 468.
[585] As quoted in: Petros Vassiliadis, "Orthodox Christianity," in *God's Rule: The Politics of World Religions*, ed. Jacob Neusner (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2003), p. 99.
[586] "Simfonija cerkvi i gosudarstva" (Aug. 4, 2019), https://thram-m.ru/stati/simfoniya-tserkvi-i-gosudarstva/.
[587] "Chalcedonian Definition," retrieved from: https://episcopalchurch.org/library/glossary/chalcedonian-definition.

> in the confirmation of those which We already enjoy, and whatever We have not yet obtained We shall hereafter acquire.[588]

Daniela Kalkandjieva has stated that it is important that the relationship described here not be understood as being between institutions in the modern sense of these terms; it is not between a specific state or Church organisation such as the Patriarchate of Constantinople or the Christian Church of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, or Jerusalem but ‘rather a unity between powers that the Byzantines defined as *sacerdotum* and *imperium.*’ This means that the Christian Church as a whole and the Church in general—which is understood in Christianity as the body of Christ, with Christ at the head—includes all those who have received salvation through faith in Christ. These include on the one hand all Christians living and dead, as well as the angels, and on the other, the ideal earthly state. Because the Eastern Roman Empire considered itself such a state, the Byzantine ‘symphonia’ included relations between the Byzantine ruler and the bishop of Constantinople but was not limited to them.

> It presupposes mutual penetration between the sacred and the civil, thus facilitating the cooperation between Church and state in the Orthodox lands. Its diarchal model also differs from the one introduced in Western Europe after the Great Schism (1054) by the Roman pope, whose attempts to establish his authority over the state brought about more distanced and formal Church-state relations in the Catholic world.’[589] In this system, the ruler was seen ‘as Christ’s vicar responsible for the organization of God’s kingdom on earth (*basileia*) as reflected in his appellation, “*basileus*”.’[590]

This construct could thus be applied to any state professing Orthodoxy and to any local Orthodox Church. When Christianity came to ancient Rus from Byzantium, the concept of ‘symphonia’ naturally arrived in tandem. Numerous medieval Russian documents make mention of it, while the concept is also enshrined in the Moscow Synod of 1667, convened in connection with the conflict between Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov and Patriarch Nikon. The Synod decided ‘that the Tsar has the advantage in civil matters and the Patriarch in ecclesiastical matters, so that the harmony of the ecclesiastical institution may be preserved intact and unchanged for all time.’[591]

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[588] "VI. How Bishops and Other Ecclesiastics Shall Be Ordained, and Concerning the Expensses of Churches," in *The Enactments of Justinian. The Novels*.

[589] Daniela Kalkandjieva, "A Comparative Analysis on Church-State Relations in Eastern Orthodoxy: Concepts, Models and Principles," *Journal of Church and State* 53, no. 4: p. 589.

[590] Deno J. Geanakoplos, "Church and State in the Byzantine Empire: A Reconsideration of the Problem of Caesaropapism," *Church History* 34 (1965): p. 385.

[591] A. V. Kartashev, *Istorija Russkoj cerkvi*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1959).

Peter the Great instituted reforms in the Church in 1721 by which the government of the Church was placed under the control of the Most Holy Synod, a body composed both of bishops and lay bureaucrats appointed by the tsar. Its *de facto* head was the Synod's chief prosecutor, a high-ranking official responsible for ensuring that the Synod's decisions conformed to state law. This does not mean, however, that the 'symphonia' was disrupted; various opinions existed in Russia on this issue and in the 19th century, many bishops who were themselves part of this system did not consider it improper.

The concept of Church-state relations formulated by Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow and Kolomna (V.M. Drozdov, 1783–1867), one of the most authoritative Church figures of the 19th century, is characteristic in this regard: 'Let the state give to God what is God's, together with its autocrat, revering the Almighty and bringing its laws into accordance with His commandments, thus helping to protect the Church.' Y.N. Panskaya, who has studied Filaret's views, summarised this scheme as 'harmony':

> The Orthodox Church, in accordance with its mystical nature exercises prayerful solicitude for the state, its success, and its well-being. The Church sanctifies the authority of civil government by preaching the Christian doctrine of authority and obedience, while it instructs citizens in their thinking and morals, thereby strengthening the state. Furthermore, the Church directs the state towards the highest goals because the Orthodox flock includes the ruling elite. Under the influence of the Church, the state brings its laws into accordance with God's commandments. It develops morally towards the level of the Church, which for its part "renders unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," prays for the Tsar and the government, inspires among its children loyalty to the Tsar, the Fatherland, and the law, and strengthens this loyalty with an oath in God's name, "assisting" the state "with teachings and prayer." The Church also provides the state with practical assistance by, for example, keeping records of the "births, marriages, and deaths of the Orthodox population".'[592]

This scheme is wholly consistent with Nikolai's views on the matter.

The Byzantine 'symphonia' was an ideal that Byzantium and other states often failed to live up to, as Church theologians and canon lawyers themselves admit. Two systems considered erroneous by Orthodox theology are noteworthy as deviations from that ideal: Papocaesarism and Caesaropapism. Orthodoxy understands Papocaesarism as a theocracy in which priests hold both secular and ecclesiastical power and rule a state or states. The power of the pope pope in Roman

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[592] U. N. Panskaja, "Obshhestvenno-politicheskie vzgljady mitropolita Moskovskogo Filareta (Drozdova): problemy teorii i praktiki." (Candidate of Historical Sciences, MGOU, 2008), p. 97.

Catholicism is the example most often cited. Some scholars have pointed to Patriarch Nikon's plan to position himself above the secular authorities as evidence of a trend towards Papocaesarism in 17th-century Russia.[593] In Caesaropapism, the Church is entirely subordinate to the state and the interests of the secular authorities. Examples include the established churches in several Protestant countries such as Great Britain, Sweden (until 2000), and others that have official state Churches. Some Russian theologians have classified the synodal system that developed in Russia as a result of reforms by Peter the Great as a form off Alexander I, and Alexander II Caesaropapism. Of course, this could not function as the official position in the 19th and 20th centuries. A more recent deviation from the ideal of a 'symphonia' is the liberal system with its separation of Church and state, in which religion is considered a personal matter that is wholly divorced from state goals.[594]

The debate over church-state relations intensified after the reforms introduced by Tsar Alexander II in the second half of the 19th century. Russian society actively discussed the possibility of Church reforms, most of which were of two types: increasing the role of the priesthood in the Synod or even its abolition and the return of the Patriarchate, and conversely, strengthening the role of the state in the Synod.[595] Having long studied Orthodox theology, Nikolai had a thorough knowledge of the Orthodox approaches to church-state relations and actively and accurately applied it in Japan. He did not write theoretical works on these issues but in his letters and diaries, he often spoke out on the debate in Russia, expressing his opinions on the positions taken by various authors, many of whom were his personal acquaintances and correspondents.

Nikolai had mixed views about the various proposals put forward by the famous religious philosopher Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900), who he met during a trip to Russia in 1880 and who had even asked to be accepted as a teacher in the Japanese Mission.[596] In a diary entry written in early 1882, Nikolai positively assessed an article entitled 'On spiritual authority in Russia' that Solovyov had recently published in the newspaper *Rus*. The article criticised the Russian Church hierarchy for not working hard enough for the spiritual unification of the Russian people, who had split into many sects. In this struggle, it said, the Church relied on coercion rather than spiritual authority and love. Solovyov described an Orthodox ideal of Church-state relations that was close to that espoused by Nikolai. According to Solovyov, such ideal relations did not exist anywhere, including in Russia. In the Western Church, he wrote, the 'papacy replaced Christ with the pope while Protestantism renounced itself.' In Eastern Christianity, the Church 'has long been burdened

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[593] "What is the Synphonia of Powers?" (May 25, 2016) https://katehon.com/article/what-symphonia-powers.
[594] Stanley S. Harakas, *Living the Faith: The Praxis of Eastern Orthodox Ethics* (Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1993), pp. 259–93.
[595] S. I. Alekseeva, "Proekty reformy Svjatejshego Sinoda vtoroj poloviny XIX veka," *Vestnik PSTGU II: Istorija. Istorija Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi* 1 (2005); G. V. Bezhanidze, "Proekty ustroenija vysshego upravlenija Russkoj Cerkvi skerediny XIX v.," *Vestnik PSTGU II: Istorija. Istorija Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi* 5, no. 48 (2012).
[596] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), pp. 241–42.

with slavery and could not show its strength,' while 'the Russian Church, in place of serving as the basis of true unity for all of Russia, is itself a cause for division and hostility.' As a result, 'in the non-Orthodox part of the Christian world, the Church and state either try to swallow each other or seek to demarcate their spheres of activity so as to have no contact with each other in complete mutual indifference, in accordance with the theory of a free Church in a free state.' According to the Russian thinker, this liberal and secular theory is 'plausible but essentially untenable and in any case, inapplicable to the government of a Christian people because a Christian government cannot be separated from Christian truth and consequently, cannot be indifferent to the Church that represents that truth on earth.' The ideal stipulates that the civil government recognise the higher authority of Christian principle and states that it:

> …inevitably wants to be guided by it in its activities, giving rise to an internal moral dependence on the Church that embodies this Christian principle. … Without a doubt, the true relationship between Church and state is one of mutual freedom. This is not a negative freedom of indifference but a positive freedom of harmonious interaction in joint service of one common goal: the establishment of a true society on earth.[597]

Nikolai referred to the opinions that Solovyov expressed in his article as 'the plain truth' and went on to sharply criticise the situation in Russia.[598] He was dissatisfied with the fact that Vasily Bazhanov,[599] the confessor of Nicholas I, Alexander I, and Alexander II, had refused to serve with the bishops 'so as not to stand below them' because he felt that this revealed the situation in the Church where, contrary to the canons, 'There is no God, neither for the Tsar's priest nor for the Tsar.' Nikolai even came to the conclusion that it was 'no wonder that they beat the tsars who put themselves beyond the laws of God!'[600] Nikolai believed that the secular authorities and clergy should obey 'the laws of God' and agreed with Solovyov that the secular authorities should not place themselves above the spiritual authorities.

A few years later, however, when Solovyov called for unity among not only all Orthodox believers but also among all Christians under the authority of a single Church, Nikolai rebuked him for what he saw as Solovyov's apparent intention to subordinate the Orthodox Church to the Vatican. That would have sacrificed the 'symphonia' for something approaching Papocaesarism (although Nikolai did not use that term). Nikolai also criticised an article titled 'A Russian Idea' that Solovyov wrote in May 1888 in which the philosopher chided Russia and the Russian Church

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[597] Vladimir Solov'ev, "O duhovnoj vlasti v Rossii," *BETA* 97, no. 37 (1997). Retrieved from: https://pravoslavnaya-obshina.ru/1997/no37/article/vladimir-solovevo-dukhovnoi-vlasti-v-rossii/.
[598] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 130.
[599] E. I. Zherihina, "V. B. Bazhanov - protopresviter i duhovnyj nastavnik," *Trudy SPbGUKI* 184 (2009).
[600] Ibid.

for their nationalist tendencies. In the article, Solovyov called Russian religious nationalism 'a new idolatry' and 'an epidemic of madness' and asserted that the real unity of the Christian family 'cannot exist in a proper and enduring way without a common father or someone who can take his place.'[601] Both Nikolai and Solovyov put spiritual Christian goals above secular ones, but Nikolai considered patriotism to be a natural secular feeling that the Church should not reject, but rather complement and elevate by filling it with spirituality. Naturally, he felt that by criticising Caesaropapist tendencies in Russia, Solovyov leaned towards the other extreme of Papocaesarism, which would benefit Catholicism, and he called the philosopher's article 'an impudent and shameless abuse of Russia' that boosted the Catholics in Japan.[602] At the same time, he expressed the opinion that Japan needed Orthodoxy because having started along the path of 'mixing faith with politics' that is characteristic of Catholicism, Orthodox Byzantium 'had become corrupted, weakened and ruined.' Nikolai evidently hoped that Japanese Orthodoxy would avoid the mistakes of Byzantine and Russian Orthodoxy: 'If in Russia they mix faith and politics, does it mean Orthodoxy is bad? Japan needs Orthodoxy and nothing more; no political shades of faith, neither Russian nor Roman.'[603] Elsewhere in his diary in this period, Nikolai referred to Solovyov as a 'semi-renegade' and who advocated 'Catholicism or the Papacy in its wretched sense.'[604] Nikolai advocated following the Orthodox ideal of the 'symphonia' in Church-state relations according to which the two coexist, each focusing on its own sphere. He ascribed the problems that countries such as Russia were experiencing to their departure from this ideal, and it was this ideal that Nikolai intended to implement in Japan.

Nikolai did not advocate eliminating the synodal system and replacing it with the Patriarchate because he believed that the latter tended towards Papocaesarism and the former did not violate Church canons. In this, he was in agreement with senior leaders of the ROC of the time, who were unable to take any other position due to their dependence on state authorities. During the years in which Tsar Alexander II developed his reforms, Archbishop Filaret of Moscow expressed the opinion that there was little difference in the status of the Patriarch and the highest-ranking member of the Holy Synod and that the main problem facing the Church was that the secular authorities lacked an understanding of their connection with the spiritual authorities and of the respect due to them.[605]

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[601] Vladimir Solov'ev, "O duhovnoj vlasti v Rossii. Pravoslavnaja obshhina," *Vehi* (1999). Retrieved from: http://www.vehi.net/soloviev/russianidea.html.
[602] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 314.
[603] Ibid.
[604] Ibid., pp. 290, 303, 418.
[605] Arhiepiskop Tverskoj i Kashinskij Preosvjashhennyj Savva, ed., *Sobranie mnenij i otzyvov Filareta, mitropolita Moskovskogo i Kolomenskogo, po uchebnym i cerkovno-gosudarstvennym voprosam*, 5 vols., vol. 4 (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naja tipografija, 1885–1888), pp. 237, 45.

This position was held by both the Church bishops and by several famous Russian thinkers who felt that the Patriarchate tended towards Catholic Papocaesarism. For example, the philosopher and Slavophile Yury Samarin (1819–1876) stated that Peter the Great's reforms were a necessary response by the state to the growing political influence of Catholic doctrine in the late 17th and early 18th centuries concerning the role of the Church. He opined that they were directed against the state and, therefore, that 'the destruction of the Patriarchate in Russia was necessary.'[606] Even those who advocated the introduction of synodal rule often spoke in support of greater Church independence from the state because they thought that the departure from the Orthodox ideal lay not in the system itself but rather in the way the state, working within that system, tried to appropriate some of the authority of the Church.

There was considerable sentiment in favour of reforming the synodal system and calls for the convention of the Council of Bishops or even the restoration of the Patriarchate became increasingly widespread in the second half of the 19th century. Although for various political reasons it was difficult for senior-ranking bishops to demand the restoration of the Patriarchate, the idea gradually found its way into the public debate taking place on the pages of magazines and newspapers.[607] Nikolai's views on these issues were not a simple performance of this duty, especially because he expressed then in his personal diaries; he formulated his position based on his observations of events taking place in Russia, Japan, and the West.

In general, Nikolai advocated reform of the Synod and broader autonomy for the Church. In October 1888 he claimed that 'the transformation of Church governance in Russia is inevitable!'[608] In his argument for the unity of Orthodox Churches but against unity with Catholics, Nikolai stated that the Russian Church should convene its Council (*Sobor*) regularly and if not as often as called for in the Apostolic Canons, then at least once every five to seven years to discuss Church issues.[609] At the same time, he spoke out against an Ecumenical Council of all Christians because in his opinion, the only purpose of such a Council would be to join the other Christian denominations to the true Orthodox Church, but Catholics and Protestants were not yet ready to repent publicly and be accepted into the Orthodox Church. Nikolai offered several suggestions for the reformation of the Synod to make the Church more comprehensible to ordinary believers such

[606] Stefan Javorskij and Feofan Prokopovich, *Sochinenija U. F. Samarina*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Tipografija A. I. Mamontova, 1880), p. 245.

[607] I. V. Lobanova, "Vosstanovlenie patriarshestva v vosprijatii Pravoslavnoj Ierarhii Rossii na rubezhe XIX-XX vv." (Candidate of historical sciences Russian Academy of Sciences, 2006), pp. 53–139.

[608] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 296.

[609] Apostolic Canons or Ecclesiastical Canons of the Same Holy Apostles, a fourth-century Syrian Christian text, requires a synod of bishops to be held twice per year. The Eastern Orthodox Church believes in its divine inspiration. (p. 502). *The Ecclesiastical Canons of the Same Holy Apostles*. Retrieved from: https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf07/anf07.ix.ix.vi.html

as the creation of a department that would assign greater attention to missionary work and the transformation of the spiritual and educational department because the Theological Academy 'should bring research closer to life and not write on subjects of no use to anyone.' He also suggested translating Church service literature into Russian, despite the objections of Old Believers.[610]

At the same time, Nikolai saw no need to go further by, for example, instituting Patriarchate that in his opinion would be no more canonical than governing by Synod. In a diary entry dated December 1898, Nikolai like Samarin openly expressed doubts as to whether the Patriarchate was canonical: 'It did not exist during the time of the Apostles or during the first three centuries. It appeared as a necessity but not as something immutable, or else the Eastern Patriarchs would not have permitted us to establish the Holy Synod. And the Synod was established at the appropriate time.'[611]

Nikolai rebuked Patriarch Nikon for 'high-handedness' and for 'deranging the Church' and claimed that Peter the Great 'was wise to ensure the elimination of one-person rule of the entire Church.' At the same time, he noted that 'now is the time to continue the transformation of Church governance without violating the canons in any way' because 'the current Synod is not enough to govern the Church well.' Without offering a specific plan, he outlined several measures: Enable the entire Church to vote for bishops who would comprise and have permanent membership in the Synod; make the Moscow Metropolitan the chairman of the Synod; ensure that all Synod members meet on specific days to decide the most important questions; and divide the 12 Synod members into working groups dealing with Russian Church affairs, missionary work within Russia, foreign missionary work, and educational work among the Orthodox.[612] The purpose of these reforms was clear: To transfer authority in the Synod from appointed officials to bishops elected by the Church.

It is interesting that Nikolai had these thoughts after reading a letter from one of the main supporters of the return of the Patriarchate, Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky, 1863–1936), a future candidate for the rank of Patriarch. That letter cited the will of Bishop Mikhail (Gribanovsky, 1856–1898), which called for the 'establishment of the Church on canonical principles'—that is, the restoration of the Patriarchate. Nikolai response was to ask, 'But has the Church really moved away from these [principles]?'[613]

[610] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 296.
[611] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 824.
[612] Ibid.
[613] Ibid., pp. 824–825.

According to Ruslan Savchuk, Nikolai was unique in recognising that the Church played a major role in society by encouraging the public to act patriotically and in his understanding of the different nature and specific tasks of the Church and state.[614]

Nikolai's plans for the Orthodox Church in Japan

In the 1880s, Nikolai formulated in detail his vision for the future role of the Orthodox Church in Japan based on his views of the role Orthodoxy played in the state in general and in Russia in particular. He also hoped that Orthodoxy would become the main Japanese religion and that the Japanese government and emperor would accept it as such. Drawing on the idea of a 'symphonia,' it was Nikolai's fervent wish that Orthodoxy come to serve as the spiritual basis of Japan's national development. At first glance, such a dream might seem unrealistic, given that many people—including Nikolai himself—doubted whether such a system in its purest form was even possible in Byzantium and Russia. Nonetheless, Nikolai initially hoped that conditions in Japan would correspond to the Orthodox ideal and tried to convince the Japanese authorities that such an approach was necessary, as can be seen in his numerous diary entries from that period.

Nikolai constantly monitored attitudes to Christianity in Japanese government circles, reading about the latest developments and conversing with government officials. Of particular note are his conversations with Soejima Taneomi, an influential Japanese statesman who had received a Protestant Christian education.[615]

As Russo-Japanese relations worsened, Nikolai began to realise that his dreams for the future would not bear fruit, at least not in his lifetime. He believed that the triumph of Protestantism in Japan would be 'the greatest anomaly'[616] because a country should adopt a faith to save souls and not for the sake of state goals 'that are all small and narrow compared to the goals of faith.'[617]

The differences between Nikolai's official statements and his diary entries concerning the relative prospects of Protestantism and Orthodoxy in Japan do not indicate that he was trying to deceive anyone or hide something. A better assessment is that they reflect two competing tendencies: On the one hand, they show the optimism of a sincere Christian who believes that thanks to the Providence of an all-merciful God, truth will ultimately prevail, even if miraculously, and on the other, the realism of a practical missionary and expert on Japanese society. In his official speeches, Nikolai leaned more towards the first tendency because he felt it necessary to infect his

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[614] Savchuk, *Problemy vzaimootnoshenij cerkvi i obshhestva rubezha XIX–XX vekov v osmyslenii ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo: monografija*, p. 62.
[615] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 283.
[616] Ibid., p. 311.
[617] Ibid., p. 267.

listeners with his optimism and thereby contribute to his own cause of spreading Orthodoxy. He allowed himself to give more vent to his sceptical thoughts in his private diaries that he did not intend for public distribution.

I showed in Chapter Three that from the 1880s onward, Nikolai thought that the growing presence of Western teachings was the main obstacle to the spread of Orthodoxy in Japan because they had led to a revival of the most negative elements of traditional Japanese culture and combined with them, creating a single trend that hindered the advance of Orthodoxy. Of the various Western religions he considered Protestantism to be the most dangerous competitor, especially its liberal forms, which were most likely to adapt to and even inflame Japanese nationalism. This raises the question as to the extent to which Orthodoxy could adapt to Japanese tradition and become an integral part of Japanese culture; in other words, the extent to which it could be indigenised in Japan.

The Orthodox approach to missionary activity and preaching in general is linked closely to the idea of synergy, according to which salvation is only possible when man exercises his free will to cooperate with God. As James Payton put it, the doctrine of synergy ('working together') is 'a distinctive element in the Orthodox understanding of how the Holy Spirit works deification within us.' He goes on to say:

> This working together is the collaboration of God's grace and a person's will. While Western Christianity has argued about the alternatives of 'monergism' and 'synergism'—that is, the question of whether salvation is accomplished only by God or by God and human beings cooperating—this issue did not create tension within Orthodoxy. Eastern Christendom has not focused on the issues of guilt, debt, questions of merit and so on, that flowed from the juridical approach of the Christian West and made the monergism/synergism issue a matter of concern. Orthodoxy insists on synergy, but Orthodox teaching approaches the question of divine grace and human will working together from quite a different perspective'.[618]

In the Eastern Orthodox view of synergism, 'human beings always have the freedom to choose, in their personal (gnomic) wills, whether to walk with God or turn away from Him' but 'what God does is incomparably more important than what we humans do.[619]

From this point of view, it is not enough for the Church to work unilaterally; a person must work on himself in order to change and improve and ideally, become sinless by going through the process of Theosis or deification, which unites him with God. In the willingness of the Protestant

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[618] James R. Payton Jr., *Light from the Christian East: An Introduction to the Orthodox Tradition* (Westmont: InterVarsity Press, 2010), p. 151.

[619] Ibid.

Church to pander to its audience by simplifying the understanding of Holy Scripture and watering down its correct meaning by allowing everyone to interpret it as they pleased, as well as by simplifying dogma and ritual Orthodox theologians saw an indulgence of sin and a marked lack of the desire to stimulate people towards self-improvement by focusing their will in the right direction.

Nikolai understood that Orthodoxy is much less able to adapt in this way but in keeping with Orthodox tradition, he believed that it was much more important for his Mission to preserve the purity of the faith than to try to recruit more people in the pursuit of popularity. For example, in a conversation with Anglican Bishop William Awdry (1842–1910) in July 1898, he said that the Orthodox 'have no hopes that any Japanese will become bishops soon (because we must uphold the dogmas and canons more strictly than the Protestants).'[620]

Nikolai harboured doubts about the success of Protestantism in Japan because he believed that it was based on the principle of 'believe whatever you want' and not on true faith. 'The Protestants fear dogma almost as much as the devil fears incense,' Nikolai wrote in December 1907:

> …but in the same way that the devil does not prevent the incense from ascending to God, neither does the Protestant prevent the dogma from standing and shining. This means that their successes are ephemeral, will soon pass, and must eventually give way to other successes, if the Japanese are worthy before the court of God to accept the true teachings of Christ about the Holy Trinity, God the Saviour, the miraculous signs of the redeeming Power of God, and so on.

According to Nikolai, 'if the gates to the Orthodox Church were opened just as wide,' many extra people would wander in and later leave, as would happen with Protestantism.[621]

Of course, even in Orthodox Churches, certain elements of indigenisation can be used in rituals and services but even with this attribute, Orthodoxy adopts a much stricter line than many other religions. Nikolai understood that a certain degree of indigenisation is possible and in this, he acted in line with the tradition of Orthodox missionary work. This kind of adaptation occurred, for example, when the Bible and liturgical texts were translated into Japanese, in the clothing and conduct of the clergy and the faithful during church services, in the style of icon-painting, and the type of calendar used. In 1880, Nikolai considered asking the Synod for permission to celebrate fixed religious holidays in the Japanese Church according to the Gregorian calendar, which had been used in Japan since 1873 but was not used by the ROC, because according to the Gregorian calendar, the New Year holiday would otherwise fall during a fasting period, which most believers

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[620] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 3 (1893–1899), p. 752.
[621] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 340.

would not observe.[622] This was not a dogmatic problem and later, several Orthodox churches switched to a Revised Julian calendar that aligns its dates with the Gregorian calendar until February 28, 2800.

The translation of religious texts has always posed a problem since certain languages do not have terms for concepts or facts referred to in original texts written at a particular time and in a particular place. Galina Besstremyannaya, who has devoted a special study to the translation of Christian texts into Japanese, noted that Nikolai and his assistant Pavel Nakai (Nakai Tsugamaro, 1855–1943) opted for semantic rather than literal translations, adapting the text to Japanese reality. For instance, 'bread' in the Lord's Prayer is replaced by the Chinese character denoting 'food' or 'grain' (*kate*); 'greet the house' in Christ's farewell discourse to the apostles is replaced by the phrase 'ask about their health' (*an-o tou*); and 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness' is replaced by 'the voice of one crying in the fields.'[623] There is nothing extraordinary in this kind of linguistic indigenisation, a practice long used by Russian missionaries. In a similar fashion, Innokenty of Alaska (Innokenty Veniaminov), the Enlightener of the Aleuts, replaced the term 'bread' with 'fish' since the Aleuts did not eat bread and fish was their staple food.

Nikolai argued that the top priority in the translation of liturgical texts was to preserve their 'crystal clarity of thought' and to achieve this, he deemed it permissible to guess at the meaning of certain incomprehensible passages in the Church's Slavonic texts or to omit some words entirely. He admitted that scholars might accuse him of inaccuracy but believed that it was more important that believers not accuse him of producing incomprehensible texts.[624] Such indigenisation of the text did not contradict Orthodox principles because the translations required only slight alterations to make them more understandable. It is characteristic of Nikolai that he considered it extremely important that believers understand the texts and felt that the best way to achieve this was to translate the Russian liturgical service from Church Slavonic into literary Russian.[625] Most Russian bishops did not share his opinion, but the idea was not considered non-canonical.

A good example of concurrent indigenisation and Western influence is Japanese Orthodox icon-painting, such as the works of the most famous Orthodox artist of the time, Irina Yamashita (Yamashita Rin, 1857–1939). Yamashita studied European art in Japan and icon-painting in Russia. Although most of her works were copies of European or Russian pieces, she 'flattened the faces of the original images, making them close to the Japanese physiognomy, and lightened and

[622] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 216.
[623] Besstremjannaja, *Hristianstvo i biblija v Japonii*, 1, p. 183.
[624] Pis'mo arhiepiskopu Tomskomu i Barnaul'skom Makariju. 30 nojabrja/13 dekabrja 1906 g. In: *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo*, 2, p. 529.
[625] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 296.

softened the colours, using light as a means of expression and favouring white.' [626] While one can see clear indigenisation in the way facial features are changed in Yamashita's works, in the opinion of certain researchers, the changes in colour reflect the influence of Japanese impressionism; i.e. a form of indigenisation that was in alignment with a new Japanese style that had emerged earlier under the influence of a Western style of painting. As Yamanashi Emiko concludes, it appears that Yamashita tried to make her icons more familiar to Japanese worshippers, whether that be because of official suggestions by the ROC in Japan, private advice from certain influential priests there, or some decision on her own part. Yamashita also sometimes wrote Japanese texts on the icons to explain the subject matter.[627]

There are various differences between individual Orthodox Churches concerning the acceptability of variations in the areas listed above, but this does not in any way mean that adaptations to local interpretations of ethics are possible, much less mergers with local religious traditions. There appears to be no truth on these grounds to the scholarly accusations that Nikolai wished to form an independent Orthodox Church in Japan. Neither can the ordination of a large number of Japanese priests be seen as an evidence of Nikolai's wish to create a Japanese Orthodox Church that was administratively independent from the ROC and different from it in terms of doctrine.[628] Nikolai was eager to step up the ordination of Japanese priests since he was forced to do so by his circumstances because despite his continuous requests, the Synod in St. Petersburg was reluctant to increase the size of his Mission significantly through the addition of Russian priests, which would have required a considerable amount of funding. The desire to ordinate local priests does not contradict any Christian doctrine (including Orthodox), according to which 'there is neither Jew nor Greek' (Gal. 3, 28)—in other words, within Christianity, nationality is irrelevant.

Nikolai was dealing with other concerns at this time. As Japanese nationalism grew, calls arose among Japanese Christians to 'send home' foreign missionaries because the Japanese thought that they were as well versed in religious matters as foreigners. In the summer of 1905, Nikolai wrote: 'The Japanese Protestant press sharply criticises their missionaries, openly declares that the Japanese have outgrown many of them in education and understanding, and advises them to return home without delay and do something more useful than the fruitless occupation of preaching here.' Nikolai considered that the Catholics were in the same position and the Japanese could very easily say to them: 'We have outgrown you. Wouldn't it be better for you to return

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[626] Emiko Yamanashi, "Chapter 11: Yamashita Rin and the Development of Icon Painting in Meiji Japan," in *A Hidden Fire: Russian and Japanese Cultural Encounters, 1868-1926*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 148–49.
[627] Ibid.
[628] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual*, p. 103.

home?’ In this respect, Orthodoxy was in a better position; Nikolai’s tactic of developing local priests meant that among the Orthodox there were ‘no missionaries, no one to point the way home for.’[629] The policy of ordaining Japanese citizens allowed a Russian bishop to continue to head the mission and the Japanese Orthodox Church as a whole for several decades after Nikolai’s death—until 1940, when Nikolai’s successor Metropolitan Sergius (Tikhomirov) had to resign as a result of the adoption of the Religious Organisations Law, which gave the government the right to appoint Orthodox leaders.[630]

The presence of few Russian priests in the Japanese Orthodox Church generated a different problem for Nikolai: Would the Japanese priests maintain the purity of the faith, without the guidance of the mother Church? To understand his approach to this problem, it is necessary to consider the larger and rather confusing question of the administrative status of the Orthodox Church in Japan at that time. As the head of the Russian Orthodox ecclesiastical Mission, from the very beginning of his tenure Nikolai used the terms ‘Japanese Church’ or ‘Japanese Orthodox Church’ fairly often, both in his diaries and in official correspondence with the Synod. The meanings of these terms as he used them can be understood only by identifying all the various meanings of the word ‘Church,’ which in the Orthodox usage has many senses: It can mean the Church in the broadest sense, as in the unity of all Christians who have ever lived, headed by Christ; it can mean the Orthodox Church as a whole, consisting of followers alive today or an aggregate of all local churches and the Orthodox Church’s separate constituent parts (local or autonomous churches); it can mean a particular autocephalous or autonomous Church (for example, the ROC); it can mean the aggregate of the faithful in a certain country or region (for instance, the Orthodox Church in Africa); or it can simply mean the building in which religious services are held.

The terms ‘Japanese Church’ and ‘Japanese Orthodox Church’ (of course, Nikolai never used the term ‘Japanese Orthodoxy’) first appeared in Nikolai’s diaries in 1879–80 while he was staying in Russia. For example, on January 17, 1880, he noted that he had asked for the Tsesarevna (Grand Duchess)[631] to be informed that a gift of hers ‘would be kept by the Japanese Church like a sacred relic.’[632] This same term also appears in official correspondence. For instance, Nikolai complained in a letter to Metropolitan Isidor of St. Petersburg in 1879 that the ‘Japanese Church’ was in a state of ‘extreme material paralysis.’ [633] Nonetheless, he signed all letters using the title of the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Japan. That the use of the term was not out of

[629] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 251.
[630] Hans Martin Krämer, "Beyond the Dark Valley: Reinterpreting Christian Reactions to the 1939 Religious Organizations Law," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 38, no. 1 (2011): p. 186.
[631] Maria Feodorovna (1847–1928), known before her marriage with future Emperor Alexander III as Princess Dagmar of Denmark.
[632] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 1 (1870–1880), p. 141.
[633] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo,* vol. 3, p. 352.

the ordinary is confirmed in a report to the Synod published in the same year by the Synod's Ober-Procurator Konstantin Pobedonostsev, who wrote about the composition of the 'Japanese Orthodox Church' that 'consisted of six Japanese priests; 78 catechists and assistants; 38 missionary districts; and 5,377 Christians.' Subsequently, he wrote that the Church Council had been attended by 'three missionaries and five Japanese priests,' among others.[634]

We can conclude that official channels of the Russian Church, including Nikolai, referred to the Japanese Church as an aggregate of the Japanese Orthodox faithful, distinguishing them from the Mission staff, who were Russian subjects. Nikolai considered himself to be both the head of the Russian Orthodox Mission, whose affairs he dealt with personally, and head of the Japanese Church, whose affairs were handled at Church Councils (in which local priests participated) in which Nikolai's opinion was not always pivotal since decisions were taken collectively.[635] Following the appointment of Sergius (Tikhomirov) as Bishop of Kyoto and Vicar Archbishop of Japan in 1908, Nikolai considered himself to have been inducted into the Japanese Church to which he had been 'bestowed' by the Holy Synod.[636] There are many documents that testify to the accuracy of this interpretation. For example, in 1888, as head of the Mission Nikolai sent a salutatory letter to Metropolitan Platon of Kiev and Galicia, congratulating him on the 900th anniversary of the adoption of Christianity in Rus' and outlining his vision of missionary work. The letter was accompanied by a separate salutatory address from the Japanese Orthodox Church, signed by 105 Japanese Christians including clergy, catechists, and parish representatives. The Russian priests and staff of the Mission did not sign the address since they were involved with the Mission, rather than the Japanese Church.[637] Furthermore, in a letter to the Mount Athos Schemamonk Dinasty, Nikolai thanked him both personally and on behalf of the whole Japanese Church.[638] One could say that in Nikolai's understanding, the Russian priests constituted the mission, Japanese believers, staff, and priests constituted the Japanese Church, and Nikolai himself was head of both the Mission and the Church (after 1908, Sergius [Tikhomirov] was also a bishop in both the Mission and the Church).

This is also confirmed in numerous comments Nikolai made in his diaries in which he expresses regret over the poverty of the Japanese Church and the reluctance of believers to donate sufficient funds, which would have decreased its dependence on the Mission. 'For some time, almost the full financial burden of the Japanese Church has fallen on the Mission and at times, it

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[634] Ibid., p. 356.

[635] Nikolai (Ono Shigenobu), "The establishment of the Japanese Orthodox Church under Archbishop Nikolai (Kasatkin) from 1877 to 1891."

[636] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo* 2, p. 253.

[637] *Sobranie trudov ravnoapostol'nogo Nikolaja Japonskogo* 3, pp. 189–91.

[638] Ibid., p. 277.

is distressing to ponder that this situation might continue for a very long time to come,' he wrote in June 1882.[639] At least until the start of the Russo-Japanese War, Nikolai did not support the Japanese Church's administrative independence from the Russian Church but rather advocated financial self-sufficiency, which would have removed a great financial burden from the Mission and by the same token, from the Russian Synod.

The situation changed somewhat in light of the deterioration of relations between Japan and Russia and the outbreak of war between the two countries. Fearing persecution by the government and nationalists, many Japanese believers and clergymen asked Nikolai to clarify the status of the Japanese Church and the essence of its relationship with the Russian Church, some even begging him to support the Japanese Church's independence (*dokuritsu*). Nikolai's diaries show that before 1904, *dokuritsu* was only interpreted as financial self-support but in the summer of 1904, it is first mentioned as a demand for administrative independence, put forward by the unfrocked hieromonk and religious writer Pavel Niitsuma (Niitsuma Keiji).[640] Against this background, Nikolai was probably concerned about the fate of the Mission and had started to talk publicly about full administrative independence for the Japanese Church.

A memorandum Nikolai wrote for Petr Ishikawa (Ishikawa Kisaburo, 1864–1932), the editor of *Seikyō-Shimpo*—a journal published by the Mission—is of great interest. In April 1909, Ishikawa was summoned to the Japanese Home Ministry's Department of Religion for a discussion and was questioned about how the Japanese Orthodox Church related to the Russian Church. The memorandum merits being quoted in full:

By decree of Russia's Holy Synod:

1. In 1870, the Japanese Mission was established to preach the teachings of Christ in Japan, in accordance with the fulfilment of the Saviour's command to preach the Gospel to all peoples (Matthew 28; 19, 20).
2. In March 1880, the head of the Mission was made a bishop for the Japanese Church's convenience since until that moment, those who were chosen by the Japanese Church to enter the priesthood had to travel to Russia to be ordained.
3. On March 28 [April 10] 1906, the head of the Japanese Church, the Bishop, was elevated to the rank of Archbishop and named Archbishop of Japan. This means that the Holy Synod has already recognised the Japanese Church as independent. To this day, it has been run by the Bishop who was Bishop of Reval [Tallinn], Vicar to the independent Bishop of Riga, and who was sent temporarily from Russia for this purpose.

[639] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 2 (1881–1893), p. 233.
[640] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 109.

4. The Japanese Orthodox Church is run according to the 'Rules of the Holy Apostles and Holy Ecumenical and Local Church Councils.' A Japanese translation of the book of rules has long been in existence.
5. The Japanese Church has nothing to do with the individual rules of the Russian Church in exactly the same way as the Russian Church has nothing to do with the individual rules of the Greek Church and the Jerusalem Church, among others.
6. While the Japanese Church does not have the means to pay its staff, the upkeep of the Church is as follows: half comes from the Holy Synod and half from the Orthodox Missionary Society in Moscow.[641]

Interestingly, this document claims that the appointment of Nikolai as the Archbishop of Japan by the ROC meant the latter's recognition of the independence of the Japanese Orthodox Church. However, Nikolai knew only too well that in an Orthodox Church, the title of bishop has no direct connection to the status of the Church. Formally, a fully independent (autocephalous) Church can be headed by any bishop, archbishop, metropolitan, or patriarch and in the canonical sense, they all belong to the level of eparch (archiereus). The heads of some autocephalous Orthodox Churches are called archbishops but in others, including the ROC, archbishops and metropolitans are subordinate to the patriarch and usually head relatively large dioceses. The process of granting autocephalous status is extremely complicated and had nothing to do with Nikolai's promotion to Archbishop. Granting him the title of Archbishop of Japan only meant that from the point of view of the ROC, Japan was no longer seen as part of the diocese of Riga and had instead become a diocese in its own right. However, it still formed part of the canonical territory of the ROC.

Nikolai's claim that his promotion to Archbishop entailed full independence from the ROC was surely not a mistake caused by his poor knowledge of canon law. The only reasonable explanation is that he wanted to protect the Church from attacks by nationalists.

Nikolai gave a similar response to questions that were put before priests who participated in the first assembly of Orthodox believers that was timed to coincide with the Council of 1909. In answer to a question as to whether the Japanese Church was a branch of the Russian or the Ecumenical Church, Nikolai remarked: 'One could say that ever since the Archbishop of the Japanese Church was appointed, the Japanese Church has been a branch of the Ecumenical Church. If an Ecumenical Church Council were to be formed, then of course it would include an independent representative of the Japanese Church.' When asked if control over the Japanese Church was to be freed from the Russian authorities, he stated that 'the Orthodox Church in Greece,

[641] Ibid., pp. 516–517.

in Russia, and in Japan is governed by the Canonical Rules of the Holy Apostles and Holy Ecumenical and Local Church Councils and in this sense, the Japanese Church is completely independent from Russia.'[642]

At the same time, he clarified that Russian money, both governmental and private, was being donated to fund the Mission, rather than the Japanese Church and that as the head of the Mission, he had the right to administer the funds, but would 'share the right with the Council of Priests when consulting them on setting the pay of Church employees.' Another assertion by Nikolai was that 'Russian money does not compel the Japanese Church into subordination to the Russian Church.' Also of interest is Nikolai's remark that as head of the Japanese Church, he had 'not once in the course of 40 years asked the Russian Synod for advice on how to run the Church.'[643] The extant documents illustrate the relationship between the Mission and the Japanese Church that Nikolai presented to the Japanese authorities and religious believers. This idea can be summarised in several points: 1) The Japanese Church and the Russian Orthodox Mission were two different entities; 2) the Japanese Church, which consisted of religious believers and Japanese priests, was administratively completely independent from the Russian Church and the Russian government. Ideally, it should switch to complete financial independence; and 3) the Mission, which consists of priests and other Russian and Japanese staff, was subordinate to the Russian Church and the Holy Synod and financed by them. As head of the Mission, Nikolai would of course have been in contact with the Synod, sending it annual reports and requesting permission for various proposed activities. All funds sent from Russia were intended for the use of the Mission and as head of the Mission, Nikolai administered the funds. He was very specific about how these funds were used—'for the upkeep of priests and preachers, for schools, for printing, and for buildings.'[644] However, as primate of the Japanese Church and in consultation with the Japanese Church's Council of Priests, he allocated part of the funds to the Church for its needs. The Church was financed through the Church Property Society (*Seikyo-okuwai iji saidan*),[645] which Nikolai had created and registered as a legal entity in line with Japanese law. Part of the Mission's funds and property were transferred to the Society, and Nikolai called on Japanese believers to transfer their donations there.

It is clear from his diaries why Nikolai adopted this approach. The memorandum to Ishikawa was intended to provide answers to the Japanese Home Ministry, which was irritated by the rumours about the dependence of Japanese Orthodox Christians on Russia and demanded proof

[642] Ibid., p. 546
[643] Ibid.
[644] Ibid., p. 546.
[645] Ibid., p. 802.

that there was no such dependence. Nikolai was here trying to defend the Japanese Church and his responses to the faithful show that his intention was to prevent Russian funds from being squandered. Diary entries from this time reveal his displeasure with a convocation of Japanese Christians that had been called at Nikolai's behest; instead of solving important Church-related matters, participants had immediately tried to gain access to the Mission's funds on the grounds that the Japanese Orthodox Church was legally independent from the ROC and therefore from the Mission—a subject about which he had spoken many times. Nikolai sought to draw a clear line between the Church and the Mission, to which all the Russian funds belonged; he agreed that the Church was independent, just as they wished, but that also meant that they could not administer the Russian money but had to collect it themselves, gathering more than was customary for members of an independent Church. He described a speech by one representative of the faithful, Alexander Sugiyama, as 'empty, idle chatter' and to other 'power-grabbing' delegates as 'bad Christians,' even branding one of them a 'traitor to his vows to serve the Church' and another 'an empty-headed braggart.'[646] In his overall summation of the convocation he wrote: 'The convocation of Christians in support of the Council was a fruitless and ghastly first experience! They vowed to revitalise the Church, but nothing came of it.'[647] Nikolai was so disappointed in those who represented the faithful that he spat out 'an angry remark and sent the Japanese priests who defended them out of his room, while Bishop Sergii actually burst into tears and "went off to a different room, offended by the Christians".'[648] It is logical to assume that Nikolai was compelled to give different responses on behalf of the Mission and of the Church but in practice, both the Mission and the Church were led by the same people and it was a complicated matter to separate their powers in his capacity as heads of both the Church and the Mission.

There are indications that Nikolai's real views on this matter were rather different to those he presented to Japanese officials. An analysis of his private diary notes reveals that Nikolai did not actually consider the Japanese Church to be as independent as an autocephalous Orthodox Church or even functional as a separate body from the Mission. In March 1904, Nikolai wrote a response to a generally positive article on the Japanese Orthodox Church in the Japanese journal *Jidai Shicho* by Anesaki Masaharu, whom he knew. Nikolai stated that independence for the Japanese Church was not yet feasible because first, Japanese believers were still unable to fund the upkeep of priests and preachers or pay for other Church needs and second, because it was:

[646] Ibid., pp. 544–546.
[647] Ibid.
[648] Ibid., p. 545.

…still too early for the Japanese Church to become an independent sister of other Churches. This is not as easy as he [Anesaki] thinks because it requires the consent of all other Churches; they need to recognise their sister church and deem her worthy of taking her place among them. Who knows when the Japanese Church will achieve such an honour![649]

Nikolai worked incessantly to convince Japanese Orthodox believers of the need to finance the Church and that this was important beyond the material point of view. During a church service in April 1911 not long before his death, Nikolai cited several positive examples of parishes turning to self-financing and expressed hope that the 'Japanese Church would begin to realise Christ's commandment that that Christians should provide material support for their clergy.'[650] Nikolai believed that only by fulfilling this commandment could Christians and servants of the Church 'feel mutually connected by bonds of gratitude leading to zeal and the expansion of the Church,' meaning that the Church also needed to mature in the moral sense to become independent.[651] Nikolai believed that in the meantime, despite the progress that had been made, the Japanese Church still had a long way to go.

At the Council of Priests held in July 1904, Nikolai gave a special speech in which he said that even after his departure, the Japanese Church should solicit a bishop from Russia and not rush towards independence for fear it would 'spoil itself and become something resembling a Protestant sect.' He believed that for at least another 100 years, it 'should remain under the control of the Holy Synod and procure Bishops from Russia, whom it would obey rigidly and unconditionally; that is the only way it shall develop into a branch of the One Synodic [*Sobornaya*] and Apostolic Church.'[652]

It was Nikolai's firm belief that the Japanese Church was not ready for independence, which would have to be acknowledged first by the mother Church and then by the other local Churches. As far as its canonical status was concerned, Nikolai wrote openly that the Japanese Orthodox Church remained intrinsically a part of the Russian Church. When asked in 1908 by the Japanese priest Simeon Mii whether the he could go to the Russian Church Council, Nikolai responded that as a representative of the Japanese Church, Mii could only accompany Nikolai as the head of the Mission 'since the Japanese Church is not yet independent like the Serbian and Bulgarian Churches, and is just a small branch of the Russian Church.'[653] This is a fairly direct indication of the Japanese Church's true status that was revealed during a private conversation and

[649] Ibid., p. 35.
[650] Ibid., p. 751.
[651] Ibid.
[652] Ibid., p. 116.
[653] Ibid., p. 363.

was clearly in contradiction to what Nikolai had said in public appearances and official documents intended for the Japanese government. It is nevertheless certain that this reflects Nikolai's true understanding of the matter.

Nikolai believed that the Japanese Church did not deserve immediate independence partly due to its lack of funds and partly due to other, more deep-rooted causes. In his diary, Nikolai reacted to demands by certain Japanese priests and believers to create an independent Church and proposals on how the Church should be organised by labelling them 'balderdash' and 'rubbish,' noting that 'the Japanese Church is far from *dokuritsu* [independent] due to its internal conditions, more than because of its lack of material funds.'[654] He was also surprised that such proposals had been put forward by priests who had been educated by the Mission: 'Are these fathers not learned, are they not equipped with all possible information about administering the Church, about the canonical decrees on which administration is based?' He came to the important conclusion that this knowledge had somehow been nullified by the "Japanese high enlightenment" on whose foundation of quicksand 'nothing stands, and all falls to dust!'[655]

By the term 'Japanese enlightenment,' Nikolai evidently was not referring to the same phenomenon as the European enlightenment about which he had spoken very positively during an earlier stage of his life in Japan as essential to improve life in the country and to prepare the country for conversion to Christianity. In January 1904, having read an article in the *Japan Mail* on the course of the Russo-Japanese war, he wrote: 'They have simply poured a whole bucket of the filthiest, foulest pigswill over Russia! They say it is such a barbaric and dastardly country that wiping it off the face of the earth is not enough! Whilst Japan, oh, it is the most enlightened and nicest of nations!'[656] In July of the same year, when commenting on the demands by Christians from a church in Kōjimachi that 'control of the Church should be changed and brought into line with Japan's current state of enlightenment,' Nikolai noted: 'The current Japanese victories over the Russians and the extremely egregious abuse of Russians that fills foreign and Japanese newspapers seem to be driving the Japanese mad with conceit.'[657] Nikolai used the term 'enlightenment' ironically with respect to contemporary Japan. This 'enlightenment' had served as a justification for war with Russia, while it had become antonymous to true Christian enlightenment and synonymous with the growth of nationalism, the source of which, he believed, was the convergence of Western, non-Christian, and non-Orthodox Christian ideas with traditional

[654] Ibid., pp. 109–110.
[655] Ibid., p. 110.
[656] Ibid., p. 18.
[657] Ibid., p. 109.

Japanese religions. This symbiosis had provided the foundation for a Japanese pseudo-enlightenment that was still very far from a true enlightenment:

> When will the Japanese Church nurture people who can be relied upon to run the Japanese Orthodox Church without the fear that it would slide immediately into Protestantism? My successor should remember well this moral deficiency of the Japanese and be patient educating them; but it is unlikely that even he shall witness the dawn of the Japanese Church's independence. Many generations shall come and go before the Japanese Church can stand firmly on its own feet.[658]

The fear expressed here and earlier—that an independent Japanese Church could slide into Protestantism—is of extreme interest since Nikolai had even labelled Tolstoy a Protestant. Evidently, in both cases, there is a dual meaning to the word 'Protestantism': It indicates a lack of theological education and an inadequate moral foundation that led to the simplification and defilement of true Christian teaching and ultimately, schismatic activity. Nikolai was concerned that the priests of the Japanese Church were insufficiently prepared to preach God's truth independently and for this reason would need to rely on the guidance of Russian bishops for a long time to come. Without the leadership of these bishops, the priests might distort the fundamental values of Orthodoxy under the influence of Japanese pseudo-enlightenment, which could spur them to engage in schismatic activities, given that they would not understand the full implications of how an independent, local Orthodox Church is formed.

As an example of Nikolai's supposed separatism and efforts to create a national Church, a number of researchers have pointed to his position at the time of the Russo-Japanese War when as a Russian subject and a patriot, he ceased for the most part to conduct church services and did not hinder Japanese priests from praying for the victory of Japan, and even encouraged them to do so.[659] This matter is discussed in detail in a number of works.[660] Nikolai based his approach here on the Orthodox attitude to politics, which is regarded as an area separate from faith, corresponding with Christ's message to 'render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.' In June 1904, he wrote in his diary:

> I am here not as a servant of Russia but as a servant of Christ. Everyone should regard me as the latter. It is proper for a servant of Christ to be always joyful, cheerful, and calm because Christ's work—unlike Russia's business—is direct, honest, robust, and truthful and shall lead not to reproach but to good ends. Christ

[658] Ibid., p. 110.

[659] Ruth A. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), pp. 268–69.

[660] Mazurika, "Sv. Nikolaj Japonskij i russko-japonskaja vojna 1904–1905 gg.: opyt primirenija skvoz' prizmu very," pp. 168–77; Perabo, *Russian Orthodoxy and the Russo-Japanese War*.

> himself supervises and directs this work invisibly, which means that I should watch myself and not allow myself to become despondent or let my spirits weaken.[661]

Nikolai firmly believed that the work of spreading Orthodoxy in Japan should not be linked to the protection of Russia's political interests, even though in his private capacity as a Russian national, he tried to improve goodwill between Japan and Russia and thereby contribute to the improvement of bilateral relations. He understood clearly that good Russo-Japanese relations would be beneficial to his work, but this did not entail that political issues were a central concern of his or that he mixed them with religious issues.

Even at the start of his career, Nikolai had informed the Russian government that previous bans on Christian activities and persecution of Christians in Japan had been a result of Christians engaging in politics, and he therefore recommended that the Japanese Orthodox Church avoid involvement in political activity since it could otherwise be perceived to be a Russian 'fifth column.' As early as 1869 he wrote a memorandum to the director of the Asian Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, P. N. Stremoukhov as follows: '"The Christian faith stirs the people against the government and opens a way for foreigners to conquer the country": These are the beliefs that a Japanese person associates with the idea of Christianity.'[662]

Neither did political considerations play a major role for Nikolai. As a missionary and primarily a representative of Orthodoxy, he even considered attachment to Russia to be a kind of temptation that would interfere with the fulfilment of Orthodoxy's task in Japan. 'Selfishness draws me to Russia; I have not been there for more than 23 years and I want to rest from this long, monotonous labour, but the good of the Church compels me to stay here,' he wrote in 1904 when Russian diplomats who had left Japan urged him to return to Russia.[663] Although he wished that Russia would win, he did not support her imperialist policies and considered her defeat in the war to be to some extent God's punishment for political and moral errors. His diary reads:

> You, my poor Fatherland, know that you deserve to be beaten and reviled. Why are you so badly governed? Why do you have such poor leaders in all areas? Why do you have so little integrity and piety? Why do you not seek to win God's love and protection, but instead provoke the fury of His wrath? May the misfortune of this defeat and disgrace at least bring you to your senses. May this be a correcting rod in the hands of the Heavenly Father![664]

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[661] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 30.

[662] Dokladnaja zapiska ieromonaha Nikolaja direktoru Aziatskogo Departamenta P. N. Stremouhovu. In: Sablina, *150 let pravoslaviya v Yaponii. Istoriya Yaponskoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi i Eyo Osnovatel' Svyatitel' Nikolai*, p. 293.

[663] *Dnevniki svjatitelja Nikolaya Yaponskogo* 5 (1904–1912), p. 9.

[664] Ibid., p. 30.

Nikolai did not believe that appeals to Japanese believers to pray for Japan's victory was connected in any way to the administrative status of the Japanese Church. Such a political choice was the personal decision of each religious believer and since patriotism, in Nikolai's opinion, was 'as natural a human feeling as one's sense of self,'[665] it was only normal for subjects of the Japanese emperor—and the overwhelming majority of the Japanese Church's followers were his subjects—to pray for a Japanese victory. However, this did not mean that the Japanese Church could not be part of the Russian Church, especially since the Japanese Church did not exist at the time as an organisation in the canonical sense but only as an aggregate of its believers. Nikolai also believed that as true Christians, Japanese and Russians should pray for peace, as well as love and help each other. This principle was manifested when Japanese Orthodox priests provided Russian prisoners of war with help and spiritual care, and is reflected in the Easter message delivered by Japanese Orthodox believers to Russian prisoners in 1905, which stated that those who are enlightened by Easter Sunday are 'no longer Jew or Greek, Russian or Japanese, but all are one in Christ; everyone is part of one family of the one Heavenly Father.'[666]

It would be a gross over-simplification to say that Nikolai supported an independent Japanese Church from the outset of his work in the country. In fact, he advocated close ties with the Russian Church for the foreseeable future as a guarantee of the Japanese Church's commitment to true Orthodoxy and fought actively against those who supported premature independence. While it is true that for pragmatic purposes, he sometimes publicly expressed opinions in support of actual independence for the Japanese Church, he only did so during a period of growth in anti-Russian sentiment in Japan in order to protect Japanese nationals from attacks.

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[665] Ibid., p.27.

[666] A. Platonova, *Apostol Japonii. Ocherk zhizni Arhiepiskopa Japonskogo Nikolaja* (Izdanie Uchilishhnogo Soveta pri Sv. Sinode, 1916), pp. 71–72.

Conclusion

The thought and activities of Nikolai of Japan and his place in history

This thesis has examined the life and activities of the distinguished Orthodox missionary Nikolai of Japan in the context of missionary activity in East Asia and against the wider backdrop of the development of Japan and Russia in the 19th century. This study is innovative for several reasons. First, this is the first time that Nikolai's works and achievements have been examined within the wider framework of the three-way mutual influence of the cultures and thought of Russia, Japan, and the West, rather than in the usual narrow framework of Russian-Japanese cultural interactions. Nikolai was the most authoritative Russian expert on Japan, the country in which he spent the greater part of his life, but was less familiar with the United States and Europe, having only passed through them briefly several times on his way from Japan to Russia, so he perceived Western culture through the lens of Russian and later Japanese culture. The influence of Western culture on both countries was so strong and ubiquitous in the second half of the 19th century that it could not but influence Nikolai's thinking and his approach to missionary work.

The second innovative element of this dissertation is its examination of how Nikolai's thinking and attitudes evolved and changed over time as a result of his analysis of unfolding events and the general influence of the religious and secular modern thought of Russia, Japan, and the West. This method has made it possible to correct some of the erroneous conclusions about Nikolai's views on various issues that are often found in the earlier research literature. These misrepresentations arose from a failure to perform a comparative analysis of some of his statements that have been taken out of the context of the period in which Nikolai made them. The third innovation is a critical analysis of sources, which has made it possible to identify contradictions between several of Nikolai's official and unofficial statements, explain them, and determine his true positions and views on a range of issues, primarily those concerning the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church that he founded.

Nikolai of Japan was a major public figure in the Russia and Japan of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and made significant contributions to a number of areas. The first is that **Nikolai is arguably the most outstanding Russian Orthodox overseas missionary and one of the most successful Christian missionaries of all time**. His formal achievements alone attest to this: In a country previously unfamiliar with Orthodoxy, Nikolai left behind a well-organised Church with more than 30,000 believers, numerous church buildings and communities in different parts of the country, and a significant number of Japanese clergymen.

By the end of the 19th century, Nikolai had become not only the highest-ranking and most experienced Russian missionary overseas but also a recognised theoretician of missionary work as a whole. The personal observations and suggestions concerning the development of missionary work that Nikolai sent to the Russian Foreign Ministry, the Holy Synod, and various influential public figures helped to shape for years to come the missionary policy of the ROC and the state agencies that supported it. The ROC recognised his contributions in this area, elevating him to the rank of bishop in 1880 and archbishop in 1906, making him the only individual with such a standing to lead a foreign mission. Although he did not return to his homeland after 1880, he and the Mission he headed in Japan were well known to Russian society, where the secular and Church-related press frequently wrote about both.

Second, **Nikolai was an outstanding researcher on Japan and a specialist in the Japanese language** and is rightfully considered the founder of scholarly Japanese studies in Russia. Prior to Nikolai's arrival in Japan, Russian society learned of that country primarily from the accounts of travellers and other popular literature. Nikolai carried out the first serious analysis of Japanese society and spiritual life and of the country's interactions with Western civilisation, the results of which were published in Russian journals in the 1860s and 1870s. These articles subsequently provided material for many professional scholars who studied Japan. Although Nikolai later gave up writing and publishing works on Japanese history and culture to devote himself entirely to missionary work and the translation of sacred texts into Japanese, he remained the leading Russian expert on the country until the end of his life, and younger experts on Japan would frequently consult him when compiling textbooks and dictionaries.

Third, **Nikolai was an influential figure in Japan**, albeit more in the fields of religion and culture than politics. According to numerous accounts, he was one of the most recognisable foreigners in the country and was even consulted by Japanese ministers and scholars, especially on questions of religious policy, the role of Christianity in Japanese life, and on all issues connected with Russia. The Japanese were particularly impressed by the fact that Nikolai positioned himself not as an agent of Russian interests but as the servant of higher forces and morals, and that he devoted his entire life to Japan and knew the country well. His moral authority

was never in question. The high state honours paid to Nikolai during his funeral attest to the deep respect in which he was held in Japan, despite Tokyo's difficult relations with Russia at that time.

Fourth, Nikolai's articles, diaries, and letters indicate that **he was an original Russian religious thinker of the conservative school, although his contribution to this area is not yet fully appreciated**. This has become evident only in recent years when certain of his manuscripts and diaries have for the first time become available. Nikolai was not a dogmatic theologian, but nevertheless managed to make significant contribution to several areas of Orthodox theology, in particular to the theory of church-state relations. Citing the example of Russia and Japan, Nikolai strove to show that a state that cares only for the material well-being of its citizens but lacks a true Orthodox Church that can show the right spiritual path will eventually fall into decline. His views on social development in general and on the progress of Japan and Russia in particular were linked closely to this concept and by the end of his life, increasingly corresponded to the views of Russia's extreme conservatives.

I have not attempted to identify and examine all of the many activities of such a major and versatile personality as Nikolai—one dissertation would hardly suffice for such a goal—and therefore this thesis focuses on three main points: How Nikolai's thinking evolved over time, including among Japanese Orthodox believers; and his views on the relationship between Church and society, as seen in his position on the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church.

A study of Nikolai's works reveals three stages in the evolution of his views, as seen primarily in his attitude to two major issues: First, to the role of traditional Japanese teachings and faiths (Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism) in preparing the Japanese to accept Christianity and in the development of Japanese society in general; and second, Western influence on Japan. Nikolai's views on these issues can only be considered within the three-way framework of interactions between the cultures of Japan, Russia, and the West because all three exerted a closely interrelated influence on Nikolai.

The first stage begins with Nikolai's arrival in Japan in 1861 and continues until the late 1860s/early 1870s. This was the stage of preparation for his missionary work because Japan still prohibited Christian preaching at this time, during which Nikolai was extremely critical of traditional Japanese teachings. He believed that they prevented the Japanese from accepting Christianity as the world's highest achievement of spiritual development, and that the religion had reached its zenith as part of the Western civilisation of which Nikolai still considered Russia a part. Nikolai displayed a generally positive view of Western influence on Japan. In keeping with Enlightenment thought, he saw it as a higher civilisation that aided the social and spiritual progress of lower ones. According to this paradigm, which was widespread in both the West and Russia, Nikolai considered Western civilisation to represent the pinnacle of progress but as a Christian

believer, he saw that high point not as the achievement of social progress, as secular thinkers held, but as the acceptance of true Christianity. As an Orthodox priest, Nikolai naturally considered Orthodoxy to be the truest form of Christianity. However, during this period of this thought, he regarded other Christian denominations as having gone astray temporarily, but still remaining far closer to the truth than the pre-Christian Japanese teachings. This being so, he considered the spread of non-Orthodox Christianity in Japan to be useful, or at least not harmful.

During the second stage of his thought, which lasted from the early 1870s to approximately the mid-1890s, Nikolai's thinking underwent a fundamental change in that he began to come to a positive view of the role that traditional Japanese teachings played in preparing the local population for Christianity. Nikolai looked for elements in those teachings that had parallels in Christianity or that could evolve towards Orthodox teachings as a result of two factors. First, the repeal of the prohibition on missionary activity in Japan prompted Nikolai and the Mission he led to intensify their activities substantially, generating a significant increase in the number of Japanese believers. Second, the number of believers in other Christian denominations also grew during this period and Nikolai, being confident of Orthodoxy's ultimate victory in Japan, convinced himself, his students, and his followers, as well as the Mission's sponsors, that the Japanese were inclined towards Orthodoxy because their previous spiritual development had prepared them for the profound truths it contained. At this time, Nikolai began to plan for the conversion of the entirety of Japan to Orthodoxy through the agency of the state authorities, including the baptism of the Meiji emperor himself. To this end, Nikolai believed it was necessary to convince senior Japanese government officials that the country could develop materially and grow stronger only if it experienced the blossoming of true spiritual life that Orthodoxy alone could provide. Nikolai viewed the influence of the West—in which at that time he included Russia—to be largely positive, but he already harboured doubts about the activities of Protestants and Catholics because those Churches enjoyed far greater material resources from Western states and international religious organisations and had begun to quickly spread throughout Japan.

During the third stage of the development of Nikolai's thought, which began in the last decade of the 19th century and lasted until his death in 1912, he again changed his attitude towards the role of traditional Japanese teachings and the influence of the West on Japan. He now drew a sharp distinction between Russia and the West and, similarly to Russian Slavophiles and conservatives, began to view Russian culture as different to and even the opposite of the West and claimed that Western influence had a negative effect on both Japanese and Russian society due to the rising influence of various materialistic and secular theories and socialist and anarchist revolutionary teachings. As for Western Christianity, Nikolai noted the growing popularity in Japan of liberal Protestantism, which he deemed to share nothing in common with true Christianity

and to serve only the material interests of the state, without showing it the true spiritual path. He also observed that Western ideas had penetrated Japanese society, resulting in the spread of mercantilism, pragmatism, secularism, and in the field of religion, Catholicism and Protestantism. Nikolai considered that Catholicism led to the domination of the Church over the state and Protestantism to the subordination of the Church to the state's material goals, while both contradicted the true Christian Orthodox understanding of the relationship between Church and state. This is the concept of an ideal symphony in which state and Church pursue a constructive interaction, with both responsible for separate spheres—one material and the other spiritual—and do not interfere in each other's affairs. He also felt that the blind assimilation of the latest Western theories would lead to the one-sided material development of a Japanese society that, forgetful of its true spiritual purpose, would inevitably end in collapse.

Similarly, Nikolai took a negative view of Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, but for a slightly different reason. He concluded that traditional Japanese teachings had not only failed to prepare the population to accept the true faith of Orthodoxy but had greatly contributed to the local assimilation of Western materialistic theories, as well as Catholicism and the latest forms of Protestantism. In his understanding, Catholicism and Protestantism, like secular teachings, lacked a deep understanding of the need for both individuals and the state as a whole to admit a spiritual dimension and were simply a means for states to improve their material well-being or power. The same Western teachings were beginning to spread in Russia as they had in Japan, weakening it as a bastion of the Orthodoxy it could spread to the world and undermining its traditional spirituality.

As set out in the first three chapters, the main analytical result of this study is the discovery that Nikolai's worldview changed during different periods of his life. This disproves the previously widespread conclusion among scholars that Nikolai always believed that Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism played a positive role in preparing the Japanese to accept Orthodoxy and that Nikolai displayed a consistently negative opinion of Western influence in Japan. A critical comparison of Nikolai's statements reveals that in fact he displayed varying and sometimes even contradictory opinions at different stages of his life and career.

Drawing on numerous documents pertaining to Nikolai's approach to the status of the Japanese Orthodox Church and the relationship between that Church and the state, the fifth chapter shows that Nikolai was an original Orthodox thinker of his time. Building on the Orthodox concept of Church-state relations as a symphony—an understanding that has its roots in Byzantine legislation and Canon law—Nikolai compared the relationship between Church and society to that between the soul and body of a man; one deals with the spiritual domain and the other with the material, and neither can exist without the other.

This account disproves the widespread assertion in the academic literature that from the beginning of his missionary work, Nikolai had intended that the Japanese Orthodox Church be independent of the ROC. He knew perfectly well that Orthodox canon law made this an impossibility and he rather argued that the Japanese Church should maintain ties with the mother Church in Russia for at least 100 years after his own death, an organisational subordination that guaranteed that the young and inexperienced Japanese Church would not evolve towards a heresy similar to the Protestantism that was gaining popularity in Japan. Nikolai also believed that the Japanese Orthodox believers who wanted to take control over the Japanese Church were motivated by a desire to distribute at their own discretion the funds sent from Russia for the needs of the Mission, and he therefore put a resolute halt to such attempts and personally allocated the funds supplied by the Russian government and Russian benefactors for the Mission's needs. He did so while listening to the opinions of Japanese believers and gratefully accepting donations from Japanese believers, which were sent directly to Japanese parishes for their needs.

Nikolai was one of the most significant conservative thinkers of the Russian Church during the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries and it is evident that his intellectual development was similar to that of many conservative figures of the time. Many of his contemporaries moved from Western-centric thinking to the belief that Russia needed to follow its own unique path. Prior to his appointment as education minister, Count Sergey Uvarov (1786–1855), the author of 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality'—a conservative ideological doctrine that laid out in concentrated form the differences between the Russian and European paths of development—had studied and worked in Russia's diplomatic service in European countries and communicated with leading European intellectuals such as Goethe (1749–1832) and the brothers Alexander and Wilhelm von Humbolt (1769–1859 and 1767–1835, respectively).[667] The writer Fyodor Dostoevsky was sentenced to death in 1849 (the sentence was later commuted to hard labour) for the crime of having read and distributed the famous letter by literary critic Vissarion Belinsky (1811–1848) that sharply criticised the author Nikolay Gogol's (1809–1852) notion that Russia should follow an Orthodox path that diverged from that of the West. Towards the end of his life, Dostoevsky himself advocated ideas very similar to those of Gogol and denounced the European path of development for its materialism and desire for profits, arguing that it would inevitably lead to social revolution and disaster.[668]

Even a revolutionary thinker such as Alexader Herzen (1812–1870), a leading pro-Western thinker in Russia, after emigrating to Europe began to advocate the theory that Russia's village

[667] V. A. Esakov, Aleksandr Gumbol'dt v Rossii (Moscow: Izd-vo AN SSSR, 1960).

[668] V. A. Mihnjukevich and M. M. Seitov, "Problema «Vostok-Zapad» v publicistike F. M. Dostoevskogo i ee recepcija Evrazijcami i N.A.Berdjaevym," *Znak: problemnoe pole mediaobrazovanija* 2, no. 6 (2010): pp. 124–28.

communal structure (*obshchina*) would enable it to achieve an ideal socialist society before the West could. He viewed Western society as inherently mediocre because it was dominated by materialism and therefore doomed to stagnation.[669]

The shift towards conservatism at this time was even more pronounced among the clergy, many of whom believed that the spread of Western teachings had caused a decline in the public's interest in Orthodoxy. Such Western teachings included 'nihilism,' which referred to all theories that rejected autocracy and Christianity, especially those of a leftist, anarchist, or Marxist nature, as well as non-Orthodox Christian denominations or different sects. However, both Russian society and the clergy grew to embrace a wide variety of views and did not move exclusively towards conservatism.

The movement from pro- to anti-Western thinking among Russian conservatives in the late 19th century was often the result of their greater familiarity with the reality of the West. In their childhood, many Russians of that generation had developed an idealised conception of the West in general and Europe in particular as a place without the shortcomings of Russia but that retained all its perceived advantages. For example, they thought that the absence of political freedom in Russia was accompanied by a deep spirituality and religiosity, but life as it actually was in the West during the early capitalist era, defined by the pursuit of material well-being and commercial success, often led Russians to become disillusioned with it. They criticised the Western way of life for its perceived lack of spirituality, materialism, and acceptance of mediocrity in comparison with Russia, where the public preferred to dwell on outstanding and heroic figures, rather than the common person. This disillusionment prompted different responses, from socialist-based criticisms of the West such as that levelled by Herzen to conservatism critiques such as those articulated by Dostoevsky. However, while the socialists felt that the victory of philistinism and mediocrity in the West was drawing it further from the revolution needed to create an ideal society and that Russia was closer to that goal, the conservatives believed the opposite—that Western materialism and its obsession with profit had distanced Europe and the US from the traditional Christian social ideal and brought it closer to a revolutionary catastrophe.

Nikolai adhered to the second line of reasoning, despite the fact that he had extremely limited personal contact with the reality of the West; his understanding of the West was based on his observations of Western influence on Japan and to a lesser extent on Russia. Whereas at the beginning of his time in Russia he considered Western civilisation to be the world's highest and that its influence on Japan was on the whole positive, his long experience of the observations of the consequences of that influence led him to the conviction that Western influence was extremely

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[669] Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts*, vol. 3 (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1968), 1081–84; Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts*, vol. 4 (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1968), pp. 1725–26.

harmful and even destructive for the development of Japanese society. In this sense, the evolution of his ideas was somewhat typical of Russian conservatives. It was only possible to come to this conclusion by following the method employed in this study—studying the evolution of Nikolai's thought within the framework of the three-way influence of Japanese, Russian, and Western cultures.

The example of Nikolai shows that a major thinker who follows a conservative approach can produce original scholarship. Nikolai essentially predicted the materialistic, secular, and anti-Christian wave that swept Japan, Russia, and indeed the entire world. In Japan, this period was associated with Western-style nationalism, theories of social Darwinism, and a geopolitical confrontation between the major powers that based their ideological justification on an updated form of Shintoism. In Russia, this period saw the victory of communist atheism—also an arrival from the West. For its part, the West experienced the spread of secular liberalism and atheistic socialism. Nikolai believed that this period would last not less than a century but that the world would eventually see the triumph of true spirituality as personified by Orthodoxy. Of course, the second part of Nikolai's prediction remains far from fulfilment, but it is interesting to observe that after several decades of life under atheistic regimes, many countries that were previously part of the Russian Empire are now seeing a rebirth in the popularity of Christianity, primarily but not exclusively Orthodoxy (for example, Catholicism is the central religion in Poland). Of course, we should not conclude from this that the predictions of the conservative Russian priest have been fulfilled literally, but it does indicate that Nikolai seems to have correctly foreseen several underlying trends in the social development of Japan, Russia, and the world as a whole, and described them in his own religion-based language.

Nikolai's role in Church history was recognised in Russia during his lifetime and interest in his missionary experiences and various aspects of his life continues to grow. This is due in no small part to the fact that after a long break, the ROC has resumed its missionary activity in East Asia. It works actively with the autonomous Japanese Orthodox Church, extending it considerable assistance; Russian patriarchs have visited Japan several times in recent years and have been received at a high level, while the Church has restored several Orthodox parishes in China, despite the Chinese communist authorities' rather strict policies on religion. Orthodox parishes have been established in both North and South Korea as well as in the Southeast Asian countries of Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, and the Philippines.[670] Naturally, in the course of these activities,

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[670] R. I. Fajnshmidt and Jan Jun'-Sjan, *Istorija i razvitie pravoslavija v Jugo-Vostochnoj Azii. Sretenskie chtenija. Materialy XXIII nauchno-bogoslovskoj konferencii studentov, aspirantov i molodyh specialistov*, ed. O. Sidorova (Moscow: Svjato-Filaretovskij pravoslavno-hristianskij institut, 2017), pp. 249–54.

the ROC continually refers to historical examples of missionary activity in Asia, primarily to the most successful of all: Nikolai of Japan.

Although Nikolai did not himself use the term 'symphony' when discussing the ideal of Church-state relations, he clearly built upon this particular approach. The ROC has declared its commitment to the idea of a 'symphony' in a number of official documents, including the policy paper *The Basis of the Social Concept* the Church adopted in 2008 that 'sets forth the basic provisions of her teaching on church-state relations and a number of problems socially significant today.'[671] Now, advocates of the Western liberal and secular model of the state often criticise Russia's state policy towards the Church and legislation enshrined in this policy that provide a special place for 'traditional religions,' especially Orthodoxy. This approach is set out clearly in the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations, which refers to the recognition of the special role that Orthodoxy has played in Russian history and in the formation and development of its spirituality and culture.[672] At the same time, this understanding often fails to take into account the strength of a completely different tradition: The Orthodox attitude to the state, its role, and its relationship to society as expressed in the concept of 'symphony.' Studying Nikolai of Japan's approach to this issue could yield important additional material that would shed light on the relationship between society and the Church in Russia.

It is no exaggeration to say that Nikolai is one of the most exceptional ROC figures of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and its most outstanding missionary in Asia. Given the growing influence and popularity of the ROC in Russia, this makes him an important public figure of this period as a whole. Although Nikolai's significance for Japan might not be as great, he did leave behind a significant mark on the country. The Japanese Orthodox Church he founded did not become the leading religious organisation of Japan and Orthodoxy did not become its state religion, as Nikolai had hoped, but the churches he founded continue to this day, serving approximately 10,000 believers.[673]

Nikolai and his Orthodox disciples exercised their greatest influence over Japanese society during his lifetime, when Nikolai was well known and the country's leadership took account of his position on various issues. Following his death, during the first half of the 20th century, many of his students actively translated and published both fiction and nonfiction works of Russian literature and worked to acquaint the Japanese public with Russia. Today, Nikolai's activities and the existence of the small Orthodox Church in Japan are known to only a few—mostly specialists

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671 The Russian Orthodox Church, *The Basis of the Social Concept*.

672 "Federal'nyj zakon. O svobode sovesti i o religioznyh ob"edinenijah (s izmenenijami na 2 dekabrja 2019 goda)," (Sept. 26, 1997). Retrieved from: http://docs.cntd.ru/document/9040821.

673 Shukyō Tōkei Chōsa Kekka - — December 31, 2014. Bunkachō Bunkabu Shūmuka, p. 81. Retrieved from: https://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/tokeichosa/shumu/pdf/h26kekka.pdf.

in Russia and Japanese Orthodox believers. Nonetheless, this small Church has survived periods of difficulties and schisms stemming from the withdrawal of Russian aid as well as periods of hostility between Russia and Japan, and it continues to exist as an autonomous part of the ROC.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 brought an atheistic communist regime to power that left the Japanese Church without material assistance, while the Great Kantō earthquake in 1923 destroyed a large number of the Japanese Mission's buildings and its library, causing serious damage to the majestic Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Tokyo. These setbacks dealt a serious blow to the well-being of the Japanese Orthodox Church and growth and development were impossible under such conditions; believers at this time simply worked to preserve the Church and the extant congregations.[674]

The Cathedral was restored and re-consecrated in 1929. However, in the wake of a rising tide of Japanese nationalism, a Religious Organizations Law was passed in the country in 1939 that gave the government the right to approve or deny the appointment of Church leaders.[675] As a result, Metropolitan Sergius (Tikhomirov) was forced to retire and the temporary management of Church affairs was transferred to the layman Arseny Iwasawa (Iwasawa Heikichi, 1863–1943), a professor at a military academy who enjoyed the support of the Japanese military.[676] In 1941 and with the consent of the Japanese authorities, the Council of the Japanese Orthodox Church elected Nikolai (Ono, 1872–1956) as ruling bishop; he was consecrated a Bishop of Tokyo and All Japan in Harbin by the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, which did not have relations with the Moscow Patriarchate at that time.[677] In 1945, the Japanese authorities arrested Metropolitan Sergius on suspicion of espionage. He was later released but died soon afterwards, having endured interrogations and torture that ruined his health.[678]

In 1946, during the American occupation of Japan and under pressure from the US authorities, the Council of the Japanese Church decided through the mediation of the General Staff of the Allied Powers to rely 'on the guidance and assistance' of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America. Popularly known as the American Metropolia, the Church had split from the Moscow Patriarchate after the Bolshevik Revolution.[679] However, some Japanese

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[674] Ilya Kharin, *After Nicholas: Self-realization of the Japanese Orthodox Church, 1912-1956* (Gloucester: Wide Margin, 2014), pp. 22–26.
[675] Hans Martin Krämer, "Beyond the Dark Valley: Reinterpreting Christian Reactions to the 1939 Religious Organizations Law," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 38, no. 1 (2011): p. 186.
[676] "Ivasava Arsenij Hjejkiti," https://drevo-info.ru/articles/8967.html.
[677] Kharin, *After Nicholas : self-realization of the Japanese Orthodox Church, 1912-1956*, p. 165.
[678] M. Naganava, "Zhizn' i dejatel'nost' mitropolita Sergija (Tihomirova) v Japonii " *Pravoslavie na Dal'nem Vostoke* (1996). Bishop Seraphim (Noboru Tsuji), "Serugii-fu shukyō no shibō kōkoku," *Seikyō jihō*, no. 2 (February 2007).
[679] Suhanova, *Istorija Japonskoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi v XX veke: put' k avtonomii*, pp. 149–57.

Orthodox believers preferred to maintain their ties with the ROC and the Japanese diocese of the Moscow Patriarchate was established for their benefit. In 1970, after lengthy negotiations, the ROC granted autocephaly to the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America, although part of the agreement stipulated the return of all groups of Japanese believers to the Russian Church and the granting of autonomy to the Japanese Church within its structure.[680] Since that time, the Japanese Orthodox Church has existed and developed as an autonomous Church within the ROC.[681] As the only truly functioning part of that Church in East Asia,[682] it plays a significant role both as a symbol of the ROC's successful missionary activity and as one of the important proofs of the universality of Orthodoxy.

"Tokijskij kafedral'nyj Voskresenskij sobor v istorii Japonskoj pravoslavnoj cerkvi," *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarhii* 6 (Sept. 3, 2001), https://pravoslavie.ru/39675.html.

[680] "Agreement on the Autocephaly for the Orthodox Church in America," https://www.oca.org/history-archives/autocephaly-agreement

[681] "Nihon no seikyōkai no rekishi to gendai," retrieved from: https://www.orthodoxjapan.jp/h-n.html.Several Orthodox Churches did not accept this decision, particularly the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which does not recognise Japan as part of the canonical territory of the ROC.

[682] The government of the People's Republic of China has not recognised the Chinese Autonomous Orthodox Church, and so it currently exists only in ROC documents. The official status of the Orthodox Church in China is currently that of a local and ethnic Church (of the Chinese Russian ethnic minority). See: Alexander Lukin, "State policies towards religion and the Russian Orthodox Church in China," *Religion, State and Society* 45, no. 1 (2017).

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