The Historical and Political Significance of the Reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow

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--Preface--

First I would like to thank my generous Russian hosts, the Kravchenkos, a family of talented artists and architects, for introducing me to the riches of their country's history and culture and for housing me repeatedly at the very fascinating centre of Moscow. I am immensely grateful to my supervisor, Professor Archie Brown, for his friendly support and comments, as well as to other members of Oxford University who encouraged me at the beginning of my MPhil to pursue this particular topic. I also thank very warmly David Hoffman, chief of the Moscow bureau of *The Washington Post*, for providing me an invaluable research base in September-October 1996 and April 1997.

I feel that I owe them all an explanation as to why I chose to write about the reconstruction of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

As recently as October 1994 I took pictures of the *Moskva* swimming pool, a desolate site which had its poetic beauty but presented no sign of the golden transformation which the future held in store for it. I was attracted first by the pools of different hues, ranging from ink-black to mossy green. Noticing young boys paddling their way on a make-shift raft across the largest, crescent-shaped pond, I was emboldened to climb over a wall and take a closer look. Walking down the main concrete strip towards the yellow and blue diving structures in the centre of the pool, it was easy to imagine scenes from the 1930s captured by photographers like Rodchenko: girls with ribbons in their hair, breathing deep and smiling hard, arms extended before taking a dive.

This day-dream happened to be an anachronism. In 1931 and as late as 1954 this site was recruited to serve grander ambitions: the erection of the Palace of Soviets. Paintings executed at this time, in the characteristic socialist realist genre, do show athletic girls but not in swimsuits-- parading instead with flags and flowers by the building's plaster model[1]. Boris Iofan who was awarded the project in a two-round competition, designed a building which can schematically be described as a wedding-cake structure, piling different concentric levels adorned with classical columns to the record-breaking height of 415 metres (approximately 150 stories)[2]. The 'cherry-on-the cake', so to

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[1] See for example '*Fizkulturny Parad'*, ('The Athletes' Parade'), by Yu. Pimenov, 1939, reproduced in *Agitatsiya Za Schast'e* , (St Petersburg: Russky Muzei, 1994), p.181.

[2] It would have been the tallest building in the world, since the Empire State Building was only 381 metres and the Eiffel Tower 300 metres. See Karl Schlögel, in *Naum Gabo and the Competition for the Palace of Soviets. Moscow 1931-1933* (Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 1993), p. 178.

speak, was to be a giant sculpture of Lenin, with his right arm extended and his six-metre index pointing forward towards the Communist future. The war, technical difficulties, and shifting political priorities put an end to this "assault of the skies"[3]. The partially erected building was stripped of its steel to protect Moscow against the Germans[4], and the site, in its abandonned state, was colonised by frogs[5]. In 1960 the massive circular foundations of the palace were converted into a huge open-air swimming pool. It was operative year round (except during summer months) until 1993.

Back at the level of Volkhonka street, I took a wide-angle shot from the parapet overlooking the whole *Moskva* complex. Suddenly, a man in his fifties who had seemed lost in contemplation nearby, turned to me and proclaimed in a thundering bass voice *" Vi, devushka, snimaite istoriu! "* ('you are taking a photograph of History, young girl'). I readily agreed that the crumbling state of this pool was an appropriate metaphor for the Soviet regime's fate.

I ignored then how much more complex the history of the site really was. I was also unaware of the fact that a month earlier the Mayor of Moscow and the Moscow Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church had officially announced the rebuilding of the 19th-century cathedral of Christ the Saviour[6] which stood on the same hallowed spot.

In October 1996, exactly two years after photographing the mossy depths of the decrepit *Moskva*, I stood a hundred metres above street level, on scaffoldings surrounding the largest dome of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II. From up there, in the light of a golden autumn afternoon, Moscow looked spectacular, spiked with cranes working to pull the city out of its late Soviet squalor, and appealing as ever, with its mixture of medieval and modern architectural marvels.

Thus, like many others, I was struck by how the story of the cathedral seemed to epitomise the convulsive metamorphoses of Russia. I felt the urge to explore the mechanisms of its latest plot twist: reconstruction.

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[3] The Palace project's hyperbolic name. See K. Schlögel, *Naum* Gabo, p. 180.
[4]Gleb Sobolev, 'Istoriya odnogo mesta', *Proekt Rossiya*, N°2, 1996, p. 63.
[5] M. Pasternak mentions the rumour in his memoirs but admits that he never personally saw neither fish nor frogs. [In Irina Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie Khrama Khrista Spasitelya* (London: Overseas Publications, 1988), p. 37.]
[6] *Khram Khrista Spasitelya,* also translated as 'Church of Christ the Redeemer', by Timothy Colton in *Moscow: governing the socialist metropolis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995) or 'Temple of Christ the Saviour' in the English translation of Ryszard Kapuscinski's *Imperium* (London: Granta Books, 1995). Since it is most commonly known as 'church' or 'cathedral' of Christ the Saviour, I have chosen the latter, using the word 'cathedral' for the practical purpose of avoiding confusions when I discuss the Church (the Russian Orthodox Church, or ROC) and also to denote the size and importance of this place of worship.

I have adopted the Cambridge University transliteration system to render Russian in the original (it spells -ы : 'y' , -и : 'i' and transforms final -ый and -ий in personal names and adjectives into 'y'). I spell 'Yeltsin' according to common usage. Russian translations are my own.



West view from the main cupola. [my photograph, 2 October 1996]
Moskva swimming pool seen from the parapet. [my photograph, October 1994]

"May this church stand for many centuries, and in it, may future generations burn incense of gratitude before the holy throne of God, together with love and admiration for the deeds of their ancestors."
-Alexander, Manifesto 1812.

"Is it really true, as the persecutors of the holy Church maintain, that Russian people have no more need for sacred things-- as if churches, mysteries, and services were only leftovers from the past and superstitions? "
-Brotherhood of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, leaflet 1918.

"With all my soul I support your initiative and express the certitude that the Russian government and regional powers at all level will consider [the cathedral] one of the most important governmental tasks and will permit its prompt incarnation into life."
-Boris Yeltsin, address to the Public Observation Council 1994.

CHAPTER I-- Introduction.

A cathedral appeared in the centre of Moscow almost overnight. Where did it come from?

Today's cathedral of Christ the Saviour is perceived as a *chudo,* a 'miracle', because it is the re-appearance of a building last seen in 1931. In the intervening years it was one of the "blank spots"[1] in official Soviet history. The way silence was broken and information about the cathedral became widespread, is part of the case I wish to make, but, for the purpose of this introduction, a very brief summary of the cathedral's biography is useful[2].

Tsar Alexander I, in a Manifesto issued on 25 December 1812, vowed to found a cathedral named Christ the Saviour, to thank God for having saved Russia from ruin in the hands of Napoleon's numerous and fierce troops; the church was also meant to uphold eternally for future generations the memory of " the unprecedented zeal, loyalty and love towards Faith and Fatherland " displayed by the Russian people in the course of battle.[3] The young artist Alexander Vitberg was the architect of a first project, a classical-looking church composed of three parts expressing the trinity of suffering, death, and eternal life[4]. To accomodate its colossal size (matching Russia's grandeur), it was located on Vorob'evy Gory (Sparrow Hills), across the river from the Kremlin. But the project foundered amid financial scandals and allegations of technical incompetence.

The succeeding Tsar Nicholas I stopped all work on Sparrow Hills, sent Vitberg into exile[5], launched a new competition and selected Konstantin Ton's eclectic Byzantine design as the one most befitting the court's new style and ideological requirements, summed up in the slogan "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, the People " coined by Sergei Uvarov, Nicholas' Minister of Education). The stone-laying ceremony took place in 1839 on a prominent site, a hill on the left bank of the Moskva river only slightly lower than the nearby Kremlin hill. It had been occupied until then by a three-hundred year-old

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[1] I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie...*, p. 5.
[2] See also chronology in appendix.
[3] Manifesto reproduced in N.Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya* (Moscow: Stolitsa, 1996), p. 9.
[4] The building's forms were also meant to celebrate the oneness of man's essence, composed of body, soul and spirit. Evgenia Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve* (Moscow: Planeta, 1992), p. 29.
[5] Accused of deliberate fund mismanagement, Vitberg was sent to Vyatka and put under police surveillance in 1836 after a long trial. Evidence was stacked against him by the " real culprits " who did not shy from " juggling facts, destroying documents and producing false expertise ." (A. Butorov, 'Kakim byl khram', *Yuny khudozhnik,* N°6, 1996, p.7.)

convent (Alexseevsky monastery, founded in 1625) and was cleared out with little ado[6] to make room for the tsar's aspirations.

The cathedral was completed in its exterior guise by 1858 under Alexander II, but its sanctification was pushed off to 1883, to allow time for the completion of lavish and often beautiful forms of interior decoration. It coincided with Alexander III's coronation (two years after his father's assassination). The ceremony underlined the all-Russian status of the cathedral, only second to the cathedral of the Dormition (Uspensky Sobor) in the Kremlin. It had become a contemporary national shrine, rather than merely commemorating the long-past 1812 Patriotic War.

After the revolution, liturgy continued to be celebrated in the cathedral, but under tight GPU control. An eye witness recalls how " pseudo-metropolitan Aleksandr Vvedensky " with " his fashionable 1920s moustache and beard *à la* Mephistopheles"[7] used to come in a black Renault taxi to conduct services in a practically empty cathedral. It was put off the list of monuments benefiting from state preservation funds so its warmth and interior beauty declined inexorably. By 1930, rain, blown in through doors left negligently open, formed a huge pool in the central part of the building[8]. The Brotherhood of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour founded in 1918 to preserve and defend the cathedral " as banner of the unity of Orthodox people "[9], was no match to counter the tide of criticism coming from art historian scholars, atheist propaganda and press campaigns in favour of a colossal Palace of Soviets on Moscow's " prettiest square "[10].

On 13 July 1931, *Izvestiya* announced the launching of a competition for a Palace of Soviets to be erected between the Volkhonka street and Prechistenka embankment where the cathedral still stood. Demolition was carried out by komsomol groups, atheist brigades, and various specialists. They first took the artwork, gold, precious stones, and marbling apart[11] (a fair booty which could be

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[6] According to a popular legend, the destruction and transfer of the convent provoked the ire of its head abbess (*igumen*) who warned that " nothing [would] ever stand in its place. " Because the curse proved premonitory, today's builders have tried to counter bad luck with a chapel dedicated to the old monastery's patron-saint.

[7] Recollections by A. Kozapzhevsky contained in L. Polinovskaya (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya* (Moscow: Moskovsky Rabochy, 1996), p. 252.

[8] Ibid.
In 1918 already, the Brotherhood of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour spoke of the " slow destruction " of the cathedral due to lack of funds and neglect from the state. In Rossiisky Mezhdunarodny Fond Kul'tury, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve* (Moscow: Otechestvo- Kraitur, 1993), p.7.

[9] Brotherhood document quoted in 'Khram Khrista Sp...' by A. Kolpakov in *Stolitsa,* N°20, 1993.

[10] Already in December 1922 during a speech at the Bolshoi Theater, Kirov called for the building of a massive and impressive 'House of USSR' on Moscow's " prettiest and best square ". Speech quoted in I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie...*, p. 26-27.

[11] I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti's book op. cit. reproduces a samizdat collection of fascinating photographs documenting the destruction of the cathedral at various phases with commentary written in an enthusiastic technical prose.

carefully preserved and sold or re-used), but the solid edifice with its 40 million bricks eventually tested their patience, so that the dismantling process culminated in a grim series of dynamite explosions on the cold day of 5 December 1931. Pasternak's brother who lived across the street, described in his diary how he was flattened down on his bed by the powerful rock of the detonations[12]. Elderly people today still remember that in the evening parents wept but that no one dared to discuss out loud what had happened. The spectacle of the cathedral's mass collapsing into white clouds of dust lit by projectors against the sky, was kept on film in archives and constituted footage with strong emotional value for all those outraged by Russia's losses. The cathedral then began its existence as a ghost, a potent symbol of destroyed Holy Russia for over sixty years.

How was the cathedral's taboo history kept alive in the years before Mikhail Gorbachev came to power? When did it resurface and what were the ideas attached to the memory of the cathedral which could motivate groups of people to agitate society in favour of its reconstruction? What were the factors which convinced authorities, both secular and religious, to take this project seriously and promote it as their own?

For several reasons, including the huge emotional response it received in Russian society, its prominent and central position in the capital's landscape, and its considerable price (estimated conservatively at $300 million, excluding interior artwork), the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II seems worthy of attention. We should not assume that it is meaningful on this sole basis-- after all, the emotional, financial and personal resources being spent on this reconstruction could perhaps be written off as anecdotal by non-Muscovites. However, as I will try to argue in this thesis, the cathedral provides a valuable prism for understanding many aspects of Russia's recent metamorphosis.

The cathedral's resurrection on the site of the sacrilegious *Moskva* swimming pool is intuitively and obviously an important sign. The question is, of what? Is it a sign of change or of continuity? If changes have occurred in certain fields, are these changes only manifest against the situation prevailing in the 'swimming pool days'? Are we entitled to draw parallels between the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II, in the context of today's transformation of Moscow, and the inspiration and movement behind the Palace of Soviet project? Can we extend the analytical exercise

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[12] Extract from M. Pasternak's memoirs, reproduced in I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie...*, p. 34-35.

even further back in time, into the 19th century, a period of Russian history also very rich in contradictory trends and comparable transformations?

Comprehensive comparative analysis is well beyond the reach of this thesis. In analysing the historical and political significance of the reconstruction of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour, I focus primarily on the Soviet/post-Soviet transformation, starting, as far as Church matters are concerned, in 1988, year of Russia's Christian millennium, up to April 1997, date at which, according to plans, the exterior aspect of the cathedral was more or less completed.

In Chapter II, I will examine how an idea discussed by obscure groupings, gained momentum and popularity, but almost never made it into President Yeltsin's speech in December 1991. This tale is intertwined with the story of *glasnost'* and *perestroika*: a historical whirlpool bringing about long-due openness regarding historical taboos, greater opportunities for societal participation through the creation of groupings and the partial initiation of debates in the media, restructuring of state-church relationships against the background of the central state's disintegration and the rise of nationalist sentiment in the centre and in the peripheries of the Soviet Union.

In the third chapter I discuss how the idea moved from vague promise to actual policy, a process which extended from 1992 to 1996, covering the Russian Federation's first presidency and President Yeltsin's successful re-election campaign. I consider the decision in the wider context of new state-church relationships and of the quest for a national ideology. This includes looking at how the cathedral and its site have been used as an ideological showcase in the past as well as in the present. This cathedral--and ideological constructions in general--was indeed supposed to remedy all sorts of evils, from averting civil war to restoring morality and legality and avoiding a Communist backlash.

Given the frequent gap between decision and implementation, it is indispensable to look at the new cathedral from the Moscow Mayor's and the business community's point of view to make sense of this construction. These two partners' combined energies have made work in progress match almost faithfully the heroic three-year plan announced in 1994. In so far as it is emblematic of Moscow-style activity and given the fact that Mayor Yury Luzhkov is likely to remain for some time a key political figure in Russia, the management details of this cathedral project can serve to outline the characteristics and the limits of Moscow's golden miracle and raise questions regarding economic prospects for Russia as a whole. This is what I do in Chapter IV.

Lastly, public response to the cathedral can be examined as a socio-cultural phenomenon. The cleavage between the negative judgement of sectors of the intelligentsia, and society's overall wide support for the state-sponsored project, offers interesting insights into the components of Russia's contemporary culture. The cathedral, advertised as a symbol of Russia's spiritual renaissance, naturally invites a critical assessment of today's religiosity. Furthermore, debates in the press, interviews and official statements show the resilience of lines of divide present already in the 19th century, as well as the legacy of Russia's Soviet years, and already typically 'New Russian' patterns of thought and behaviour. Identifying continuity and change in the field of symbols and opinions may be a very perilous endeavour, given necessarily patchy data, but even an impressionistic picture of the relationship between political and cultural transformations would seem worth the risks involved.

This discussion will lead to a brief conclusion on the state's power to shape collective memories and select cultural identities through monumental projects in a pluralistic society, as illustrated by the epic case of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

CHAPTER II-- Waking Up the Ghost of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

Who came up with the idea of rebuilding the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour?

Tracing the origins of an idea may give a deceptive picture of the history of a political decision, by focusing attention on a limited number of pioneers and advocates. These people are, however, both passive and active representatives of a given social climate. In the Soviet Union, grass-root movements benefited from Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of increased tolerance for transparency in the media and for societal participation in public life, but at the same time, groups of people actively tested and stretched the limits of these policies to introduce into the mainstream topics of interest and concern to them.

One such topic which surfaced with unforeseen strength and consequences, was the question of national heritage and destiny, threatened by Soviet practises of assimilation and destruction. Another was religion. As Jane Ellis writes in *The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness* (1996) " it became clear with hindsight that religion was a far greater motivating force in the Soviet Union than its leaders had realised. Religion became important because millions of half-liberated people felt it to *be* important. (...) It had not been on the Communist Party's agenda, but the Party found itself obliged to deal with it. " [1]

The rediscovery of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour after years of oblivion and official silence, fits within this formal pattern: grass-root agitation commanded the attention of the authorities. It is also intrinsically linked with both sensitive issues of *nationalism* and of *religion* which gained visibility in a multinational and atheist state on the wane. Analysing the discourse and affiliations of the first champions of the cathedral makes this evident. Statements like " If it were not for my wife and son who showed selfless dedication for months on end, the cathedral would not be standing today " should make us weary of lack of historical perspective. But the personal career and actions of this speaker, sculptor Vladimir Mokrousov, are worth tracing and taking seriously. They are characteristic of the mix of patriotic politics, accident, and pure luck which produced an opportunity for the

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[1] Jane Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p.12.

cathedral's Second Coming. The case of Father Georgy (Dokukin)[2], another key "policy entrepreneur"[3], throws light on the creation of nationalist alliances and on the timidity and ambiguity of the Church's position in this early period.

Patriotism and the competition for the All-Union Victory Monument

The cathedral of Christ the Saviour was brought into the spotlight by the second round of the architectural competition for a victory monument on Poklonnaya Gora.

Poklonnaya Gora, the 'Hill of Prostrations' west of Moscow, connected to the centre by Kutuzovsky Prospekt, was the hill where Napoleon Bonaparte waited for the keys of the city,[4] and where, after the 1812 war, the families of deceased soldiers and officers planted trees in memory of the dead. The site had been chosen for the erection of a colossal World War II memorial complex at a date as early as 1957[5], but work started there only in 1984, with the razing of its mound and lovely woods. Thus, a hill and woods endowed with significant patriotic value were wiped out to make room for another era's socially binding ritual, the commemoration of the Great Patriotic War. This ritual had gradually gained preeminence over celebration of the October Revolution as the core element of Soviet identity[6]. The *tabula rasa* or destructive/constructive process was characteristic of many Soviet ideological endeavours, including, of course, the 1931 decision to blow up the cathedral of Christ the Saviour in order to build the Palace of Soviets. The appalling scenario of Poklonnaya Gora offered the perfect target for individuals concerned with 'roots' in both senses of the term (respect for nature and for ancestors). Criticism coming from various intellectuals regarding the ugliness of the main monument (a graceless Victory Banner by Nikolai Tomsky), had stopped this project mid-way a first time in 1986--it was one of Yeltsin's "first accommodating gestures" as Moscow Party boss[7]. The

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[2] Father Georgy is his church name; Yury Nikolaevich Dokukin his civil one.
[3] John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (University of Michigan: Harper Collins, 1984), p. 129.
[4] There used to be three such hills according to E. Kirichenko, all owing their name from the fact that visitors would bow and kneel in awe (*poklonyat'sya*= to bow, to worship) after catching their first view of Moscow, splendidly sprawling below, dotted with innumerable church belfries.
E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve*, p. 165.
[5] In 1957 the hill endured a first attack. It was partly levelled, apparently for security reasons, when Kutuzovsky Prospekt was widened and when big apartment buildings for *apparachiki* were erected there. "The excavated earth was piled up into a large mound" and people gradually came to call that mound Poklonnaya Gora", writes Nina Tumarkin in *The Living and the Dead: the Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), p.215.
[6] N. Tumarkin's study *The Living and the Dead* shows that this ritual reached its apex under Leonid Brezhnev but was already on the wane in the 1980s.
[7] T. Colton, *Moscow*, p.579.

memorial complex was put on the agenda again in 1987, but a protest movement led by the prominent sculptor Vyacheslav Klykov, based on ecological and patriotic arguments, resulted in the launching of a second contest round in 1988, this time open to all citizens and not restricted to the site of Poklonnaya Gora. Wider participation fitted nicely with *perestroika*'s emphasis on increased democracy.[8]

The cathedral of Christ the Saviour was Vladimir Mokrousov's bold entry in the 1988 competition. He was not a dissenting artist, being a member of the the Russian Council of Artists and the Moscow Council of Artists which supervised and authorised politically correct artistic productions. He was also a member of the registered organisation *Bolshaya Volga*, which sought to stir up public awareness of the crumbling fate of historical monuments lining the banks of Russia's great Volga river. Confronted with the task of designing yet another monument to the Great Patriotic War, Mokrousov found it difficult to think up something meaningful and lasting, when so many monuments existed already, and when the greatest of war monuments, the cathedral of Christ the Saviour dedicated to 1812, had been destroyed so savagely[9]. He reflected that " it was absurd to build, without restoring first a moral conscience and an attitude of respect towards ancestors and history in today's generations "[10]. As he was walking past the *Moskva* swimming pool, an idea took shape in his head...[11]From an old engraving of the cathedral he reconstituted a more or less accurate model version of it, adding nearby a chapel in the name of St Georgy, patron-saint of Moscow,[12] and a second chapel with a tent-shaped belfry and little onion bulbs " representing the Soviet Union's many constituent nationalities "[13]. Choosing the swimming pool site instead of Poklonnaya Gora was a way

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[8] The difficulty of putting democracy in practice in cultural affairs, meant that there would eventually be 15 different stages in the competition between 1987 and 1990 (*Kommersant Daily*, 6 May 1995, p. 14, in *CDSP* Vol. XLVII, N° 1,1995). N. Tumarkin also notes that " intrigue within the powerful community of Soviet architects and sculptors (major monuments were a *big* business in the old Soviet Union) combined with growing glasnost-inspired sentiment that the people should have the right to control public culture " (*The Living and the Dead*, p. 217). Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov's approach will be discussed in Chapter V.

[9] " *Varvarstvo razrushen* " ('destroyed in an act of vandalism'), is the favourite, and now formulaic, way of describing the grim 1931 destruction.

[10] V. Mokrousov, interview, Moscow, 9 October 1996.

[11]The idea seems rather obvious, considering the fact that Poklonnaya Gora had been chosen precisely for its association with the 1812 Patriotic War which the cathedral also commemorated. (The hill had played no significant role in the Second World War, according to N. Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, p. 215).

[12] " Always represented slaying a dragon, St Georgy is a very appropriate symbol for military victory but especially for the Victory over the Fascists since St Georgy is celebrated by Orthodox people on 6 May, and given that Marshal Zhukov was called Georgy " explained V. Mokrousov, interview.

[13] See photograph of the sculptor with his model in annexe.

of preventing further pointless destruction, but also of returning to " the best place in Moscow,(...) the *belly-button of Russia* "[14].

It may seem odd that his model made it past the control staff supervising the ideological acceptability of submitted projects when participants signed up for exhibition space, but it went fortuitously unchecked thanks to the commotion following a burlesque incident at the Manezh Exhibition Hall[15]. For two weeks the cathedral model was freely on view and, reportedly, attracted visitors' great curiosity and support (some volunteered on the spot to donate money towards its reconstruction, asking with excitement " where is the urn?! ")[16]. When the police removed it from the show it received even more sympathetic publicity. *Moscow News*, edited at the time by Yegor Yakovlev, ran a favourable article mentioning the exhibition's church-like models (including a *cathedral of Christ the Saviour project*)[17]. The jury's secretary however, dismissed the excited conversations surrounding "designs of a nationalistic nature" as "demagogical" conversations, "*conducted on a highly emotional level.*"[18]

Mokrousov implies today that his project was censored because it was daring to mention in public the cathedral[19]. Enthusiasts started flocking to the artist's studio, (people of all ages and professions " united by strong patriotism and a common distaste for state lies "[20]). Mokrousov also believes that he was paid an unfriendly visit by the KGB. (His studio was broken into, belongings were moved around, but nothing was stolen)[21].

The secular, patriotic appeal of the cathedral as a victory monument (in the tradition of many other churches in Russia, built after victorious battles) over-rode the religious content of the edifice--what was holy and worth dying for was Russia, not Orthodoxy per se. In the loose community that

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[14] Article by V. Mokrousov in a special 4-page supplement devoted to the theme of the cathedral, issued by *Pravda,* April 1992, p.1.

[15] Immediately preceding V. Mokrousov, General Alexandr Ivanov, a pilot who was carrying his own project (a simplistic giant flag featuring Lenin's face), slipped and broke his teeth on the threshold of the Manezh Exhibition Hall, allowing Mokrousov to enter and avoid the censors. (V. Mokrousov, interview).

[16] V. Mokrousov, interview.

[17] N. Vasilyeva, 'Symbols of Victory', *Moscow News*, N°18, p. 14.

[18] Viktor Agashov, jury's secretary, interviewed by N. Davydova, in 'When the Famous Finished Last', *Moscow News*, N°25, 1988, p.14.

[19] V. Mokrousov underlined the originality and daring of his entry (V. Mokrousov, interview). But N. Tumarkin, who visited the Manezh exhibition in April 1988, mentions that " several models envisioned as a victory monument a reconstructed Cathedral of Christ the Saviour " (*The Living and the Dead*, p. 217). The most notorious alternative cathedral of Christ the Saviour project was the proposal to erect a full-scale metallic carcass, the golden contour of the cathedral, in memory of its irrevocable destruction. This project was variously attributed: to R. Venturi (in *Arkhitektura i Stroitel'stvo Moskvy* , N°3, 1989), but more often to Yury Seliverstov (see for example *Nauka i Religiya,* N°1, 1996).

[20] V. Mokrousov, interview.

[21] Ibid.

formed around the idea of promoting a return to sacred Russian traditions through the resurrection of the cathedral, few people were serious believers. The term they chose for their community, *Obshchina*, typically designates a religious association of twenty[22] or more figures. But only over time did the priest among them, Father Georgy (Dokukin), provide religious education to members of the *Obshchina*, teaching them how to pray and the meaning of repentance.[23]

The next bold step was taken by Father Georgy who suggested that they should attempt to register their association properly as a religious community, with the right to open a bank account and claim a locale for meetings. It was more an act of defiance-- concocted with the kindred-minded people who usually congregated near the Pushkin square or the TASS building-- than a serious endeavour. " We did not trust *perestroika* then. Everyone thought it was just a stratagem from above to crush those below who had the audacity to stick out their heads. Our gesture was aimed at 'testing the water temperature' "[24]. Furthermore, the building they were claiming for their community did not even exist! Twenty-four individuals put on paper their full names and personal addresses (the list was headed by Dokukin (Father Georgy), Vladimir Mokrousov and his wife, Valentina Mokrousova) and a delegation was formed to carry the list and registration demand to the *ispolkom* of the Leninsky raion. They came *en masse* into the office carrying a camera, and were thus able to film a civil servant running down the corridor, scared away by this apparently prank-prone gang. Somehow the footage made it on TV, on the current affairs programme *Vzglyad* in April 1989, and the idea was picked up in May by the editors of *Literaturnaya Rossiya* who announced that they supported the initiative and would establish in the near future a Fund for the Restoration of the Church of Christ the Saviour and open a bank account for donations.

The nationalist mix at Kino Rossiya's charity evening

Literaturnaya Rossiya was a 'pinkish' and nationalist literary newspaper, in the vein of the village prose writing which had developed under Brezhnev. It was the organ of the RSFSR Union of

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[22] A 1929 law required that congregations elect a 'committee of twenty' (*dvatsatka*) in order to lease a church building. Groups under twenty could be dissolved--a pretext often used for the closing down, conversion, or destruction of church buildings. See George Kline, *Religious and Anti-religious Thought in Russia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 149.

[23] V. Mokrousov, interview.

[24] Fr. Georgy (Dokukin), interview, Moscow, 9 October 1996.

Writers. Its nationalist and conservative stream contrasted with Father Georgy's more personally spiritual and radical purposes, as events and disagreements would soon show. But in the summer of 1989 the (unregistered) *Obshchina* and the people from *Literaturnaya Rossiya* joined forces to organise a special evening in the honour of both the 175th anniversary of the victory over Napoleon's forces and the 150th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the cathedral. The venue, *Kino Rossiya*, the big cinema in the centre of Moscow (near the Pushkin statue), was secured thanks to Father Georgy's financial resources (or so he claims), and more importantly, through the precious contacts of the newspaper's editors who found a receptive ear in the chief Communist Party ideologue Yegor Ligachev[25].

The event was by-invitation-only and featured a very interesting combination of characters and opinions. At the invitation stage, the unsteady balance between religiously inspired nationalist aspirations on the one hand, and nationalist ones motivated by the desire to maintain the Communist status quo on the other, was tilted in favour of the latter: Father Georgy's text for the invitation was rejected by the organisers from *Literaturnaya Rossiya* for mentioning 'God'. On lavish copper-coloured paper, it read " Dear Compatriots! If for you the renaissance of Russian culture is a sacred task, you can be a founder of the Fund for the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, by taking part in the charity evening dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the stone-laying ceremony of the cathedral built to thank GOD for having defended the Fatherland "[26]. The final (*'LitRos'*) version, designed in blue bold font, in the style of Soviet constructivist art, rallied people under the slogan " *Eto pamyatnik na veka* " ('It's a monument for centuries'). Note that Father Georgy's text, with its references to " renaissance " and " the Fatherland ", was proof that a broad common language existed between nationalists of different types, despite their inter-personal skirmishes.

The speakers of the first part of this evening (an extraordinary evening for its time) included mainly high-profile intellectuals, artists and literary figures like Igor Shafarevich-- the mathematician correspondent-member of the Academy of Sciences, turned publicist and philosopher-- and Vladimir Soloukhin-- an author who gained popularity before *glasnost'* by writing a few daring pieces about the land and the dilapidation of Russian heritage. Soloukhin, speaking as President of the *Fond Vosstanovleniya Khrama Khrista Spasitelya,* or Fund for the Restoration of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, established ceremoniously that evening, warmed the audience with the words " Dear friends!

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[25] Fr. Georgy, interview.
[26] See invitation in appendix.

we have gathered today to begin the restoration of the trampled and outraged honour of the Russian people...*The renaissance of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is a question of honour for each one of us, and a question of honour for our government if it wants to call itself popular (narodnim)* "[27].

Shafarevich's speech captured the main patriotic hope which participants attached to the rebuilding of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour. In this speech[28], common people's patriotism was described as the force which redeemed all of Russia 's sufferings (serfdom, foundation of Petrograd, etc.). Suffering did not stem from " the desire of half-Asiatic tsars, who wished to have a good army at their disposal to fight their neighbours " or from " nobility's cravings for Western comfort ." Rather, the suffering endured by the people was the secret motor of history. He extolled the serfs and peasants who fought " not to defend their masters, but somehow, moved by an irrational feeling, to defend the future of Pushkin and Dostoyevsky " in 1812-- a mystery akin to that of the courage displayed by *" muzhiki in the Second Patriotic War who had just been 'de-kulakised' and collectivised ".*

He went on interpreting Russia's history in the light of the cathedral's tragic experience: " that explosion [in 1931]-- it was like our whole history concentrated in one moment and point. (...) Then History showed that it is a force which defies human calculations and human plans. Something miraculous happened to the reinforced concrete monolith [the Palace of Soviets]: it started cracking and crumbling; weeds started pushing through the cracks, at first ungraceful plants but later more healthy ones. (...) We are going through such a fantastic and improbable period of history [*perestroika*] that it is now possible to hope and expect anything[29] (...) So today we are beginning a completely incredible task. (...) The resurrection of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour will be the affair of many years, maybe a few decades, and our generation will not see its completion (...) But if this affair does materialise, then it is really the Cathedral of all Russia that will rise, a Cathedral on the Blood of all Russian martyrs. The mystery of Christ's birth, passion, death and resurrection will translate into the birth, passion, death and resurrection of Russia ".

The cathedral and the Palace of Soviets had provided such perfect metaphors for past regimes (grand imperialism; steely Stalinism; weeds of 'Thaw') that it was tempting indeed to make sure that Russia would not enter the next historical phase in the form of a swimming pool. Although it

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[27] V. Soloukhin, quoted by A. Kolpakov, 'Khram Khrista Sp...', *Stolitsa*, N°20, 1993.
[28] Igor' Shafarevich, 'Vistuplenie na vechere posvyashennom pamyati 150-letya zakladki khrama khrista spasiltelya i ucherezhdeniyu fonda ego vosstanovleniya', 24 September 1989, reproduced in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p.231-233.
[29] Remember that in September 1989 the Berlin wall was still standing but political events had already taken decisive turns in other Eastern European countries.

rationalised past suffering as manifestations of Russia's sacred destiny, Shafarevich's speech was moderately chauvinistic. (But it is also probable that more enflamed speeches would not have been reprinted in the same memorial collection of articles and essays published by the Moscow Government in 1996[30]).

An additional clue to the ideological motives of many participants, was provided by the presence of Colonel Aleksandr Rutskoi, shrouded with the fame of his heroism in Afghanistan and chairman of the Moscow *Otechestvo* society (Fatherland) since May 1988[31]. Many felt acutely the loss of prestige of the Soviet army, after the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, and shared deep amazement as they witnessed the first signs of the Communist bloc disintegrating, in open defiance of years of Soviet intimidation and strength. The cathedral and the 1812 victory it represented, became important as a symbol of valour and glory; remembering it collectively was a way of getting a grip on one's self and pledging to stop the trend of Soviet decline by reviving essential patriotism and respect for military duty. These opinions ran counter to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's new thinking in foreign policy, and to a certain extent to the mood of anti-militarism perceptible in society. But no doubt many were astounded to see the Soviet Union pulling out of the Cold War, apparently succumbing to the Western ideas. By contrast, in 1812, the Russian Empire had fought valliantly and vanquished Napoleon's armies and seditious ideas...

When Father Georgy's turn to speak came up, the master of ceremonies called an intermission and switched off the stage's spotlights. Insults and injunctions came from the audience calling him among other things " Pope Gapon "[32]. He kept his cool and asked those not hungry or thirsty yet to stay away from the buffet, to come closer to him, and to get down on their knees and repent their sins.[33] A line of people did form to consult with him and pray, but Colonel Rutskoi meanwhile had an orchestra play loud military music.[34] The idea of repentance, which enjoyed popularity with the intelligentsia, following the ground-breaking release of the allegorical Georgian

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[30] N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya* (Moscow: Stolitsa, 1996).
[31] The Moscow *Otechestvo* society was founded by the journals *Moskva, Nash sovremennik,* and *Molodaya Gvardiya,* and the Moscow branch of the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments (VOOPIK). " Its aim was patriotic and internationalist education, especially military patriotic education, and it enjoyed military support ", writes Peter Duncan in Geoffrey Hosking (ed.),*The Road to Post-Communism: Independent Political Movements in the USSR, 1985-1991* (London: Pinter, 1992), p. 84.
[32]Father Gapon was a Slavophile, a disciple of Zubatov, and the founder of " police socialism "--a paternalistic approach to workers' welfare which proved dramatically naive on Bloody Sunday in 1905. See Walter Sablinsky, *The Road to Bloody Sunday* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).
[33] Article 'Khram Khrista Sp..'by Aleksandr Kolpakov in *Stolitsa,* N°20, 1993, and Fr. Georgy, interview.
[34] Apollos Ivanov (witness and guest of honour at the Kino Rossiya evening), interview, Moscow, 5 October 1996.

film *Repentance* (by T. Abuladze) in 1986, was thus pushed into the background at this charity evening. It probably seemed a dangerously self-critical and fuzzily spiritual notion to patriots who had assembled instead to boost their morale with visions of renewed Russian grandeur. It was not time to discuss a little-known priest's dream of creating a Union of Sinners and Repenting People.

At the event, there were few representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church-- and none from the hierarchy, according to Yury Klitsenko, an Orthodox layman and staff member of the External Affairs Department of the Moscow Patriarchate. Klitsenko had made a few contributions to *Literaturnaya Rossiya* but, that evening, was shocked by the extremist discourse and atmosphere of the whole gathering and allegedly " stopped flirting with nationalist politics soon afterwards ".[35] His position exemplified the peculiar attitude of conservatism and restraint often displayed by the Russian Orthodox Church: it is inherently sympathetic to patriotic and conservative causes, but not interested in compromising its relationship with power by sticking out its neck in favour of such causes until they are officially sponsored by the state.

Mention of Pope Gapon in relation with Father Georgy is confusing because in fact, it was the nationalist-conservative main contingent in the cinema hall which blatantly benefited from protection from above (within the Communist Party), while Father Georgy seemed a more free-lance, dissident-type character.[36]Perhaps he was simply castigated for being member of an Orthodox Church

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[35] Yury Klitsenko, interview, Moscow, 4 September 1996.

[36] Fr. Georgy's biography has its mysteries, but nothing proves that the man worked for the KGB. Yury Nikolaevich Dokukin became an Orthodox priest in 1980 (in his late thirties) after having occupied a secular position that he declined to describe to me. He served first in a very central Muscovite church on Bolshaya Ordinka but was moved to the smaller Peter and Paul Church in the Kitai-Gorod neighbourhood (east of the Kremlin, not far from the Budapest high building), " as a small punishment-- for being too enthusiastic" (mainly: baptising too many people). The Peter and Paul church is one of the rare churches which remained open throughout the Communist era and, in Fr. Georgy's own words, it attracted " many interesting people; many KGB agents flocked here ".
The promotion of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour idea fitted within his political worldview and spiritual mind-set.
Although he congratulated Zhirinovsky for his ideas and strong results in 1993 and was branded an ultra-nationalist by the daily *Moskovsky Komsomolets* in May 1991 (a clipping he showed me), he resents all stamps and instead likes to think of himself as a believer in Orthodox messianism. (At the time of our interview, in 1996, his ultimate aim was to have Orthodoxy lead the Christian world and defeat Islam).
He fell in disgrace with the Patriarch because of his strong-willed and independent behaviour, and was forbidden from serving liturgy (the errings of his private life were the official reason given by the Church authorities for making him an outcast). He believes the Church should be a community of repenting sinners instead of a dogmatic institution.
For several years now, as director of the ' Spiritual Theatre *Glas'*, he has illustrated his interpretation of the notion of repentance in theatrical shows, inspired from Gogol but with a born-again flavour.
(I went to the opening of his troupe's 1996 season on 7 October and interviewed him at length on 9 October and 12 October. Lev Levinson and Apollos Ivanov also informed me about the character in seperate interviews).

undoubtedly infiltrated and moulded by the KGB since the creation of the Patriarchate in 1944.[37]

The KGB can also be evoked in connection with the fact that as early as 1985 or 1986 the extreme nationalist and anti-semitic group *Pamyat'* ('Memory') benefited from KGB help and protection when it was granted access to the footage of the cathedral's destruction kept in closed archives and was allowed to screen it in meetings held at night in the Central House of Artists' cinema hall, near Gorky Park. An eye witness (hiding in the film-projection booth)[38], recalls how *Pamyat'* used the clip to illustrate its theory of a Jewish plot against great Russian power because it was well known that Lazar Kaganovich, who was believed to be prominently associated with the decision to blow up the cathedral, was of Jewish origin[39]. The whole Communist regime was portrayed as a Jewish plot by implication, since the scene of the cathedral dramatically collapsing in three massive jolts, was framed with a view of Lenin raising his cloth cap, and a long shot of the Siberian rivers due to be diverted by the 'saboteurs' still in power.[40]

It would be a wild extrapolation however to see in the antipathy shown towards Father Georgy, a case of friction between the KGB and the Communist Party, since affiliations and lines of division could not be drawn so simply (just as the tags 'arch-conservative', 'extreme-nationalist', 'spiritual-patriotic' or 'Orthodox fundamentalist' lost sense in the face of surprising coalitions later built up with 'democrats' in power). What can be said is that, by 1989, a whole array of institutions or, more precisely, groups of people within these institutions, had an interest in shoring up patriotic feelings for

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[37] See Bruce Clark, *An Empire's New Clothes: The End of Russia's Liberal Dream* (London: Vintage, revised edition 1996), p. 91, on how the KGB preserved the Orthodox Church (or rather, its outward appearance) throughout years of atheist rule, to use it in the interest of the Greater Russian state.
As part of an investigative parliamentray commission which consulted KGB files after the 1991 coup, Fr. Gleb Yakunin came to damning conclusions regarding these KGB links and activities. In leaflets and articles, he has built a convincing case against the Church's hierarchy and on those grounds, has repeatedly called for its purge and disbanding.

[38] Mikhail Osadchev, Moscow, 16 September 1996.

[39] T. Colton recounts how Lazar Kaganovich later claimed to " have warned that the demolition of the church would be held by ethnic Russians against him, a Jew, and against the party and would 'call forth a flood of anti-semitism' ", but Stalin " was unmoved by this thought ". (T. Colton, *Moscow,* p.261-262). In what may have been the same interview ('Za Rodinu, za Stalina', published in November 1993, newspaper source lost), Kaganovich denied having said " *zaderem podol matushke-- Rossi* " (' we have ripped off the hem of your skirt, mother Russia') from a tribune set up at the House of Writers. The chilling sentence is commonly attributed to him.

[40] Note how the causes of natural and cultural heritage (also at the origin of the protest against Poklonnaya Gora) were combined and offered a popular platform for Pamyat's extreme nationalism.There could be more than coïncidential reasons for this: N. Tumarkin writes that the sculptor V. Klykov was " rumoured to be linked with Pamyat' " *The Living and the Dead,* p. 218.

different reasons. The divisive question was what should be the object of this conservative, obedient mind-set: the Soviet Union? the Russian empire? Orthodox Russia? But the symbolism of the cathedral with its pantheon commemorating " not Soviet but Russian warriors (Russians, Georgians, Kalmyks..) "[41] in Soloukhin's words, could overarch and cloak these differences for the time being.

In the immediate wake of the evening, the Fund for the Restoration of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour entered the Bloc of Public and Patriotic Movements of Russia which prepared to compete in the historic 1990 elections. Its platform was entitled 'For a Policy of National Accord and Russian Rebirth' and published on 29 December 1989 in *Literaturnaya Rossiya*[42]. It featured environmental causes and the protection and restoration of architectural landmarks, but these were " secondary notes in the chorus on the right. The primary chord raged at *perestroika* and defended an imperial nationality policy. "[43] The programme stated for example that " 'left radicals' are prepared to dismember the USSR and sell off our wealth to Western 'partners'. It is difficult to cite any other period in our Homeland's past when our national dignity and our national pride were reviled with such frank sadism. (...)They have launched a campaign for the legalisation of private property falsely called 'transfer to the people' of means of production', so they can become the bosses of the country." It concluded with a discourse foreshadowing formulas which would become mainstream after the closing of Russia's era of radical transformations: " Russian rebirth depends on every one of us, on our selfless labour and our high level of self-discipline and responsibility. Let us revive the glorious name of Russian (*russky i rossianin*) and the human dignity of all the peoples of our multinational Fatherland! (...)We don't need great upheavals, we need a Great Soviet Russia! No to separatism, chaos, enmity between nationalities and civil strife! "[44]

This suggests that the destroyed cathedral was remembered above all for its multiple political thought-associations, rather than envisaged under the angle of a building one could seriously bring back to life. The imperial cathedral was an imaginary place of unity, a *'lieu de mémoire'* (to borrow

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[41] V. Soloukhin, 'Esli ulitsa ne vedet k khramu...', *Literaturnaya Rossiya* , N°35, 1 September 1989, p. 6.
[42] It was signed by 12 associations including: the United Council of Russia Associtaion (or National Accord; itself an umbrella group), the Unity Association of Lovers of Russian Literature and Art, the Russia Club of USSR People's Deputies and Voters, the All-Russian Cultural Fund, VOOPIK, the United Front of Working People of Russia, the Public Committee to Save the Volga, and the Fund to Restore the Church of Christ the Savior (what I call Fund for the Restoration of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour).
[43] T. Colton, *Moscow*, p.619.
[44] *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, 7 February 1990, in *CDSP,* Vol XLII, N°, 1990.

the historian Pierre Nora's expression), as particular places associated to key events in national histories can be.[45]

If the patriotic-imperialist idea behind the commemorative cathedral was the core motivating force behind the most active and vocal advocates mentioned above, the poor results of the Bloc suggest that the market for these jingoist ideas was rather reduced in contrast with the more open and forward-looking ones uttered by democratic candidates (Democratic Russia elected 282 deputies while the right elected only 12)[46]. And yet, the promoters of the cathedral's fame, curiously acting like impresarios for a dead diva, felt that they were tapping into a huge pool of popular sympathy. The petition campaign started by the (unregistered) *Obshchina* had managed to collect 50,000 signatures[47] in Moscow, Sverdlovsk, Kiev, Pervoural'sk, Tbilisi, Novosibirsk, etc. in a few months in the summer of 1989, simply by approaching people in public gardens and pedestrian underpasses. It was tempting for a well-organised political movement to transform support for the cathedral into support for a wider platform.

In the model for decision-making proposed by John Kingdon in *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (1984), emphasis is put on the fact that policy-entrepreneurs are like surfers waiting for a wave which will carry them (and their ideas) closer to the shore. One such wave is public mood, as perceived by officials in power (presuming that they are receptive to it when they are elected by the people)[48]. Arguably the (unregistered) *Obshchina*, the Fund, or later the Brotherhood and the registered *Obshchina* would have been utterly incapable of influencing governmental figures' agenda-setting if the cause they were supporting had not seemed to be enjoying broad public support. On their own, these associations controlled few assets which could be used as bargaining chips. We must therefore widen our focus and pay attention to what was happening outside the group agitation described above.

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[45] Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986).
[46] Peter Duncan in G. Hosking (ed.),*The Road to Post-Communism,* p. 88.
[47] This figure, quoted by A. Ivanov, *Tainy Khrama Khrista* (p. 159), is only an estimate and may have been exaggerated. A comparable signature campaign started by the group Memorial in the autumn and winter of 1987-1988, and calling for the erection of a memorial to Stalin's victims, had collected 30,000 signatures by June 1988 (G. Hosking, *The Road to Post-Communism*, p. 17).
[48] See J. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, p.191-192.

Indeed, extremists or conservatives were far from enjoying an exclusive take on cathedral facts and myths. Although today they may be keen on presenting themselves as taboo-shattering pioneers, most educated Muscovites already knew of the cathedral's existence in some detail despite years of official silence. Typically, the past glory of the pool's site would be pointed out in private conversations to visiting foreign friends. Another sign of this awareness was the fact that a polemical article in the journal *Moskva* in March 1962 could mention the cathedral's destruction as if it were an open secret (but great reprobation followed this audacity, confirming the cathedral's taboo status)[49]. A small picture of the religious building figured for the first time in the 1980 Great Soviet Encyclopaedia's special volume on Moscow (in the honour of the Olympics).[50]

It is also likely that images of the building were kept in many homes, since the cathedral was one of the favourite subjects of both photographic and postcard industries which boomed at the turn of the century. Evgenia Kirichenko, the cathedral's most authoritative art historian, argues that this made the cathedral of Christ the Saviour a metonymy for Moscow[51], equivalent in status to St Basil's, whose colourful bulbs are nearly obligatory in tourist brochures today. Fuelling people's passion for revisiting history (now that *glasnost'* allowed to do so almost unrestrictedly), or perhaps seeking to profit from this surge of interest for things past, hidden, and destroyed, old postcards of 'lost Moscow' were re-edited and sold like hot buns in the streets.[52] Interest for the cathedral of Christ the Saviour was clearly carried by the wave of fashionable novelty: a curiosity for the 'new' (revised) past.

The black and white film clip of the building's destruction secured an even wider fame for the cathedral since it was broadcast on television, beamed across the Soviet Union. It became a veritable *cliché* in both senses of the word: a mechanical reproduction and a commonplace representation[53].

Demonstrating the importance of context in ascribing meaning to mute images, the same fragment of film which Pamyat' projected to fit its anti-Semitic purposes, was used in the documentary

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[49] T. Colton, *Moscow*, p. 419.
[50] It was inserted by A. Ivanov who was working then on the Committee for the Organisation of the Olympics.
[51] E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve*, p. 158.
[52] One such pack of coloured-in, black-and-white views (including one which featured the cathedral) was printed in 1990 with the mention in bold capital letters: " PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME FROM THE FUNDS OF THE MOSCOW HISTORY MUSEUM ".
[53] Laura Mulvey, interview, London, 1 July 1996.

film *Khram* ('Church') showed in Leningrad cinemas starting in February 1988 as part of a little advertised and cautious step towards remembering the Russian Orthodox Church's history, on the eve of its Millennium[54]. Excerpts were also broadcast on television shortly before the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Moscow, June 1988[55]. Soon it would become mainstream footage, with usage ranging from music video clips to background action for credits...In these different usages the underlying message could be confrontational (look at what *they* did to us), or repenting (look at what *we* have done with ourselves). This disturbing but fascinating footage of the cathedral's destruction could be compared with Stanislav Govorukhin's daring (but heavily biased) documentary films *Tak zhit' nelzya* ('No Way To Live'; 1990) and especially *Rossiya, kotoruyu mi poteryali* ('The Russia We Have Lost'; 1992) which elicited from viewers reactions ranging from self-pity and self-criticism to awe for what existed under the tsars.[56]

Aside from these two iconic manifestations (old postcards of the cathedral standing; moving images of the cathedral collapsing), knowledge was spread in specialised journals like *Arkhitektura i Stroitel'stvo Moskvy,* starting with an article chastely titled 'Towards the history of the choice of a site for the Palace of Soviets' in 1988[57], but also diffused in publications with wider readerships in more accessible, and at times sensational, forms.

A prolific source of such stories was the elderly author Apollos Ivanov[58], who started writing a half-fiction book in 1976 after retiring. He used his experience as an engineer for the construction of the Palace of Soviets, archival material, as well as fantasy to deal with his twin passions, the destruction of the cathedral (which he witnessed) and the exploration of hidden tunnels connecting the site of the cathedral with the Kremlin (possibly leading to Ivan the Terrible's mysterious library). Although his book *Tainy Khrama Khrista* ('Secrets of the Cathedral of Christ') was only published in

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[54] Samizdat by Serguei Lopukhin, 26 March 1988, in Keston Institute archives. Lopukhin argues that the film represented " for the majority of Soviet people a really open (although embellished and superficial) account of the ROC's life ". It was directed by Diyakonov.
[55] J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p. 31.
[56] M. Yampolsky has argued that the film fragment was the most shown piece of the Soviet chronicle in the post-Soviet period. 'In the Shadow of Monuments' in *Soviet Hieroglyphics: Visual Culture in Late Twentieth Century Russia* (London: British Film Institute, 1995), p.101. Thereby, the footage gradually lost some of its emotional impact, but it did much to spread public awareness of the building.
[57] Selim Khan-Mahomedov, 'K istorii vibora mesta dlya Dvortsa Sovetov', *Arkhitektura i Stroiltel'stvo Moskvy,* N°1, 1988.
[58] Apollos Ivanov was born in 1911 in Southern-Arkhangelsk. He came to Moscow in 1931 to work for the Directorate for the Construction of the Palace of Soviets and witnessed the destruction of the cathedral. He claims no part in the explosion and emphasised during our interview that that his "moral conscience" had prompted him to leave the Palace building team in 1934.

May 1995, he gave numerous talks, contributed to up to 40 articles and also helped to make films on the two subjects[59]. He received tremendous response from citizens living in and outside of Moscow, who told him in their letters: " We never knew that such a cathedral existed! " or " Thank you for revealing this at last. " [60]

Many people's interest in the cathedral was kindled by curiosity for the occult rather than owed to a sense of personal religious or patriotic imperative. A. Ivanov often wrote about the site of the 'Moskva' pool as a site which had always been cursed by the devil[61]: it had first been the scene of terrible violence caused by the *oprichnina* (Ivan's political police force); then, the epicentre of a plague which had produced piles of corpses burried without proper religious funerals; later still, when houses were built near this unruly cemetery, inhabitants of the area experienced strange angsts and hallucinations, which led many of them to commit suicide. Closer to date, A. Ivanov wrote, " extrasenses have confirmed the presence of fields of Forces of Destruction, especially powerful in the western part of the [*Moskva*] swimming pool. "[62] And popular wisdom held that people had drowned in this pool because they were somehow "pulled down by the feet. "[63] In addition to this occult trivia, another legend claimed that the 19th-century cathedral's altar and iconostasis had been bought by Eleanor Roosevelt and donated to the Vatican. (It contributed to people's belief that recreating the cathedral to the standard of past splendour would be relatively simple.)[64]

Thus, by 1991, groups of individuals were petitioning, devoting time and resources to lobbying, erecting crosses near the swimming pool, opening bank accounts (and even a whole

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[59]His articles appeared first in 1989, in newspapers and magazines at home like *Nauka i Zhizn'* and abroad, in *The Houston Chronicle, The Los Angeles Times* and the Italian edition of *Christian Family* magazine. He became known as an authority on the subject of the cathedral and was therefore invited to speak at a candle-lit meeting of the initial (unregistered) *Obshchina*, in the basement of the Peter and Paul Church as well as made an honorary guest at the *Kino Rossiya* evening. Although very old, blind and living in the outskirts of Moscow, he continues to promote actively his writings and findings. (In 1996, 85 years old, he was still involved in the search for Ivan the Terrible's hidden library).

[60] A. Ivanov, interview.

[61] See for example, 'Tayna drevnogo Chertol'ya', in *Vechernaya Moskva*, 24 June 1989 and 28 October 1989, or 'Tayna Cherto'lskogo urochishcha' in *Nauka i zhizn'*, N°1, 1989 or 'Tayny Khrama Khrista Spasitelya' in *Moskvichka,* N°23, August 1993.

[62] This list is drawn from an article by A. Ivanov published in a Russian equivalent of *Playboy* magazine, *Andrei,* N°4, 1994. In the same article, he stated that " for sixty years, exploring the underground passages under the *Chertol'e* [name of the cathedral's neighborhood--which ominously contains the word *chert*, or 'devil'] and tracking down the traces of the library of Ivan the Terrible, I have been confronted constantly with inexplicable dark forces. (...) I believe that [the cathedral's] renaissance is the only effective way of keeping in check evil energies. I am convinced that many problems in Russia will be solved if this happens. "

[63] Ibid.

[64] The myth was so pervasive that Mayor Luzhkov himself eventually paid a visit to the Pope in Rome, in February 1995 in the hope of finding the artistic treasure in the Vatican's coffers.

bank!)[65]. They were partly motivated by the hope of reaping political and financial benefits from the idea of rebuilding the cathedral, and partly moved by a genuine desire to see its golden domes grace the Moscow sky. Meanwhile, the emptiness above the wide open *Moskva* pool was not only distressing-- chlorine vapours, allegedly, were slowly damaging the art collections of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, across the street[66].

Society at large seemed receptive to the idea of rebuilding the cathedral (the first poll on the subject was only conducted post-factum, in October 1994 but the successful signature campaign conducted by the unregistered *Obshchina* was interpreted as a sufficient manifestation of popular will). It was swept by desire for all sorts of recently forbidden fruits: sensitive historical topics, religion, UFOs...now common staples in the liberalised, late Soviet media. Furthermore, society had been bombarded with stories and film extracts about the cathedral. Around that time (1991-1992), a camera crew filming for Father Georgy's Brotherhood asked passers-by in the neighbourhood of the swimming pool " Excuse me, does this road lead to the church? " (paraphrasing the famous last dialogue of the film *Repentance*) and although it received many blank looks and shrugs in return, a fair portion of Muscovite interviewees knew what the crew was referring to and pointed in the direction of the *Moskva* swimming pool[67].

At this stage however, the cathedral had not yet been defined as a problem which required governmental action. Why was it never considered a priority under Gorbachev? Why did it become an item on Yeltsin's agenda? Incidentally, we see that grass-roots agitation and public mood are to be understood as conditions of this historical decision (initiating discussion of the idea of reconstruction in wide social circles), but not as sufficient causes. Although the idea had already attracted populist interest from aspiring politicians (like Aleksandr Rutskoi) and even calculation from enterprising individuals, two obstacles stopped the ball from 'rolling': President Mikhail Gorbachev's attitude and the ROC hierarchy's own agenda.

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[65] Fr. Georgy's Bank of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was founded in 1990 after a split ocurred in the unregistered *Obshchina* following the *Kino Rossiya* event: some members (like sculptor Mokrousov), chose to stay with *Literaturnaya Rossiya*'s Fund for the Restoration of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour; others followed Fr. Georgy in his move to create a secular Brotherhood of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, which was easier to register since it had no religious status and did not require the Church's benediction. He created the bank to manage collected donations and " protect them from inflation ". The financial story (as far as I understand it) will be dealt with in Chapter IV.

[66] T. Colton, *Moscow*, p. 367.

[67] I have a copy of this video thanks to Fr. Georgy.

Lack of response from President Gorbachev and the ROC Patriarchate

In a very brief interview with the author, Mikhail Gorbachev admitted that he had played no role what so ever in the history of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour, since he thought that the very difficult economic and social conditions plaguing his time in office made the project " untimely "[68].He may have been reluctant to acknowledge his hand in a project which had become by then (1996) a hallmark of his opponent Boris Yeltsin's regime. But trawling the past in search of Mikhail Gorbachev's indirect influence on the cathedral phenomena, leads to the same conclusion: Gorbachev's policies in the areas of religion and nationality did not provide the fully supportive context needed to erect a monument of such distinct nationalistic and religious character as the cathedral of Christ the Saviour. Allowing *glasnost'* to awake and create public awareness of these once-taboo subjects was Gorbachev's single greatest contribution.

Indeed, we have seen that the cathedral's memory was revived by individuals belonging to the political right (or influencing it) as an empire-saving device[69], an object of pride credited with almost talismanic power by embodying the spirit of imperialism which seemed crucially lacking in practice. Although Gorbachev himself perceived as tragic the onslaught of centrifugal forces (Baltic states) and the loss of central power (a perverse result of his democratisation and economic liberalisation reforms), he was probably more inclined by education and outlook to seek rational methods to save the Union rather than charismatic ones symbolically linking him to past tsars and manipulating Orthodox identity.[70]

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[68] Mikhail Gorbachev, interview at a St Antony's College reception after a lecture in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, 28 Oct 1996. Asked what he thought of the new cathedral of Christ the Saviour, and whether he supported the idea when it appeared under his rule, Gorbachev answered: " I did not support the idea then because I very much doubted that our country could afford it at the time, given the gravity of socio-economic needs. I did not help in any way." He added "I still have doubts today as to the appropriateness of the timing. " However, when asked whether the cathedral was linked with the idea of repentance, he stated " Yes, indeed. And I am in favour of rebuilding what Stalin destroyed; we do have a debt towads history. It is the right thing to do. "

[69] I borrow the expression from John Dunlop, 'The Russian Orthodox Church as an 'Empire-Saving' Institution', in M. Bourdeaux (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1995). See also Roman Szporluk, 'Dilemnas of Russian Nationalism', *Problems of Communism*, XXXVIII, Vol. 4, July-August 1989.

[70]On the other hand, Yegor Ligachev clearly saw the Russian Orthodox Church's 'empire-saving' potential as demonstrated by his decision to back the Kino Rossiya event. Richard Sakwa, in *Russian Politics and Society* (London: Routledge, second edition 1996), p. 200, describes the decision to allow the celebration of the millenium of Christianity in Russia " with great pomp " as an example of the " typically ambiguous way Gorbachev sought to coopt some elements of Russian national rebirth to buttress the regime. " Another way of undermining opposition was to taint patriots (Russian anti-communists) with the same brush as extreme nationalists and encourage the growth of Pamyat' to use it as a scarecrow.

Secondly, although freedom of religion (Law on the Freedom of Conscience 1990) and the institutional status of the Russian Orthodox Church (April 1988 marked the first meeting between a Soviet leader and the church hierarchy since 1947) made great progress under Gorbachev, the man himself never pretended to be a believer and these changes occurred arguably, less because of state policy than because of the momentum of Millennium celebrations which took place in 1988.[71] With economic transformation as the leader's top priority, religion was merely envisaged as a motivating and moralising force which could foster positive attitudes in the work place[72] -- the rest was improvised when the logic of *glasnost'* revealed (and created) a great thirst for religion and religious traditions.

Conceivably, new policy on religion could go only in the direction of religious freedom given Gorbachev's commitment at home and abroad to human rights principles. Although police structures were sometimes slow to change their ways (as witnessed by the KGB's visit to Mokrousov's studio for example), religious phenomena were freed from repressive state supervision and supposedly put into church structures' sole hands (the Council for Religious Affairs continued to exist but its functions were limited-- at least on paper). The fact that the Church itself had not undergone its *perestroika* to meet appropriately the needs of believers old and young was a separate problem.

The ROC hierarchy's apparent indifference to the project provides another explanation for the absence of a policy breakthrough on the cathedral question in the late Soviet years.

While the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA) had marked the 100th anniversary of the consecration of the cathedral in 1984, by publishing extracts of a comprehensive description of the cathedral by M. Mostovsky, the Moscow Patriarchate remained silent, both on that early occasion and in 1989 (150th anniversary of the cornerstone ceremony). Speaking from headquarters in New York, the first could comment in a foreword to the publication: " Those who destroyed people's goods and ruined peoples' valuables and treasures which were amassed by our ancestors over many centuries, have been ruling Russia for 67 years already. When will this nightmare of violence and destruction cease? The Bible tells us about 70 years of captivity in

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[71] J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p.43.

[72] Pimen, then Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus, stressed that " the clergy sees its pastoral and patriotic mission as inculcating in parishioners a conscientious and honest attitude towards labour . " (in *Izvestiya*, 9 April 1988, *CDSP* Vol.XL. N°15, 1988). See also J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p.28.

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Babylon; it also speaks of liberation ."[73] Meanwhile, the Moscow Patriarchate pursued the same strategy of non-confrontation, caution, and patience it had carefully worked out over the years[74].

It refused to help register the *Obshchina* in 1989 and frowned upon Father Georgy's Brotherhood and banking activities, eventually forbidding him to conduct services. One explanation for this unsupportive attitude could be that it judged the groupings' proposal to rebuild the cathedral completely utopian (given the size of the object), and unnecessarily provocative in atheist times. However, the religious community which conducted propaganda in the name of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour had initially only required the right to lease a locale in which members could pray and work on expanding the scope of their spiritual movement.[75] In fact, the hierarchy itself had grand plans.

Since 1988, it was pursuing an alternative cathedral project to mark the Millennium of Russian Orthodoxy. The foundation stone-laying ceremony took place on 13 June 1988 in the south of Moscow, on the Tsaritsino park grounds. Patriarch Pimen duly underlined on this occasion " the positive results of *perestroika* in improving state-church relations "[76], while Konstantin Kharchev, Chairman of the infamous Council for Religious Affairs, dialectically declared that " the laying of this foundation stone is the incarnation of Leninist principles ".[77] Although these platitudes make the event sound unpromising today, the details of the construction brief indicate on the contrary that a very ambitious project was being discreetly pushed forward. An article in *Izvestiya* described the future memorial church as " one of the largest church buildings in Russia. (...)In terms of dimension and capacity--10,000 worshipers--it can be compared only with St Isaac's Cathedral in the city on the Neva. " [78]

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[73] Foreward reproduced in A. Ivanov, *Tainy Khrama Khrista*, p. 207-109.

[74] B. Clark explains that Orthodox prelates' traditional loyalty to the state is not "an advanced form of cynicism". It derives from the fact that "eastern Christendom profoundly believes that coexistence with earthly powers- so long as they do not interfere in theological matters- is less spiritually damaging than actually becoming an earthly power, complete with an army, treasury and diplomatic service, which was the path followed by Rome. " (B. Clark, *An Empire's New Clothes*, p. 93).

[75] Fr. Georgy, interview.

[76] G. Charodeev, 'Vozvedenie khrama v Tsaritsine', *Izvestiya,* N°166, 14 June 1988.

[77] J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church,* p.30.

[78] Archbishop Aleksy of Zaraisk, chairman of the economic administration of the Moscow Patriarchate, revealed the grand scale of the Church's plans: " On the ground floor there will be a conference hall (...). The church will be provided with the necessary radio and television equipment for airing special programs and broadcasts. There will be a separate underground parking garage for 700 cars " He concluded with the following words " I want to express the hope that believers and all our fellow citizens who so desire will provide assistance in the construction of the church through donations. " (*Izvestiya*, 30 May 1988 in *CDSP* Vol. XLI, N°22, 1989).

The idea of building a new cathedral of Christ the Saviour must therefore have seemed somewhat annoying to the Church hierarchy when it sprung up from lower quarters and gained wide public support the following year. The resources which its own plans required meant that the hierarchy could not view favourably any competing construction.

With unresponsive secular and religious authorities, inflation eating away donations, in-fighting splitting apart patriotic groups, and popular interest captured by other fads, could the cathedral idea have vanished like a dream?

Father Georgy was noticed day and night around the barricades of the August coup in 1991, urging soldiers to remain calm, praying with defenders of the White House, acquiring himself a face and name within democratic circles. He waded through the crowds (so conveniently assembled and galvanised by the extraordinary events), hitting home with his charismatic talk in favour of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour, symbol of Russian valour and victory.[79]

Indeed, another force was at work which carried the idea into the next era, unto new Russian democrats' agendas: the rise of Russian nationalism --first, as a tactical move to 'squeeze out' Soviet leadership, then, as an important element in the post-Soviet Russian regime's tentative state-consolidating ideology. This is what I discuss in chapter III.

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[79] Fr. Georgy, interview. This visible activity was confirmed by another source: "While the leadership debated its position, Orthodox priests were to be found among the crowds assembled around the White House (...). They included priests from the ROCA as well as those from the Moscow Patriarchate; among the latter were Archpriest Georgi Dokukin and Fr Valeri Suslin. " (J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p.130).

CHAPTER III-- The Cathedral of Christ the Saviour as an Ideological Construction.

This chapter looks at the cathedral of Christ the Saviour as a mainly ideological[1] construction: a monument meant to foster and buttress people's support for the post-Soviet Russian state.

The case for the cathedral's rebuilding progressed in two major leaps, in 1992 and 1994, under the aegis of governmental authority. These moves occurred when ideological concerns were at the forefront of politicians' minds in the aftermath of two defining crises: the August 1991 coup, which gave birth to independent post-Communist Russia, and the October 1993 conflict, which manifested political and social cleavages bordering on civil war. Many of the meanings ascribed to the monument were also formulated in preparation for the 1996 presidential election, so the whole 1991-1996 period is worth considering in this discussion.

The coup provided an opportunity for the rapprochement of two forces which entertained until then a mutual antipathy. While Democrats favoured the rebirth of Russian statehood more than that of nationalism[2], tactical reasons made them temporarily receptive to Russian nationalist ideas: all groups were welcome to join in the slaying of the Communist dragon. Father Georgy's visible pro-Russian activism on the barricades, meant that he, like Colonel Rutskoi, made friends in the camp of the Democrats who would soon gain sovereign power with the dissolution of the USSR. In the wake of the failed coup, " the corridors of power were very accessible; it was a moment of rare fluidity--things would soon freeze up ", he recalls. At that time, " it was easier to get along with the Democrats " and propagate the idea among them, " than to get along with those of my own camp [the National-patriots]. "[3]

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[1] I use the term 'ideology' loosely in this chapter to designate a legitimising device, used by politicians to transform their influence into widely undisputed authority, as well as a more general set of views, " formulated in more or less persistent, integrated doctrines that purport to explain and justify their leadership in the system " [Robert Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis,* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, fourth edition, 1984), p. 55]. The reigning ideology (the moral, religious, factual and other cultural assumptions shared, to a greater or lesser degree, by the people and state), does not rest solely on political propaganda formulated from above, but this chapter focuses on leaders' creative utterances; adherence to or rejection of the official ideology will be discussed in Chapter V.

[2] Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, p.37.

[3] Fr. Georgy, interview.

But the importance of personal contacts[4] made by Father Georgy, the self-styled cathedral policy entrepreneur, or by other members of groups agitating in favour of the cathedral can be seriously questioned. Individual nationalists *were* co-opted increasingly into the presidential entourage over time, especially once the " disappointing phase of Westernization "[5] was over. But also, the reigning ideology and mainstream discourse simply grew more patriotic over time. National-patriots like Colonel Rutskoi may have fallen in and out of favour (mostly because of the violent resolution of the power struggle between the presidency and the parliament in October 1993), but the imperatives of returning to Russian roots, bolstering Russian social unity, and defending Russian power--in other words, a Great Russia programmatic ideology--held sway in the political establishment throughout the period. Groups were instrumental in waking up the collective memory of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour, as we have shown in the previous chapter, but change in the realm of state ideology provided the fertile ground for their idea to take root.

If we turn to the August 1991 coup again, this time in search of signs of a change of ideological climate occurring in democratic political circles, two solemn and symbolic gestures are noteworthy: the removal of the statue of Feliks Dzerzhinsky (founder of the Cheka), which amounted to rejecting the Communist order, by declaring illegitimate one of its historical monuments; and the religious procession behind the defeated coup's three martyrs, giving the Orthodox element in traditional Russian identity a strong measure of official endorsement.

The cathedral of Christ the Saviour as a Russian virtual rallying-point against the Soviet Union.

The closure of the *Moskva* pool and the reconstruction of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour actions were related to the iconoclasm[6] and new symbolism which accompanied Russia's victory over

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[4] With whom exactly did Fr Georgy have contacts remained fuzzy in interviews. Until the coup, in the opinion of someone who dabbled in nationalist politics and then moved on, " the only political contacts these extreme nationalists would have had were with hard-line communists ." (Yury Klitsenko, interview).

[5] Mikhail Leontyev, in *Segodnya,* 24 November 1994, p. 1 (*CDSP* Vol. XLVI, N°47, 1994), announced that Russia's pro-Western stage was over; reforms had brought only disappointment and failed to accomplish Russia's integration into the 'Western world'. After aping the West, it was time for an economic and social structure " grounded in natural traditions and possibilities and in national cultural values. (...) The stage of transformation that Russia is beginning today is a national stage. We must get it into our heads that Russia is going to emerge from its very grave and very inevitable crisis on its own, with no support from outside ."

[6] The predictable waltz of monuments meant that 50 out of Moscow's 60 Lenin statues were removed by 1992 (L. Mulvey, interview). The movement of desacralisation started earlier: *Pravda* on 16 August 1990 already signalled with alarm: " city authorities ordered that monuments to V. I. Lenin be taken down in those places, showing disrespect not only for the founder of our state but for history itself. " (*CDSP* Vol. XLII, N°33,

the old Soviet Communist structure. Certainly M. Yampolsky's comment about Lenin's plan for monumental propaganda seems applicable to the reshuffle of symbols marking the Soviet/post-Soviet transition: " The point was to replace some monuments with others quickly, as if the emptiness created by the broken idols possessed some sort of destructive force that had to be subdued. "[7] When a crane and truck were provided to topple Dzerzhinsky, participants in the resistance to the coup were deprived of their creative fervour and spontaneity and transformed into spectators of a political ritual.[8] This foreshadowed a process of appropriation of the cathedral idea (by the Russian presidency and Moscow authorities), which would obscure inevitably the role played by grass-root movements of the Gorbachev era.

In the aftermath of the coup, the cathedral, promoted earlier by conservative nationalists as a symbol of imperial strength, was adopted by Russian radical Democrats as a symbol of Russia's martyrdom in the hands of the barbarian Soviet Union. This usage extended the aura and rare legitimacy enjoyed by dissidents to the whole of Russia[9]. On 9 November 1991 *Pravda* reported that " a well-organised column made up of an impressive amount of people ", the Democratic camp, staged a demonstration leaving the Lubyanka and ending at the cathedral of Christ the Saviour "on the site of which a large and dirty public swimming pool now steams ." Banners read: " Lenin-- the national disgrace of Russia! Forgive us Russia for this disgrace that we suffered from 1917 until Aug. 19, 1991 " and " We will pray for the fallen, the Whites and the Reds, the godless, Christians, Jews and Moslems. We ourselves will repent. " The prayer service ended with a petition to the Lord to " grant a long life to the President of Russia "[10].

1990). To counter this tide, a draft USSR Law on Strengthening Criminal and Administrative Liability for Violating Legislation on the Protection and Use of Historical and Cultural Monuments was considered in June 1991 *(Izvestiya*, 11 June 1991; *CDSP* Vol. XLIII, N°23, 1991).

[7] M. Yampolsky, *Soviet Hieroglyphics*, p. 100.

[8] According to witnesses, the crowds would have been contented with simply degrading the monument and taming the monstrous founder of the Cheka, by painting his nose and crowning him with a party hat. (See *'Disgraced Monuments'*, Channel 4 documentary film, produced in 1992 (but aired in 1994) by Laura Mulvey and Mark Lewis). The crane and truck were provided by Sergei Stankevich, then Moscow Deputy Mayor (under Gavriil Popov). (B. Clark, *An Empire's New Clothes*, p. 97.)
Note that the hand-over was also a matter of having (or not having) adequate resources: the rope tied around Dzerzhinsky's neck by people in the crowd would not have been strong enough to topple the statue.

[9] The charismatic manoeuvre brings to mind General de Gaulle's Liberation speech in Paris, which made Frenchmen feel that they were collectively responsible for their final victory over Nazi occupying forces.

[10] *Pravda,* 9 November 1991, p.1, in *CDSP* Vol. XLIII, N° 45, 1991.
The last prayer echoes the final chorus of Michael Glinka's opera 'Life for the Tsar': " Glory, Glory to our Russian Tsar!/Given us by the Lord a Sovereign-Tsar!/May your clan be immortal/ May the Russian people flourish! " [quoted in translation by Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995) p. 379].

A month later, mourning the sixtieth anniversary of its destruction on 5 December 1991, Boris Yeltsin declared in an address to the heads of all denominations and believers of the Russian Federation: " this unprecedented act of vandalism was committed in peaceful times not by foreign invaders but by people blinded by false ideas and motivated by hatred towards everything good and saintly."[11] Reproduced on *Izvestiya*'s first page, the Russian anti-Bolshevik content of Yeltsin's public address was made more explicit by the article's author, R. Armeev: " Russia erected this cathedral, calling into action its most talented architects, masons, engineers, artists [etc.] ". When the cathedral was blown up in 1931, Mikhail Prishvin, a witness, had written in his diary that " we, artists, are like birds, flying towards the spot where there used to be a cross, and trying to sit down "[12]. But " despite the fund, the money collected, and the vast quantity of books, essays and reminiscences about the lost cathedral ", A. Armeev concluded in the *Izvsetiya* article, " our soul is not contented. We are still all like those birds, flying high in the air where there used to be a cross, and we have not found rest ..."[13]

The destroyed cathedral was an important rallying point for anti-Communist sentiment. In the same December address, Yeltsin also expressed the hope that future generations would see the cathedral of Christ the Saviour rebuilt in one form of another[14] and thereby espoused a cause which had until then been promoted under the banner of conservative nationalist forces. This wish could be interpreted as strictly metaphorical, nothing more than the expression of a general hope for a better, non-Communist, future. If so, it acquired physical content, once the transfer of power from Soviet to Russian post-Soviet institutions had been achieved with the dissolution of the USSR: the Democrats, ex-Party members included[15], had found 'branches' on which to sit.

Rebuilding--in the name of repair, repentance or ideological requirements?

Yet, the image of the cathedral's cross sadly missing from the Moscow skyline also captured the hope of seeing religious signs as such operate a real comeback on the official scene and in the

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[11] R. Armeev, 'Godovshchina pozora i skorbi', *Izvestiya*, 5 December 1991, p. 1.
[12] M. Prishvin quoted by R. Armeev, 'Godovshchina pozora i skorbi', op. cit., p. 3.
[13] R. Armeev, op. cit., p. 3.
[14] B.Yeltsin quoted in N. Guglyar (ed.),*Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 219.
[15] The decree which banned the CPSU in the Russian Republic ensured that there would be no 'witch-hunt' waged against " the millions of rank-and-file Party members who had nothing to do with the violence committed in their name. " (Decree reproduced in *CDSP* Vol. XLIII, N°45, 1991).

life of Russian society. Radical changes in the political order awaited symbolic validation[16]. Boris Yeltsin, turning for inspiration to pre-Revolutionary times, was apparently confident that the Russian Orthodox Church could and would fulfil such a function. Already at the stage of his presidential inauguration in June 1991[17], he deemed it fitting to ask for the Patriarch's blessing as if he feared that democracy's strictly procedural legitimacy was not enough in the public's eye. Arguably, Yeltsin's heroic resistance to the coup gave him more charismatic legitimacy than the mysterious rituals and beautifully robed prelates could possibly offer. But Russia's traditional church could be politically useful in the future. The ROC authorities' ambiguous stand during the coup was overlooked[18] and public attention was directed instead towards the country's spiritual unity in the face of adversity and suffering, dramatised (and televised) in a national religious burial ceremony[19].

Vague statements in favour of the cathedral's rebuilding had been made by the Church's Holy Synod in February 1990[20] and in April 1992 by the Patriarch himself in a newspaper article[21], but the idea really took off only after the President had given it the go-ahead. In preparation for a meeting in June 1992 between Patriarch Aleksy II and President Boris Yeltsin, a blueprint of a chapel was " drafted in 36 hours " by sculptor Vladimir Mokrousov[22] to give shape to the reconstruction idea, and give the two men something concrete to discuss. It was apparently approved and the meeting was followed by a presidential decree 'On the Foundation of a Fund for the Renaissance of Moscow' on 16 July 1992[23] in which the cathedral was made an official priority. Only then was the *Obshchina* of

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16 See A. Cohen, *Two-dimensional Man: an essay on the anthropology of power and symbolism in complex societies* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 37.

17 The Patriarch was also present at the President's swearing-in ceremony in 1996. The 1993 Constitution only requires a " ceremonial atmosphere " in its art. 82. 2 and makes no mention of the spiritual leader's function in a supposedly secular state.

18 For a discussion of the ROC leadership's position during the coup see J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p. 130-133. The most compromising fact was Metropolitan Pitrim's visit to Boris Pugo, the coup leader, on 21 August 1991.

19 Although a rabbi was present to conduct prayers for the Jewish man among the three victims, the Orthodox ceremony was the main attraction. See B.Clarke, *An Empire's New Clothes,* p. 83-88.

20 A. Ivanov, 'Dvizhenie', in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya,* , p. 218.

21 Patriarch Aleksy II wrote: " Thinking about the renaissance of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, we will peacefully hope for the help of God, remembering the words of Saint Pisanie: 'If God does not create a house, in vain do we labour building it...' ". (Quoted in A. Ivanov, 'Dvizhenie', op. cit., p. 219). These words are in the biblical tradition of the story of the Tower of Babel--a story which permeates the Church's views on the cathedral's rebuilding: it accepts the gift, but takes no responsibility for a building which might illustrate once again human fallibility and the vanity of secular pursuits.

22 V. Mokrousov, interview. He believes that the meeting took place at the monastery on Valaam Island but J. Ellis already mentions a meeting between the two leaders at the monastery in Sergiev Posad in June 1992 (*The Russian Orthodox Church* , p.146) and the likelihood that they met again the same month seems faint.

23 This decree (N°785) was on display in the cathedral's temporary museum. It put the cathedral of Christ the Saviour number one on the list of important projects designed to " renew and strengthen the role of Moscow as the political and cultural centre of the Russian government, guarantee the fulfilling of Moscow's capital functions, and improve the economic situation of the city as well as the spiritual and cultural lives of Muscovites and of the capital's guests . "

the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour registered properly, with the Patriarch's blessing (on the condition that a certain Father Vladimir (Rigin)--not strong-minded Father Georgy[24]--be named its parish priest)[25].

The decree was typically issued with the intention of it remaining a dead letter (since the funds which Vneshekombank was supposed to provide failed to materialise). But the fact that the cathedral featured at the very top of the list was an important symbolic gesture, reinforcing the direction chosen by Yeltsin from the start: that of reversing years of atheist practice through restitution of church buildings and a type of 'affirmative action' in favour of religion[26]. The only precedent, on a much smaller scale, had been the decision to rebuild the Kazan Church on Red Square in 1990 (a municipal initiative for which Moscow leaders including Yeltsin had lobbied the CPSU Politburo).[27]

On the other hand, the decree's formulation cast the rebuilding as simply one out of numerous other steps which would put Moscow back on the map of culture and civilisation by correcting past wrongs[28]. Many were quick to point out that rebuilding from scratch was common after the Second World War and that " no doubt, Britain would rebuild its St Paul's Cathedral and France its Invalides if they were destroyed today"[29]. It was also common to believe that the Russian government, inheritor of USSR's debts and seat in the UN, inherited the civil obligation[30] created by the destruction of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour--an obligation towards the Russian people since the cathedral was a national shrine[31],a sacred repository of Russian cultural and spiritual values, built in part by popular subscription. The notion of repair was psychologically important for a people who had suffered the

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[24] By then, Fr. Georgy had seceded from the *Obshchina* and founded his own Brotherhood.

[25] V. Mokrousov, interview. Confusingly, A. Bossart claims in 'Teatr vremen Luzhkova i Sinoda' that the *Obshchina* was registered as eraly as 1990, (*Stolitsa*, N°2, 8 January 1995, p. 12). I chose to believe Mokrousov.

[26]For Yeltsin's long-term religious policy aims, see J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p. 147.

[27] T. Colton, *Moscow*, p. 636 and note p. 893.

[28] See note 23.

[29] Yu. Klitsenko, interview.

[30] For the notion of a" debt towards the Russian people, a debt towards the people's history and culture " assumed by government, see I. Pokrovsky, 'Nas Spasaet khram khrista spasitelya', in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista* Spasitelya, p. 241. The Orthodox Deacon Andrei Kuraev, a former associate and advisor of the Patriarch, made the case plain: " the government must help in the reconstruction of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour--because the government destroyed this cathedral as well as thousands of other churches. " [*Razmyshleniya pravoslavnogo pragmatika o tom, nado li stroit' Khram Khrista Spasitelya* (Moscow: Department for Religious Education and Catechism of the Moscow Patriarchate, 1995) p. 12]

[31] The cathedral of Christ the Saviour was a national sanctuary on two accounts: not only did it list one by one the names of officers wounded in the war of 1812 against Napoleon's forces, but also, allegedly, throngs of people inscribed the names of deceased soldiers in the cathedral's stony flesh during the First World War. " By hand. As well as possible. Last name, dates of birth and death. No one prevented them or scrubbed the inscriptions off the walls. Everyone understood that, in this major military shrine, it was a necessary act. " (Nina Moleva in 'Gor'ky urok istory', journal *Moskva,* N° 7, 1988, p. 161). Unfortunately this story is hard to ascertain. The cathedral's most authoritative historian, E. Kirichenko focuses on the looming civil war rather than on the First World War per se and her book *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve* omits this.

huge patrimonial losses and memory amputation occasioned by waves of successively utopian and amateur cultural policies. Strict repair was also a minimalist interpretation which especially satisfied those who wished to counter allegations that in the process of this rebuilding, heavy new links chaining the Orthodox Church to the state were being forged.[32] (The coldest view of this decision held that the *Moskva* pool was in such a poor state that it represented a hygienic danger for swimmers and a hazard for neighbouring buildings; rebuilding the cathedral was the best solution to address this problem, since building something new risked offending public opinion, recently sensitised to the tragic history of the place)[33].

But mechanical restitution can hardly explain the decision to actually rebuild this cathedral rather than hundreds of smaller, artistically more valuable churches and monuments which were wiped out ruthlessly throughout the Soviet era. Why rebuild the cathedral rather than the picturesque Sukharev Tower for example, also demolished by Stalin in 1934 and rediscovered in the late 1970s when appreciation for historical landmarks gained a new measure of acceptability?[34] In the words of local historian Sergei Romanyuk (author of a meticulous survey entitled *Moskva: Utraty* or 'The Losses of Moscow', 1992), "the cathedral idea, an initially national-patriotic one, was seized by government as an opportunity to establish a new political ideology, based primarily on statehood *(gosudarstvennost')* but using Orthodoxy as a support. It is the continuation of the Communists' desire to erect a building [the Palace of Soviets] which would be the showcase of the Communist state.(...) And nothing carries ideology better than big projects." In contrast, the Sukharev Tower " bore no ideological necessity."[35]

Official atonement for past destruction and repentance for years of militant atheism were also credited with little explanatory value by the capital's free-thinking intelligentsia (both seemed indeed hypocritical in the light of Moscow authorities' otherwise ruthless modernisation and often superficial piety, as the next two chapters will argue). However, the Russian President could be credited for being consistent in his discourse, using a language of faith and repentance from the start. " Forgive me, your president, that I was not able to protect and defend your sons " Yeltsin had asked the

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[32] In separate interviews, Yury Klitsenko from the Danilovsky Monastery (4 September 1996) and Father Mikhail, the cathedral's sacristan (Interview, Moscow, 25 September 1996), both played down the binding effect of this 'gift' from the state, by pointing out the strict symmetry between state destruction and state construction.

[33] Yury Mamoshin, deputy director of AO Mospromstroi, interview, Moscow, 8 October 1996.

[34] Mikhail Posokhin, Moscow's chief architect, had come out in 1978 for rebuilding the Sukharev Tower. It was a proposal hotly debated in terms which bear some resemblance with the discussions caused by the cathedral. See T. Colton, *Moscow*, p.561.

[35] Sergei Romanyuk, interview, Moscow, 10 September 1996.

crowds, gathered to mourn the August coup's three victims.[36] It struck a chord in the minds of people wishing to heal and seal the Communist era, without engaging in an all-out witch-hunt[37].

Admitting that the cathedral was seen as a symbolic way of doing justice to the past[38], at the decision stage, however, the idea was mainly favoured for its present and future relevance. After all, it was a much more costly and risky deal than the laying of a memorial stone on the side of the Lubyanka square to commemorate " the millions of victims of totalitarian repression "[39]. Whereas the stone, brought back from Siberia, only made reference to the painful past, the cathedral was clearly intended as a contemporary political statement. At the very least, it provided the present regime with a legitimate genealogy.[40]

The decision met some resistance. Following a special State Duma hearing summoned by Mikhail Seslavinsky on 13 December 1994, during which many authoritative negative opinions were voiced, a collective letter was adressed to the Moscow Mayor asking him to stop the construction project. The city hall's first deputy (Vladimir Resin at the time) replied that Moscow " still thinks the reconstruction is absolutely necessary ."[41] Another (mild) act of opposition was waged by a movement called *Narodny Al'yans*: its picket meetings neer the pool were " briefly shown on TV and registered as 'opinion' to give the whole process a semblance of pluralism ", in the words of one of the movement's disenchanted members[42]. The most serious obstacles were arguments raised by the

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[36] James Billington notes that " almost with those words alone, Yeltsin seemed to reinvest power with higher authority. Someone blameless was assuming responsibility in a society where people in power never used to accept responsibility for anything. " ('The Case for Orthodoxy', *The New Republic,* 30 May 1994, p. 24.)

[37] Ironically, when Yeltsin's tanks began shelling the defiant White House on 4 October 1993, " Yeltsin made a broadcast to the nation in which he begged the people's pardon for being so lenient and tardy in dealing with the 'fascist-communist' plot. " B. Clarke, *An Empire's New Clothes,* p. 245.

[38] This idea is developed in Chapter V.

[39] Inscription on the stone. (T. Colton, *Moscow,* p.637). It is a discreet and elegant monument in that it refers to the reality of camps through the Siberian origin of the stone, instead of trying to represent it figuratively.

[40] As M. Yampolsky notes, in a reflection on iconoclasm and time, a connection arises between old and new monuments through the practice of building on unchanged locations. " It instantly creates the illusion of continuity, organises a genealogy, and introduces into the consciousness the very concept of the founding-father, so indispensable for the legitimisation of a new regime. " ('In the shadows of monuments', *Soviet Hieroglyphics,* p.102).

[41] Member of *Nash Dom Rossiya* in the State Duma and deputy director of the Committee for Cultural Affairs, Mikhail Seslavinsky summoned a special hearing to consider the problems of the reconstruction of the cathedral. It was not strictly within the parliament's competence to do so, since the project was a Moscow government one. But, given the strong probability of governmental funding, the Duma deemed important to examine the question in some detail. Various personalities from the Institute of Art History (among them Aleksei Komech) and the Ministry of Culture emitted overall negative opinions. The Duma did not hold a vote on the question. (Resin's answer to the collective letter was quoted by Seslavinsky).
[M. Seslavinsky, telephone interview from Oxford, 5 December 1996.]

[42] Andrei Golovin, staff member of the Duma (working for the Committee for Trade Union Affairs) and member of *Narodny Al'yans*, interview, Moscow, 17 September 1996. *Narodny Al'yans* was founded on 25 April 1994 by deputies who opposed the 1993 events and were members of the National-Patriotic Bloc. The

Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Affairs but even these were overcome with relative ease[43]. Intense lobbying conducted by Sergei Shakhrai accounts for part of this success. But the overall prudence and restraint manifested by politicians on the subject shows that the cathedral was an essentially ideological priority. " Given the project's character, that of a 'holy deed', linked to the idea of Holy Russia, people were careful (...) It wasn't worth offending anyone ", acknowledged M. Seslavinsky[44].

What was the ideological thrust of this project?

The return of " Orthodoxy, Autocracy, the People "?

A glance backwards over the history of the first Cathedral of Christ the Saviour reveals changing " scenarios of power "[45].

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movement distributed leaflets and held picket meetings near the fenced off pool (ready to be liquidated) in the autumn of 1994.
Another picket was held a year later near the Pushkin statue on 5 November 1995 in conjunction with the movement led by hard-core Yeltsin opponent Sergei Baburin *Rosisky Obshchee Narodnaya Organisatsiya* ('Russian All-People's Union') and the Patriotic Union of Women.

[43] Following a joint letter from the Patriarch and the Moscow Mayor requesting financial support (20 September 1994), the Russian Federal Government was asked by the President on 23 September 1994 to consider financing the cathedral.
The Ministry of Finance replied in a letter on 14 October 1994 that it was against the idea of freeing companies participating in the reconstruction from paying taxes and custom duties, given the country's difficult economic situation and given the imperative of strict budgetary discipline. The Ministry of Economic Affairs was less categorically negative in its response: in a letter addressed to the head of the government, the first deputy minister Ya. Urinson stated that while it was impossible to find the resources in the 1994 federal budget, the ministry favoured in principle the idea of providing governmental financial support. The apportionment of governmental resources would be studied for 1995, and in the meantime, he suggested using the reserve funds of the government and of the President.
S. Shakhrai, head of the governmental Commission for Affairs of Social and Religious Organisations (in which sat representatives of the Duma), and E. Frolov, deputy director of the Department for Co-operation between the Federal Assembly and Social Organisations, further lobbied prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin in November 1994 to increase the budgetary sums allocated to the reconstruction and restoration of religious buildings from 14,5 milliard rubles in 1994 to 275 milliard rubles in 1995.
However, that line was ommitted from the 1995 budget (altogether it seems). Instead, a presidential decree on 5 May 1995 instituted a tax break for all firms involved in the reconstruction.
This indirect financial support was halted on 13 April 1996 in a presidential decree 'On the loss of effective power and the suspension of certain presidential decrees', apparently by mistake. Bureaucrats from the Ministry of Finance included the cathedral builders' tax break in a list of privileges to be eliminated. " The President probably didn't notice it when he signed the decree ", explained S. Semenenko (interview, Moscow, 24 September 1996). In a typically confusing act of policy reversal, President Yeltsin issued a third decree on 30 July 1996, modifying the April decree so as to continue helping firms and organisations participating in the reconstruction of the cathedral until September 1997.

[Copies of all these documents are in the author's possession and were provided by the State Duma's Committee for Public Groups and Religious Organisations.]
[44] M. Seslavinsky, interview.
[45] R. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995).

In Vitberg's project, enthusiastically supported by Tsar Alexander, the cathedral's architecture was supposed to embody the universal ideals and truths which founded the tsar's legitimacy as a " superordinate force " whose title came from divine or ideal mandate-- not from the people.[46] Richard Wortman argues that the cathedral of Christ the Saviour was intended as a way of " displacing the responsibility for the [1812] victory from 'the people' to Providence, turning the event from a national triumph into a religious miracle accomplished through the instrument of the Russian armies. "[47] On paper, the strong neo-classical style, the symmetry, and the noble strength of the building, matched the monarch's passion for perfect military discipline on the parade ground and order in social life.

Had the project not foundered, the correspondence between the building's form and Alexander's ruling ideology would have been as plain to contemporary onlookers and historians sharing a mystical conception of art, as the correspondence between Nicholas I's formula of " *Pravoslaviye, Samoderzhaviye, Narodnost'* " and Konstantin Ton's eclectic Byzantine style. Nicholas' programmatic vision was deeply rooted in the experience of the Decembrist uprising of 14 December 1825 and the firm belief that only the Orthodox Church could protect Russia and its *narod* from the tide of European revolutionary thought which had contaminated part of the elite.[48] It presented autocracy as the incarnate ideal of the Russian people, sanctified by the prestige of the Orthodox Church[49]. Whereas Alexander's world-view had been mystic but universal, Nicholas's was explicitly anti-Western, defending unlimited autocratic power on the basis that it corresponded to Russia's distinct national spirit[50].

Church architecture was seen as the last bastion of Russianness, a well from which architects could draw to produce, for the first time since the Petrine revolution, buildings with a native style[51]. But even then Russia's conflicting lines of heritage were manifest. Konstantin Ton's revival of the 15th and 16th century Moscow cathedral types (looking back, in turn, to the earlier traditions of Suzdal and Vladimir), was married with " a persisting classicist interpretation of detail, ideal regularity, abstractly

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[46] R. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, p. 222.
[47] Ibid.
[48] R. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, p. 275.
[49] E. Kirichenko, *Moscow Architectural Monuments of the 1830s-1910s* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1977), p.19-20.
[50] Nicholas Riasanovsky shows in *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959) that Russian thought was not particularly original (it borrowed from de Maistre, Chateaubriand and Schelling), nor unique (reaction was continent-wide), in combating French revolutionary ideas. He also notes that the more radical implications of the romantic 'Russian idea' were partly kept at bay thanks to the prevalence of the dynastic principle of leadership.
[51] E. Kirichenko mentions that D. Bykovsky in 1834 at the Imperial Architecture College in Moscow launched the criticism of classicism: " Rather than imitate the forms of the ancients, we should emulate them and have a national architecture of our own ."

smooth forms ."[52] And by the time paintings were commissioned, the most Byzantine elements of Ton's original design which had particularly seduced Nicholas I, were dropped in favour of paintings in a contemporary style which belonged to the Western school.

Indeed, Alexander II hoped that the cathedral would function " like a historical museum presenting a collection of artistic productions which would show future generations the level of mastery reached by contemporary art in Russia. "[53] Thus, by the 1870s, the cathedral's meaning as 'divine miracle' or as 'gem on the tsar's crown' was apparently eclipsed by its meaning as an element of national cultural heritage.

The pendulum swung back to the cathedral as symbol of Great Russia's unity and autocracy when Alexander II's assassination in 1881 and brewing opposition at home and in the borderlands, brought the new tsar to increase the empire-saving missions of the Orthodox Church (conducted mainly through proselytism and tighter control of the educational system). On the day of the consecration of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour in 1883, the culmination point of festivities in his honour, Alexander III expressed publicly his hopes regarding the reestablishment of order, stability, legality, and social peace in the empire. (The tsar mentioned the cathedral as " a monument to peace after a bloody war ", referring, thereby, both to 1812 and to the country's contemporary explosive situation)[54]. His successor Nicholas II, informed by advisors of the political gains which could be expected from manipulating religious symbolism[55], followed much the same strategy, casting himself as a monarch with a privileged link with God and the people. Bloody Sunday in 1905 shattered the credibility of this scenario.

These shifts in the official meanings ascribed to a same monument serve to warn us that the repetition of the cathedral's 19th-century form could not possibly carry-over a finite body of signified ideas (meanings were eclectic and could not be automatically reactivated). And indeed, amongst the public figures associated with the Second Cathedral, only Ilya Glazunov stated in a televised

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[52] E. Kirichenko, *Moscow Architectural Monuments of the 1830s-1910s*, p.20.
[53] Quoted in I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie Khrama Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 15.
[54] E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve* , p. 142.
[55] For various accounts of how religion was used " as a glue to bind the pieces of a near-crumbling empire " (p.25), see Charles Timberlake (ed.), *Religious and Secular Forces in Late Tsarist Russia* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1992).

interview[56] that his ideology was encapsulated in the three tenets of Nicholas I's formula-- not surprisingly given the obsequious artist's extremely literal approach to both art and power.

" *A spirit of optimistic patriotism* "[57]

If we turn to the speeches of promoters and participants of the cathedral's rebuilding, a more complex set of ideological views becomes apparent.

On 6 September 1994, the Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov and Patriarch Aleksy II formally announced that the Moscow Government had decided to go ahead with the reconstruction project.[58] A Public Observation Council for the Reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, counting among its members cultural and architectural personalities, civil servants from the city and the ranks of the State Duma, and even a representative of the Moscow *okrug* armed forces, was formed and co-chaired by the Mayor and the Patriarch[59]. Speeches read out at this ceremony in the Moscow Town Hall (speeches by the Council, by the Mayor, by the Patriarch, by President Yeltsin, and by the Prime Minister V. Chernomyrdin) and, later, addresses by the head of the State Duma and the head of the Council of Federation, provide a useful record of key participants' concerns and objectives. In so far as they expressed views for public consumption, they offer a good place to start when looking for articulated official ideology.

The thematic scope of these discourses, although loose and not codified, covered a certain number of common topics: the great difficulties of contemporary Russian life from all points of view (material, moral, and patriotic); the need for spiritual purification and atonement for past sins; a required common effort (gathering spiritual and physical forces) to build a better future on healthy moral foundations; the importance of bringing back to life Christian values (faith, generosity, and repentance); the cathedral of Christ the Saviour as a national and governmental sacred place; the restoration of historical memory and national heritage; the cathedral's resurrection as national and governmental first-rate imperative; the need to foster social unity and avert civil war.

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[56] On 21 September 1996, according to A. Komech, interview, Moscow, 23 September 1996.
[57] Boris Yeltsin's assessment of Glazunov's painting 'Russia, Awake!' shown at the Manezh, in July 1994. See Evgenia Albats, in 'Yeltsin at the Manege', *Izvestiya*, 22 July 1994, p. 4, *CDSP* Vol. XLVI, N° 29, 1994.
[58] See next chapter for details of the steps leading to this decision.
[59] A list of the 33 personalities was published under the heading 'Sostav: Obshchestvennogo nablyudatel'nogo soveta po controlyu za vossozdaiem khrama Khrista...' in *Vestnik Merii Moskvy* , No. 18, 1994. See list in appendix.

Together, they referred to most of the state's and society's contemporary problems, after the recent years' stock of radical change and tumultuous political events, and cast the soon-to-be-resurrected cathedral as the perfect antidote for these ills: morality would bring down criminality; Christian values would fight the danger of factionalism; Russians stranded abroad could be united in Orthodox faith; material difficulties would be compensated with the promise of spiritual riches.

The utilitarian approach to public morality (as opposed to upholding moral virtue as an end in itself) which shined through some of the speeches seemed to perpetuate the belief in limitless malleability and in the vast scope of social engineering which had sustained Marxist-Leninist ideology for decades. Ivan Rybkin hoped that « the efforts and resources spent on [the cathedral's] reconstruction will produce in the future a morally healthy nation .»[60] And Yeltsin urged: "it is a national sacred place [*svyatynya*] and must be resurrected." He added that "with it, it will be easier for us all to find the path towards social accord, towards the creation of good, towards life in which there will be less place for sins."[61] The President skillfully equated economic and political transformations[62] with "a sickly and long process of appropriation by the people of the ideals of faith, goodness and love", in which the Church's role was basically that of a comforting, confidence-boosting, and advice-giving nurse[63]. Religion was medicine which could lower Russia's transitional fever and rid it of its Communist 'disease'.

The tragic/triumphant tone (a possible legacy from the years of Soviet propaganda) was unequally distributed between the speakers: Viktor Chernomyrdin's sober words of encouragement addressed to " His Holiness " (the Patriarch)[64], contrasted with the almost deliriously enthusiastic speech addressed by the Council to " Russians! Co-citizens! Compatriots! ", enjoining all to contribute to the heroic feet according to their means[65].

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[60] A copy of his address hung in the temporary museum in front of the cathedral, autumn 1996.
[61] B. Yeltsin, address reproduced in N. Guglyar (ed.) *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 213-214.
[62] "Our lot has been to live through difficult times of destruction and creation, tragic confrontations between the old and the new, changes of economic and political foundations." B. Yeltsin, op. cit.
[63] "Moral purification has always been and will always be a supremely difficult experience. It requires supreme exertions of spiritual forces and merciless relationships with oneself. This makes even more important the support, the human participation, the wise admonitions, the increase of faith in one's own strength that, from time immemorial, man has received in church." Ibid.
[64] V.Chernomyrdin's words emphasised above all the secular merits of the cathedral: he noted that it is " an idea which unites millions of Russians ", and the cathedral's resurrection will be " further evidence of the restoration of historical truth ", as well as " a manifestation of the attention paid by government to the Church, and a monument in which future generations will feel swept away with pride ". Address reproduced in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 214.
[65] Council's address in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 213.

The strong national-patriotic composition of the Council manifested itself in many passages of the group's speech. Familiar intonations were detectable in the speech's use of sentimental images (" our hearts are restless ") and slightly archaic modes (the brotherly use of " *ty*": " *esli u tebya est' talant, nesi ego k stroitel'noi ploshadke*"), in its personification of Russia as an organic, living being (" The Fatherland is painfully recovering ") and in its special concern for Russians abroad: " To you, living in the expanses of Russia, to you who find yourselves in the near and far abroad but who have not broken off your spiritual bonds with the Mother country [" *svyaz'' s Otchiznoi* "], to you, hurting from her pains and partaking in her joys, we address ourselves today ." Even the quote from the Ecclesiastics (" There is a time for all...a time to kill, a time to heal; a time to destroy, a time to build; ...a time for scattering stones, and a time for gathering stones ") could be traced back to one of the first public statements issued by the 'pre-historic' Fund for the Restoration of the Cathedral. Unsurprisingly, the president of this Fund, publicist Vladimir Soloukhin, was made a member of the Public Observation Council.

The disintegration of the USSR was something national-patriots would not readily stomach and probably the greatest cause of opposition to Yeltsin's regime, but the trans-border community of Orthodox believers (a little like the Muslim *umma*), could offer an alternative feeling of grandeur. The cathedral was a step towards reconciliation with people who, like Igor' Shafarevich (writing in *Pravda*, on 2 November 1991) shared a feeling of bitter loss: « I think that most of us had a sense, even if quite unconsciously, in some little corner of our soul, of our participation in the immense 1,000-year process, thereby escaping the absurdity and triviality of our lives. Now this spiritual support has weakened. Tens of millions of Russians have ended up outside Russia. » [66]Rebuilding the cathedral can thus be interpreted as a charismatic gesture aimed both at rallying support from the wider public, in prevision of upcoming democratic elections, and at enlarging the party of power's ruling coalition, after it emerged victorious but shaken from the October 1993 crisis and the December 1993 parliamentary elections.

The rebuilding decision encompassed the two general policy lines of sustaining governmental nationalism and of promoting Orthodoxy as a healthy and structuring faith for the masses (left otherwise at sea and open to foreign and subversive ideas following the crumbling of Marxist-Leninist

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[66] In *CDSP* Vol. XLIII, N° 45, 1991.

ideology). While the political balance had not tilted definitely in chauvinistic and religious fundamentalist directions, the manipulation of symbols left such options open in theory. Indeed, by their very ambiguity, symbols are extremely useful: they work like bridges " allowing us to run back and forth from one kind of meaning to another, until we take firm resolve to cross the bridge into new, and fixed, meanings. "[67] As was immediately perceived by Russian commentators, this particular symbol, the rebuilding of Ton's cathedral, " in its lack of measure and eclecticism " could accommodate comfortably " the most contradicting thoughts: the greatness of Russia and its profanation, originality and aping, pride and humiliation, memory and unconsciousness."[68]

The Renaissance of the Russian idea

Beyond the analysis of these ceremonial speeches, reasons for considering the cathedral as part of a wider 'Great Russian' agenda abound. Already in July 1994, the journalist Evgenia Albats noted Boris Yeltsin's " strange political gesture against the backdrop of the painting 'Russia Awake'."[69] (Yeltsin visisted Ilya Glazunov's exhibit at the Manezh three days after it had closed). In an article in *Izvestiya* she concluded that Yeltsin had probably " already begun his presidential election campaign ."[70] The President had decided not to tempt fate by giving extreme nationalists a monopoly over the Russian national idea, and chosen instead to draw national-patriots' votes in advance. Albats characterised Glazunov's style as " an eclectic embodiment of Nazi art" .[71] But Yeltsin praised the artist for his " spirit of optimistic patriotism " and granted him a a seat among the select 33 members of the Public Observation Council a few weeks later.

In the building process itself, concern for the patriotic content of the feat was both paramount in discourse and secondary in practice-- a contradiction which is the sure sign of ideological wishful thinking. The Mayor loudly vowed that all workers hired to work on the site would be exclusively Russian. In fact, cheap labour from Caucasian republics and from Ukraine and Belorus was used (particularly for the labour-intensive, irksome and awesome phase of brick-piling, three shifts around

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[67] Duncan, quoted in A. Cohen, *Two-dimensional Man,* p. 37.
[68] Nikolai Malinin, 'Voskrecenie tainogo sovetnika', *Stolitsa* , N° 2, 8 January 1995, p. 96.
[69] E. Albats in *Izvestiya* , 22 July 1996, *CDSP* Vol. XLVI. N°29, 1994.
[70] Ibid. See also Yu. Solomonov, 'Tak pobedim?', *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 27 July 1994.
[71] E. Albats, op. cit.

the clock).[72] Vladimir Krupin, a patriot, member of Father Georgy's Brotherhood for the Reconstruction of the Cathedral had insisted that " WE, Russians " should rebuild the patriotic shrine (" *imenno my, a nikakie ne inostrantsy, i imenno na rossiiskie rubli* .")[73] but as sponsoring techniques would show (discussed in the following chapter), this was far from being the case. Because the cathedral was believed to be a literal metaphor for Russia, the question of *who* exactly was building the cathedral became a matter of great importance and the object of so much jingoistic posturing.

Indeed, the patriotic message was hammered into people's consciousness again and again in official speech. Posters paid for by the Moscow government, put up in modern rain-proof cases around town, clamoured " Cathedral of Christ the Saviour--Symbol of Russia's Renaissance "[74]. President Yeltsin, visiting the site on Orthodox Christmas, on 7 January 1996, also personally ensured that the constructive statement made by the building, rising already 100 metres high after only a year's work, would be properly interpreted by the wider public: " Now we can observe the stabilisation and raising up of Russia. The Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is like a symbol of this process. The fact that it has been built in a year means this is possible, it means our possibilities are great, that Russia is alive, that the Russian spirit is alive. "[75]

The manipulation of Orthodox identity

The manipulation of Orthodoxy for political purposes was made obvious from the project's inception. The concept of repentance was cut off from its originally religious meaning and clearly used to " build up political capital ", complained Father Nikolai (Vedernikov) to the journal *Ogonek* in December 1994.[76] The cathedral itself was the object of a strong polemic which illustrated the old

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[72] Former priest Gleb Yakunin mentioned scathingly that Muslim workers were hired to build the cathedral in a brief conversation on 16 September 1996. The fact that workers from the Caucasus participated in the hardest phase was admitted to me by Sergei, a security guard employed on the cathedral's site on 30 September 1996. But he insisted that, later, only " *nashi* " (i.e. " our people ") were used, including in this category Ukrainian and Belorussian workers " who are even worse off than we are in Russia ". This interpretation of the nation as an area of solidarity which encompasses more people than citizens of the Russian Federation echoes nicely Weber's definition: a nation "means above all that it is proper to expect from certain groups a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups. " [Quoted in Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.21]

[73] 'We, precisely--not foreigners, and precisely on Russian roubles'. Vladimir Krupin, article in a special number of *Pravda* devoted to the cathedral (paid for by the Brotherhood), April 1992.

[74] See photograph in appendix.

[75] Alastair Macdonald, 'Yeltsin Sees Christmas Hope in Rebuilt Cathedral', Reuters, 7 January 1996.

[76] "Pokoyanie" ('repentance') is " a Greek word which means transformation", explained Fr. Nikolai in the same article, " the transformation of thoughts, of feelings. It is not an emotion--tears and all. It is a concrete

division between the possessors and the non-possessors within the Orthodox Church[77]. A large proportion of the clergy expressed in private their disapproval of a project, which seemed to respond to the state's needs rather than to those of ordinary believers, deprived of the most basic pastoral services in many church-less parts of Russia. The hierarchy, in turn, was accused of " caressing 'latifundist' aspirations "[78] (i.e. dreams of becoming a big property-owner) and of compromising its moral authority in the process of pecking from the state's hand. In fact, even the hierarchy was reticent to sponsor the rebuilding project, and not simply because of its alternative Millennium Cathedral plans. It was careful to portray the building as " *chisty podarok* "[79] ('a pure gift'), entailing no material or political responsibility on its part[80].

One can infer from all this that the Church's overall opposition was not taken into account because the Church's objective interests and the in-depth religious awakening of society were simply besides the point.

Taking advantage of Orthodox calendar events (most prominently Christmas and Easter) the construction site was turned periodically into a political campaign platform from which both the President and Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov could not only infuse a spirit of optimism in Russia's future but also remind voters where there allegiances should rest. When Yeltsin and Luzhkov were photographed standing or sitting next to the Patriarch, on the ceremony of the first stone-laying (7 January 1995),on the laying of the symbolic final stone (7 January 1996), and on many occasions in between, the underlying message was that the political tandem had " God on its side ". Only pneumonia prevented Boris Yeltsin from partaking in the 7 January 1997 Christmas ceremony celebrated there for the first time. Judging from past practice (and given that a media centre was to be included in the cathedral's underground quarters), there was an important likelihood that the cathedral of Christ the Saviour would remain the theatre of state-church productions in the future.

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return towards God. In my opinion, we can not say that those who took the decision to build [the cathedral] have returned to God. " 'Khram Khrista ili Pamyatnik Mera?', *Ogonek*, N°48-49, December 1994.

[77] J. Billington notes that the "conflict between the priestly and prophetic side of Christianity has been particularly intense in Russia--ever since the clash of the more wealthy monastic 'possessors' with the ascetic and spiritual 'non-possessors' at the beginning of the sixteenth century. " ('The case for Orthodoxy', *The New Republic,* 30 May 1994, p.25).

[78] L. Levinson, interview.

[79] Fr. Mikhail, sacristan of the cathedral, interview.

[80] Bishop Sergei told the State Duma in December 1994 that the cathedral was not the Church's initiative (according to L. Levinson, interview) and the Bishop's Council made known that if funds for social programmes were to be diverted from their intended end to finance this building " the Church itself will not agree with such a decision ". (Address quoted by Ol'ga Tselkova, 'Den'gi dlya metro i dlya ambitsii', *Rossiskaya Gazeta*, 19 January 1995).

Although the analysis of the role of the Orthodox Church in electoral politics would require further study, suffice to say here that the cathedral, in all its tall new glory, provided the perfect before-and-after snapshot advertisement in favour of the current regime. Polls commissioned by the Yeltsin campaign suggested that underlining the improvement of religion's status under the Democrats would bring sure rewards[81], and the cathedral was of course the most blatant proof of Orthodoxy's triumphant return. A campaign poster seen in Novgorod in August 1996 (left over from the presidential election of the previous month) featured the cathedral surrounded by cranes, its golden bulbs shining against a blue sky, with the following slogan " We are resurrecting Spirituality--we are resurrecting Great Russia! ", signed " B. Yeltsin ".

In the context of the presidential campaign, the feat of resurrecting Orthodoxy's largest place of worship was a political asset hard to beat. This became particularly important when politicians of all stripes began pledging warm regards for the church (the last institution, along with the army, commanding any measure of respect according to public opinion polls)[82]. Given its hesitant behaviour during the critical experience of 'dual power'[83], there were reasons to believe that the Russian Orthodox Church might shift its allegiances in favour of rising forces and abandon its traditional position of loyalty to the incumbent power[84]. A measure of the major ideological changes which affected the entire political elite in less than a decade was given when the Communist candidate Gennady Zyuganov, in the race for the presidency, promised to respect religious freedom[85], without attracting the kind of scathing remarks Valentin Rasputin once made when Boris Yeltsin first appeared in church with a candle[86].

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81 " Focus groups, commissioned by the Yeltsin campaign, indicate that most voters hazily recall how the Communists curbed freedom of speech and movement, but the oppression of the church remains a vivid, palpable memory ". Alessandra Stanley, 'Church Leans Towards Yeltsin in Russian Votes', *The New York Times,* 30 May 1996, p.1.

82 A survey commissioned by the Moscow government in October 1994 found that 47.5% of respondents believed the ROC worthy of total confidence, 19.5% answered "not totally", 4% expressed distrust and 29% could provide no answer. (In Yves Hamant, 'Russie: le renouveau des Orthodoxes', *La nouvelle alternative,* N°42, June 1996).

83 For a discussion of the concept (which refers to the worsening 1992-1993 situation between legislative and executive powers, leading to an open conflict between the Presidency and the Supreme Soviet), see for example Archie Brown, in Amin Saikal and William Maley (ed.) *Russia in Search of Its Future* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 32. The Church failed in its attempt to mediate between the two bodies, partly because its own ranks were divided.

84 The ROC's reasons for being critical of Yeltsin's regime included economic liberalisation in 1992, which hit hardest its natural constituency, and the disintegration of the USSR, which meant that the Church lost Ukraine, a region rich in monasteries and believers by the Soviet Union's standards.

85 A. Stanley, 'Church Leans Towards Yeltsin in Russian Vote', op. cit., continued p. 3. At a rally Zyuganov even "quoted extensively from the Bible and kissed a priest on stage, while a huge banner with an image of Christ waved above his head." (Angela Charlton, news wire from *The Associated Press,* 10 June 1996).

86 V. Rasputin, 'Conscience vs. Envy' in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* 6 June 1991, in *CDSP* Vol. XLIII, N° 29, 1991. It is ironic that Valentin Rasputin was made a member of the cathedral's Public Observation Council.

By 1996, religion, believed in or not, had finally been taken for granted as a factor of social life. Religious symbolism and identity markers were part of the official discourse as centrally and as visibly as the cross of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour in the Moscow skyline. The ironic result, was that, come election time, the supra-political quality of Orthodox identity made it not such a divisive and ultimately decisive issue in politics.[87]

" Accord and Reconciliation ": a new wooden language?

There was another strong ideological reason for paying attention to the national and religious sacred place: for the sake of socio-political 'accord and reconciliation'. Indeed, in the wake of the 1993 events, when society was felt to have only narrowly escaped civil war[88], the calls for unity, peace and *sobornost'* were tinted with a particular ring of urgency. Rebuilding the cathedral of Christ the Saviour was seen as a logical step in the search of an ideological social cement. The church could provide a spiritual unifying point for the nation (albeit reduced to those identifying themselves as Orthodox), as well as a place where people could physically assemble (the cathedral had room for 10,000 worshipers and televised services could extend considerably this feeling of direct communion).

The cathedral's initial architect, I. Pokrovsky, made this connection between the cathedral and the need to shore up national unity absolutely clear in an interview with *Ogonek* in December 1994: " Our country has many problems. But today our country has one fundamental and important problem: avoiding civil war. And we can avoid it only by reuniting the Russian people. This reunion, in turn, can only happen thanks to an idea. Because a people which is not united by a moral idea is a crowd (*tolpa*), capable of committing anything. This is why I believe the return of the cathedral--and it will be the cathedral (*kafedral'niy sobor)* of Russia--is an important moral deed which, I believe, must be

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87 Religious identity did not orientate the voting behaviour of the majority of Russians. Muslims (20 million) could have felt excluded by the manipulation of majority Orthodox identity but Yeltsin was careful to win the endorsement of Imams by visiting mosques and claiming credit for Islam's post-Soviet growth. (A. Charlton, *The Associated* Press, op. cit.). T. Varzanova suggests that voting was not correlated with religion because most Russians today have a secular outlook and a very superficial religious identity. ('Nuzhen li veruyushchim religiozny president?', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 20 June 1996, p. 5).

88 People still debate whether the Red-Brown forces marching towards Ostankino represented a genuine danger or whether they were set-up to justify the usage of violence and facilitate a clear-cut presidential victory. For the conspiracy theory, see Bruce Clark, *An Empire's New Clothes,* p. 252-253. If this interpretation of events is true, later talk about Russia having been 'on the brink of civil war' can be viewed as a useful scare-crow image, designed to elicit the kind of deferential attitude towards the status quo which is typically sought by state-produced ideology.

supported. I am a non-believer but all these ideas are very dear to me. "[89] In saying this, Pokrovsky was merely relaying what had become the official view: the cathedral would be an ideological response to the country's divisions[90].

Was a new 'wooden language'[91]--a language so symbolically charged that words become pure signs and lose contact with reality-- being crafted? Some noted the bitter irony of the fact that the worst day in the bombing of Grozny should coincide with the laying of the cathedral's symbolic first stone[92]. (A few months earlier, Patriarch Aleksy II had promised that the cathedral would become again "the centre of the spiritual life of Russian warriors".)[93] Television viewers were told repeatedly in 1996: "*Khram-- edinstvenno chto nas soedinaet* " (" Church-- the only thing which unites us ") in an advertisement film designed to increase citizens' donations[94]. Even *opposition* to the cathedral's rebuilding, was cast in terms of unity and social accord[95]. And a few months after Yeltsin had complained that in 1996 a unified ruling ideology had still not been concocted for the post-Soviet regime, the most important of the Soviet Union's national holidays, November 7, the Day of the Great October Socialist Revolution, was renamed the Day of Accord and Reconciliation[96].

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89 I.Pokrovsky in *Ogonek*, N°48-49, December 1994, p. 11.

90 " Although I am not a believer, I consider that this cathedral is necessary for Moscow as well as for Russia " Luzhkov in an interview with V. Gurevich in *Moskovskie Novosti*, N° 62, 4-11 December 1994, p. 27.

91 See Françoise Thom's exagerated but interesting analysis of the Soviet wooden language in *La langue de bois* (Paris: Juillard, 1987).

92 See Sergei Zalygin (editor of *Novy Mir*), 'Bremya derzhavnosti razdavit Rossiyu', *Izvestiya* , 18 January 1995, p. 4.

93 Patriarch Aleksy II's address to the Council, 6 September 1994, in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 212.

94 Yu. Grimov, author of the advertisement film and creative director at Premiere SV, also worked for Yeltsin's presidential campaign in 1996 (slogan " Choose or you loose "). The executive director of this agency, Lisovsky, is even more famous for having been one of the two people caught leaving Kremlin quarters with $500,000 in a cardboard box between the presidential elections' two rounds.

95 State Duma deputies concluded their negative assessment of the project on 13 December 1994 with the following words: " We hope that taking the above-mentioned decisions will permit mutual understanding and co-operation and that real steps in favour of a collective discussion of this question, will serve the cause of national reconciliation and accord in our society, by lowering the level of social tension" (printed in *Ekspress Khronika*, No. 32, 9 August 1996).

96 Patriarch Aleksy was the first authoritative opinion to be heard on ORT, the state's TV channel: " This day of peace and reconciliation is exactly what we need. Reconciliation must exist between generations and between people who have different political views. We must all be united in accord, without forgetting the future of our fatherland which we must all serve. " Unsurprisingly his words echoed those he had uttered in January of the same year " We must stay together to have peace and accord reign everywhere, so that all of us [Boris Yeltsin, Yury Luzhkov and members of the Church] meet here on the great jubilee, the 2,000th birthday of the Saviour ". No other religious leaders were featured in the news that evening.
Aleksandr Rutskoi, back in presidential grace, newly elected governor of the Kursky oblast', also showed that he mastered the new language well: " This is exactly what we need. I have the ukaz between my hands now and the President and the Prime Minister should have no doubts what so ever that this ukaz will be applied on the territory of Kursk. Without accord, without reconciliation, we will not rise from this low situation in which we were. "
Only Yury Luzhkov seemed capable of injecting any substance into the linguistic straight-jacket. Speaking with warmth and animation and looking directly at the camera, he said: " We need consensus in society about making Russia a government which strongly stands on its feet in the economic sphere, which helps its needy citizens and which occupies the place it deserves in the world--these are the most important goals of the ukaz [on accord and reconciliation]. " He was given the last word. (ORT evening news, 7 November 1996).

An ideological grammar may well have emerged at the same time as the cathedral was being pulled up from idea to concrete reality. But early 1997, while cranes still surrounded a half red, half white, empty building[97], authorities had no monopoly on the cathedral's-- or Russia's --meaning.

In some respects, religion was becoming a more fundamental part of social life and indeed filling in the ideological vacuum left by the demise of Marxism-Leninism. According to the popular adage, "*svyato mesto pusto ne byvaet*".[98] However, manipulation of Orthodox identity was a dangerous operation. Given the multinational and multi-denomination makeup of the Russian Federation, it could put the solidity of the new state at serious risk. Would the cathedral fan the flames of intolerance and militant bigotry? Aleksei Denisov spoke of his work as an architect on the cathedral and on a new church in Saratov, as an imperative in the struggle against Islamic fundamentalism: Orthodox people must not be left "spiritually unarmed", he said[99].

But political leaders were more cautious in their statements and reluctant to turn the cathedral into a religious strategic silo. The only message carried with a degree of certainty by the cathedral itself seemed to be 'Movement!' (whether 'forward' or 'backward' was unclear), a positive feeling at the core of Mayor Luzhkov's vision and gamble for the future of Moscow-- this is what I discuss in the following chapter.

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[97] In April 1997, the cathedral's brick appearance was in the process of being faced with white stone.
[98] For a criticism of Russia's search for a new ideology see Andrei Zagorodnikov, 'Svyato mesto pusto ne byvaet', *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 30 July 1996.
[99]Aleksei Denisov, architect from Mosproekt-2, Moscow, 30 September 1996.

CHAPTER IV-- Yury Luzhkov's Golden Cathedral in the Centre of Moscow.

How was the cathedral idea put into concrete form?

Agitation at grass-root level or ideological star-gazing in search of the Russian Way would not have been enough to produce the cathedral 'miracle'. Even put together, these two political streams combined group influence too scant to matter, with tenets of a state ideology too blurry to inspire. I argue that the cathedral policy only took substantial shape at an intermediary level of history and politics, in the resourceful hands of Moscow's Mayor, Yury Luzhkov.

Although courting the Patriarch and helping churches recover an important status in the city were clearly part of the Mayor's agenda, Luzhkov's guiding ideology was closer to a populist boss's common sense, than to a mystical monarch's ruling principles. In his memoirs *My deti tvoi, Moskva* ('We Are Your Children, Moscow'), he linked his conception of a useful ideology, based on the age-old idea and metaphor of 'construction', with the need to find a way out of the particularly black pass experienced by Moscow at the time he was appointed mayor, in 1992. It is worth quoting in full since it has the ring of a political credo.

" The situation in 1992 was indeed very dangerous. Not because there were 500,000 unemployed builders-- a catastrophe which could shake the whole municipal system to pieces. Not even because Muscovites, waiting in queues, were left with no future prospects regarding the improvement of their housing conditions. There are things more serious and subtle which affect the emotional tone of people. When the Bolsheviks named the people 'builders of the future' they knew what they were doing. They instilled optimism into the people. 'Construction' as well as 'victory' have always been for us (...)two of the most important ideological symbols. Some people built pyramids and temples; others-- the reign of freedom; others still-- comfort for individuals; in all cases, construction is hope in renovation (*obnovlenie*). To deprive Muscovites of the perspective linked with these notions would have meant much more than only unhappy people on waiting lists, left in their tiny rooms and in shared housing. For the rest of the people too it would have become a pretext for distrust in the

future. If a capital does not renovate itself, Khans are in the country. And poor is the ruler who does not understand these things."[1]

"The most important thing now is to survive this moment. Things will be easier later"[2], Luzhkov told experts at a Moscow government meeting at the time, and proceeded to expound the main points of his building plans. These included the idea of funding new construction work through bank loans (and trusting the real estate market to churn out a buyer willing to pay a high-enough price to recoup the money invested), and the idea that priority should be given to 'resident' labour ("*otkazyvaemsya ot limitchikov*")[3] to help preserve Muscovite builders' business. The first was in some ways revolutionary after years of planning and was a gamble which Luzhkov had the courage to take[4]. The second was a protectionist and populist motion --also typical of the new mayor's management of the city's needs. Significantly, both elements were prominently at work in the Moscow government's decision to rebuild the cathedral of Christ the Saviour: the cathedral was seen as a risky but worthy investment which would eventually pay off, providing in the short term much-needed business orders for builders, suppliers and artists, and confidence in the future for the general public.

A project emblematic of Moscow's New Deal

The way the cathedral's steel was raised, clad, and crowned with gold, is a tale which offers insights into the New Deal offered to Moscow under the leadership of its dynamic Mayor Yury Luzhkov[5]. The Russian media's attention focused for but a brief period on the mystery of the cathedral's finances. It questioned the assertion that no rouble from federal or city budgets would be diverted to fund the costly project, but was later quite content to report only spectacular donations, confirming the official version of a cathedral built entirely from popular donations and providing the

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[1] Yury Luzhkov, *My deti tvoi, Moskva* (Moscow: Bagrius, 1996) p. 235.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Yu. Luzhkov, *My deti tvoi, Moskva*, p. 236.
[4] "It was a tough, risky game. With the guarantee of Moscow government [i.e. pledging Moscow property as security], we received bank loans for 20 milliard roubles. Roubles of that time [1992] were not the same thing as today's. If the operation fell through, the city would simply have driven itself into a dead-end" Yu. Luzhkov, *My deti tvoi, Moskva*, p. 237.
[5] Yury Luzhkov was elected prime minister of the Moscow government on the ticket of mayor Gavriil Popov but appointed Mayor by Yeltsin in 1992 and named governor of the Moscow region in 1993. It is thus against the crisis situation of 1992, with its stock of stray dogs, miserable outdoor bazaars and derelict roads, that the Mayor's performance in improving Moscow's conditions is judged.

generous with a good deal of publicity[6]. Yet the financial and economic dimensions of the cathedral's rebuilding history are worth delineating both before and after the official go-ahead.

Luzhkov's take-over

If we go back in time to July 1992, the moment when the *Obshchina* of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was finally blessed by the Patriarch and registered with its own bank account for donations, the situation was the following : there were at least two rival fund-collecting organisations[7] with little chance of raising enough money to rebuild the cathedral but sufficient appeal in underpasses and subway corridors to create the impression that vast amounts were being accumulated and stored away. In fact, no matter how impressive the sums thus collected (about 7 million roubles by the end of 1991 according to one account[8], and close to 60 million roubles in 1993 if the worth of Germes-Soyuz shares is taken at face value[9]), the amateur character of these fund-raising techniques meant that people's hopes were bound to be disappointed. This was a situation which Vladimir Soloukhin deplored already in February 1990[10] and again in 1993, recommending that old pensioners buy themselves " a loaf of bread " instead of giving money to the *Obshchina*'s fund-collecting brigades[11]. Inflation was said to be eating the money away. Whether the money vanished indeed is debatable. The businessman Valery Neverov, for example, precisely aimed to protect his donations from monetary depreciation by giving " 1000 shares of his international-national oil company Germes-Soyuz worth no less than 30-50 million roubles ", in a publicity stunt for his miraculous fund[12]. But the fate of these donated shares was also murky.[13]

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[6] The last critically-minded article to be published in the official newspaper *Rossiskaya Gazeta* dates back to 19 January 1995. Entitled 'Den'gi dlya metro i dlya ambitsii...' „('Money for the metro and for ambition...'), it claimed that money for the metro was under serious jeopardy, while, somehow, 800 milliard roubles had already been found in the government's treasury to fund the cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

[7] These two financial pools for donations were the World Bank of Christ the Saviour and the newly registered *Obshchina* of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. There may have been more groups involved (like modern-day "sons of Lieutenant Shmidt"), since the idea of rebuilding the cathedral was so popular.

[8] J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church,* p. 57.

[9] A. Kolpakov, 'Khram Khrista Sp...', *Stolitsa,* N°20, 1993.

[10] " No grass-root agitation, no *subbotniki* (Saturday voluntary labour) will do.(...)People believe that their fivers (or more) will go towards the cathedral deed, but the money lies in the [Fund's] bank account like dead weight. " Vladimir Solukhin, 'Eshche raz o vozrozhdenii Khrama Khrista Spasitelya', *Literaturnaya Rossiya,* February 1990.

[11] V. Soloukhin quoted in the article by A. Kolpakov, op. cit.

[12] Valery Neverov advertised that the return in dividends in 1992 totalled " 200% per year " and the value of the shares he donated would be multiplied " by 7 or 8 in two years ". Anticipating Luzhkov's use of vaguely religious language to promote utilitarian ends, Neverov equalled long-term investment with faith in the other-worldly, urging readers to buy his shares: " Today there are many things which don't work in the economy and other spheres, because instantaneous and narrowly material interests predominate. What kind

In Father Georgy's opinion, the belief that a well-spring of popular support for the cathedral could be transformed into a source of cash, or in other words " greed ", contributed in no small manner to awake the interest of the Patriarch and the Mayor. Money collectors were swept off the streets and a monopoly of the collection of funds was eventually established with the creation of the Fund for the Financial Support for the Reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, run by the city hall, in September 1994. Father Georgy's own Bank of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was only allowed to keep its license and name on the condition that it adopt a very low profile.[14]

Luzhkov (" a man I get along with " in the priest's words) thanked him for his compliance by granting

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of Eternity can there be when people don't think about mid-term and long-term interests? "('Da Voskresnet Svyatynya!', *Literaturnaya Rossiya,* March 1993).
Ironically, the Germes business conglomerate was unworthy of trust (just like many other schemes typical of transition's early days). In 1996 the Germes fund seemed to have vanished; no dividends were paid that year. A.Ivanov, author of *tainy Khrama Khrista,* unfortunately invested all his vouchers in this fund.
Neverov's whereabouts in 1996 were unknown although Andrei Yurchenko, specialist attached to Moscow Government's Press and Information Department, mentioned a rumour that Neverov was abroad, acting as advisor to Aleksyandr Lukashenka, the President of Belarus. (A. Yurchenko, interview, Moscow, 19 September 1996).
However small the amount of truth behind these stories may be, Neverov's colourful career (he was a teacher in a provincial town before dealing oil from Tyumen and accumulating businesses) illustrates the opportunities for extraordinary success created by the credulity of people in times of socio-economic flux.

[13] A. Ivanov, a bit lost by the new capitalist rules of the game, thinks they went towards " paying for photocopy machines " for the organisation Fund for the Reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

[14] This bank is lodged in a small building directly adjacent to the Peter and Paul Church where Fr. Georgy used to serve. Its picturesque style (discreet door, impressive security thugs, designer furniture) is telling in itself. On the impromptu call I paid the bank, on 1 October 1996, I was hurried up to Natalya Osipova (a women in her thirties, clad in jewellery, whose business card read 'Chairman of Board of the **World Bank of Christ the Saviour Cathedral**, North-Eastern Dept.'). In her small office, a plaster model of the insignia of the first (unregistered) *Obshchina* founded by V. Mokrousov and Fr Georgy was on display. But business activity in the bank seemed minimal. As N. Osipova nervously explained to me: "We're not really a bank: we're not interested in widening our clientele. We're more like a financial fund, managing the money of the clients we already have." It has a religious niche of a sort since the cathedral's sacristan, Fr Mikhail, and members of the registered-but-dissolved *Obshchina* have accounts here. " With so many churches being reopened and restored (...) quite a few of our clients are priests. " At the same time she denied any continuing links between the Bank of Christ the Saviour and the eponymous cathedral, saying: "We did make a small donation, but we're a bank not a charity fund. Initially [when the bank was founded by Fr Georgy], a third of our profits was to go towards the reconstruction of the cathedral but at the time it was merely an idea. When it became a serious official project, we had to step aside. Luzhkov was very jealous of our movement."
"Since then", she added, "we just haven't changed names because it would be very difficult to go through a new registration process. There are already too many little banks". She gave the impression that the bank was intimidated into accepting a status quo with the Mayor, by which the bank could continue to exist if it refrained from using its name for the expansion of its activities. Several times in the course of our brief interview she repeated: " Please, please don't mention us; we don't want to remind ourselves to Luzhkov. "

When I described this visit to Fr. Georgy (no longer head of the Bank of Christ the Savior), he commented "yes, it's a pity that they have forgotten the original mission. There are people in the bank who are far from the original spirit because they did not take part in the first adventure." (Interview, 9 October 1996).
In *Podlinny lik Moskovskoi Patriarkhy* (Moscow: 1995), p. 16, Gleb Yakunin wrote that the bank " flourished on money made by selling arms in Chechnya and has assiduously financed the publication of Black Hundred literature in Russia. "

his Spiritual Theatre *'Glas'* a prime city-centre three-storey building, at a time when most theatre troupes were struggling to make ends meet and keep buildings in adequate shape.[15]

Along with the desire to rationalise fund-gathering techniques[16] and limit the exploitation of popular credulity by taking matters in hand, the Mayor may have had his eye on regaining full control over the 6.7 hectares of precious municipal land, part of which had been foolishly handed over to the *Obshchina* of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour to design a chapel. Taking over the site and its fate, Luzhkov was consistent with his aim of stopping dead in its track, in Moscow at least, the privatisation programme led by Anatoly Chubais (whom Luzhkov had compared, in words now famous, to " a drunk [who] sold off everything in the house "[17]).

Although the *Obshchina* had paid an architect to produce blueprints and thought that it was operating with the city government's approval, its plans were trumped unexpectedly. When Mokrousov learned that a project had finally been approved by the Mayor and the head of Church at a meeting in the building of the Architecture Council[18] on 23 February 1994[19], his natural reaction was to congratulate the Patriarch. But soon Mokrousov discovered with bitterness that the *Obshchina* had been fooled by Father Rigin (planted by the Patriarch as the religious community's priest) who knew all along that a different plan was under study in closed circles. According to Mokrousov, " the Patriarch supported our chapel idea at first, but when Luzhkov put his weight behind building straight away a full-size cathedral, the Patriarch also agreed it would be better"[20]. The *Obshchina* was then 'cancelled' by the Patriarch (" although he had no right to do so ", insists Lev Levinson, a Duma staff

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[15] In order to do this, the Mayor dislodged a collective of disabled workers, specialised in knitting big-size underpants (" *trussy bolshykh razmerakh* "), which had been occupying the locale for years. The reason this is known owes to a fortuitious event: one of the workers' relatives complained to Lev Levinson about the forceful expulsion of the collective and sought the Lev Levinson's assistance in seeking legal redress for the Mayor's action(in vain). Lev Levinson, interview, 17 September 1996.

[16] Sheer luck rather than professionalism accounts for the way money was found by the *Obshchina* (registered in 1992) in order to erect fences on part of the swimming pool's territory and pay an architect to draft plans for a chapel. In sculptor Mokrousov's words: " It was unbelievable how people gave us time and money without counting! To put up a fence around the land we needed 3. 5 million roubles. In a corner of the territory, Chechens were selling cars--you know, stolen cars with new windshields. My wife and I had the idea to come up to them. We said: 'you are aware that your business is on our land'. They answered: 'OK., what can we do for you?' and gave us the money we needed immediately, in cash-- no stamps, proof or verification needed! " (Interview).

[17] Quoted by David Hoffman, 'The Man Who Rebuilt Moscow', *The Washington Post,* 24 February 1997, p.1. Chubais's privatisation programme handed every citizen vouchers for shares in state property sold at under-valued prices. In 1994 Luzhkov obtained from Yeltsin that Moscow retain control over the fate and most of the proceeds of its vast stock of state property (see Anne Barnard, 'A Finger in Every Pie, an Eye on the Kremlin', *The Moscow Times,* 24 December 1994) .

[18] The *Arkhitekturny Soviet* keeps a large-size detailed model of Moscow for town planning purposes.

[19] This date happened to be symbolic of the two 'patron' ideologies of the cathedral (Orthodoxy and patriotism), since that day was both the birthday of Patriarch Aleksy and the Day of the Protection of the Fatherland (former Soviet Army Day). (V. Mokrousov, interview).

[20] V. Mokrousov, interview.

worker specialised in protecting the civil rights of public organisations). It eventually dissolved of its own will, retaining only a religious book-selling kiosk on the sidewalk a few metres from the construction site. A wooden chapel (dedicated to the icon of the 'Sovereign Mother of God'), bearing some resemblance with the *Obshchina*'s project, was eventually built near the two-metre cross which sculptor Mokrousov had erected in March 1991.[21]

The modest, incremental, approach within civil society's means (i. e. building a two-storey church first) was compatible with the romantic ideal of a wide movement of religious awakening and spiritual atonement eventually culminating in the reconstruction of the cathedral. It could not compete however with the solid logic of a full-blown authority-backed plan. The large central piece of land, a carrier of such ideologically charged history and so much utopian potential, could be used to create something immediately big and profitable under appropriate leadership. As a result, pioneers of the idea met different fates: some were placated with a seat on the cathedral's Public Observation Council; others like Apollos Ivanov were thanked with a diploma signed by the sacristan of the cathedral, Father Mikhail (Ryasantsev); others still, were forgotten and turned bitter. In any case, note that the link between the romantic and the official phase of the cathedral's history was not one of lobbying. In a colleague's account, Yury Luzhkov is " not a man easy to influence; he is very autonomous and self-standing" [22]; he is a practical man, " a manager, not a politician "[23] ; and in case lofty political and religious ideals actually *did* stir him to undertake this construction, the Mayor probably acted " out of personal conviction. "[24]

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[21] The genealogy of this chapel (*Khram-chasovnya vo imya ikony Derzhavnoi Bozhei Materi*) is somewhat muddled due to the variety of objects which bore that name. My understanding is the following:
A first temporary open-air chapel dedicated to the icon of the Sovereign Mother of God existed near the two-metre plaster cross. Prayers were held there regularly, in view of the swimming pool. Patriots gathered there for example for emergency prayers during the October 1993 events. (Fr. Georgy, interview, 9 October 1996).
Plans to build a proper chapel were approved in principle by Moscow authorities in December 1992 and worked out by an architect on the *Obshchina*'s account. But the *Obshchina*'s project was superseded when it was decided to build straight away a full-blown cathedral, in February 1994.
Today's cathedral complex also includes a wooden chapel with a tent-shaped roof dedicated to the icon of the 'Sovereign Mother of God' , based on a design very similar to the *Obshchina*'s abortive one. It was raised on the same spot as the one initially fenced off at the *Obshchina*'s expense, on the western side of the construction site, and was blessed on 7 January 1995. Ironically, because the *Obshchina* had been dissolved by the time it was built, the Patriarch called for the foundation of a new parish (" but this time with appropriate members, *his* men " commented bitterly Mokrousov).
Details also in 'Dvizhenie' by A. Ivanov in N.Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya* , p. 219-220.

[22] S. Semenenko, interview.

[23] In Luzhkov's words, uttered when he was vice-chairman of the city executive in 1990. (quoted by T. Colton, *Moscow*, p. 399). Since then, he has reaffirmed this apolitical attitude--it accounts for much of his success in the post-Communist electoral context.

[24] S. Semenenko, interview.

Helping Orthodoxy on the religious market

Yury Luzhkov was open about his pragmatic attitude towards religion: "I do not consider myself a believer (...) I believe in Christian principles and would like to see them achieved in society. I got interested in religion only a few years back, for understandable reasons: I'm interested in the social processes which go on in the city. Today we must provide society with moral support. Before, the Party took care of this. (...)I believe, above all, in the utility of the Church and in its indispensable presence in society."[25]

Thus, Luzhkov set out to satisfy Muscovites' spiritual needs with the same energy and populist approach with which he undertook to repair the city's roads or vowed to build more housing. (This general all-round efficiency was what earned the Mayor credit among many different sectors of the population). In religion's case, it meant promoting the position of the dominant Church, while conceding some life and amenities to satisfy minority creeds (mosques were built, a church building on Malaya Gruzinskaya street returned to the Catholics, and Jews saw a rebirth unequalled elsewhere). In the religious market too, Luzhkov combined protectionism and voluntarism to defend the actors he judged key to Moscow's survival and development (namely the Orthodox Church), despite the official secularity of government and the proclaimed equality of multiple faiths[26].

Luzhkov's apparent espousal of Orthodoxy[27] and his promotion of the Patriarchate's material interests via the gift of the high-tech massive cathedral (complete with conference room, restaurant and private quarters for the Patriarch), could be seen as a modern-day Russian version of King Henri IV's opportunistic statement: "*Paris vaut bien une messe.*"[28] It made electoral sense since sociological enquiries pointed out that "85% of Muscovites feel themselves drawn towards Orthodoxy"[29] and Luzhkov did not hesitate to use this factor of identity and allegiance to achieve his

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[25] Yury Luzhkov, interviewed in 'Kto on, Yury Luzhkov, kogda osenaet sebya krestom: bogomolets, prikhozhanin, mer?', *Obshchaya Gazeta,* 11-17 January 1996, N°1, p. 9.

[26] In this, he has responded to a clear demand on the ROC's part: the institution has been lobbying politicians at all levels since 1993 for discriminating legislation which would protect Russia from 'sects and non-traditional religions'.

[27] Most people believe Luzhkov is an Orthodox believer. In fact, despite being an atheist, Luzhkov was baptised at age 57 by the Patriarch --mainly to please his wife, he says. "It was at Peredelkino [where the Patriarch has a dacha]. There is a very old pretty church there. It was for me an honour." In the same interview Luzhkov said that he refuses to confess because he likes to remain "absolutely free in [his] decisions". He does not take part in holy communion either because "communion means drinking wine and I categorically do not drink." *Obshchaya Gazeta,* op. cit.

[28] 'Paris is well worth a mass', or, in other words, converting to the dominant faith (Catholicism) is a small price to pay to rule over the Kingdom of France.

[29] Statistics quoted by Y. Luzhkov in the *Obshchaya Gazeta* article, op. cit.

political aims[30]. Taking on full responsibility[31] for the cathedral's construction, Luzhkov pursued his objective energetically[32]. In exchange, the Mayor repeatedly turned to the Church for supplies of religious ritual and decorum to pad and enliven the daily nitty-gritty businesses of the city (the Patriarch sanctified the new office building of the Moscow City Department of Construction, for example)[33].

Apart from helping to secure an ostentatiously cosy relationship with the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, the cathedral was built because it was " a massive source of work and city commands , a *kormushka* "[34] ('feeding-trough'), for builders and artists left briefly at bay with the collapse of the command economy. Construction, the familiar hope-inducing metaphor, was also an economic and political necessity, and, in this case like in others, the Mayor was expeditious in his dealings with people who stood in the way of the realisation of his vision for Moscow.

How the cathedral was financed and whom did it profit...

The suggestion that the construction of the cathedral may have been driven by economic interests seems at first disrespectful (since the rhetoric of the project was more one of self-less sacrifice, generosity, and effort), or, at the very least, paradoxical. Indeed, for a long time in many people's opinion, the high *cost* of the building was the most prohibitive factor weighing against the reconstruction, given the dearth of resources available for more mundane and smaller-scale works. In a public opinion poll (conducted after the Mayor's decision had already been taken, in September 1994), 39.6% of respondents were in favour of the prompt rebuilding of the cathedral, but 32.6% thought the construction of the cathedral should be built " later " and 17.3% thought " it shouldn't be

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[30] During his 1996 political campaign, Luzhkov was pictured against a background of golden Orthodox onion domes, with the slogan " Muscovites have already made their choice ".
[31] The cathedral of Christ the Saviour features in the list of his exclusive tasks in the break-up of responsibilities between members of Moscow government. ('O raspredelenii obyazannostei mezhdu chlenami Pravitel'stva Moskvy', *Tverskaya-13* , N°36, 5-11 September 1996, p. 6.)
[32] According to I. Ptichnikov, director of the Fund, " Luzhkov comes to work once a week and pounds his fist on the table." (Quoted by Christya Freeland, 'Church of Christ the Saviour is becoming a symbol of capitalism', *The Financial Times*, 29 August 1995, in *CDSP* Vol. XLVII, N°36, 1995).
[33] *Vechernaya Moskva*, 4 March 1995.
[34]Mikhail Shvydkoi, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation, interview, Moscow, 20 September 1996.

built at all " (10.4% found it " difficult to answer ")[35]. Like Gorbachev earlier, many of the decision's opponents felt that the cathedral should await better economic times. Few were those who, like Luzhkov, perceived that, on the contrary, ambitious enterprise was the only way out of depression.

Can the cathedral be seen as one such 'saving' venture? Looking at how the cathedral was brought into being, we can attempt to draw a balance of cost[36] and benefits associated with the construction. But working through the finances of this city project is bound to yield imperfect results since the task is complicated by the secrecy of information (or the spreading of false information) and by the complexity of the institutional and contractual ties which still linked enterprises together less than a decade after the beginning of privatisation. Furthermore, some have argued that the money involved was " not real money " compared to the cost of military rockets or other heavy equipment and therefore not worth wasting sleep over and worrying about[37]. Yet the case of this construction's economic management is worth exploring in some detail because it illuminates the particular brand of state capitalism promoted by Moscow government with apparent success.

The mythical dimension of popular subscription

The cathedral was supposed to be built exclusively from voluntary donations, both individual and corporate. If we focus first on personal donations, the idea of raising money through a nation-wide subscription was clearly more symbolic than financially meaningful. It was important given the

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[35] VTsIOM poll institute, survey conducted on 12-13 September 1994 with a sample of 1,722 people from various economic and social backgrounds, age categories and levels of education. Whether they were all Muscovites or not is unfortunately not indicated in the survey's data. See survey in appendix.

[36] The cost of the building in its completed exterior form (excluding all art work and ornamentation) was most often quoted as $300 million, but the accuracy of this figure is highly questionable.
V. Resin, First Deputy in the Moscow government, estimated that the cathedral would cost around " $360 million ". (*Moskovskie Novosti*, N°62, 4-11 December 1994, p. 27). But, at the time, detailed architectural plans did not exist. Arguably, Moscow government was concerned chiefly with convincing the public and state powers that the project was affordable and that 80% should be financed directly by the federal budget.
In an *Interfax* wire on 25 February 1996, Luzhkov said that reconstruction had so far cost " 450 billion roubles " (approximately $90 million)--but that was probably ignoring sunken costs in the form of inter-enterprise debts and ignoring the artwork already begun in the new chapel built in the cathedral's gigantic pedestal.
Changing dollar rates from one year to another also complicated the exercise of summing up and keeping track of real costs. (Konstantin Ton's cathedral had cost a little under 15 million gold roubles.)

[37] A. Komech remembers a session of the Moscow Duma when a banker suddenly stopped short the idle talk about the cathedral's cost by saying " What are we talking about? 1, 2, 3 trillion rubles? That's $200 million to $600 million. Is that real money? That's not real money. If we're talking about a project to build a high-speed highway- 100 to 150 trillion rubles- now that's money. This isn't real money . " (Quoted by Lee Hockstader in 'Moscow is a Haven of Haves Amid Russia's Sea of Have-Nots', *The Washington Post,* 27 December 1996).

die-hard legend that the first cathedral had been entirely raised on common people's money[38]. It also mattered as an orchestrated gesture of social bonding, in the line of the fund collections organised in Soviet times (to finance the Great Patriotic War memorial on Poklonnaya Gora, for example, 190 million roubles were collected in a campaign led by Viktor Grishin in 1983)[39].

This transpired in the fact that Moscow City's Fund for the Financial Support of the Reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (simply 'Fund' hereafter) made special efforts to ensure that money would be collected from all regions, "because the cathedral should be all-Russian "[40], and in spite of the obvious disparities in the amount that provincials and Muscovites could contribute to the project. The task was arduous given that only the Moscow branch of Sberbank (savings bank) proposed to transfer individuals' money into the Fund's account without charging a commission for the service. TV advertisements were crucial for acquainting provincials with the destroyed Moscow landmark.

In addition to the problem of general poverty, people's confidence in financial ventures had been eroded by crashing pyramids[41] and swindlers of all kind, so that the Fund had to give individuals special reassurance. Work in progress could be checked thanks to see-through metal-bar fences erected around the site, and television advertisements, showing the stage reached by the construction, stressed its admirable tempo.[42] Yet, " some people come in person to us, not trusting even our bank! " exclaimed the deputy director of the Fund[43].

In its marketing campaign, the Fund was greatly helped by the unusual fact that images of the completed product were available from day one: the cathedral already virtually existed (since work was directed towards faithfully restoring the appearance of the previous cathedral); calendars, postcards, paper-weights, baseball caps, city posters, certificates thanking donors-- all could bear the effigy of the previous cathedral like a hallmark of certainty (if not quality). But even so, with the object of donations easily identifiable and obviously progressing, people had the right to remain sceptical given the number of phoney church representatives begging for financial support for the artistic

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[38] Nina Potapovich-Molini notes that people continue to believe that the reason why the cathedral's building process had dwindled over 45 years was because it was financed exclusively through a slow accretion of kopecks, sent by relatives of the deceased soldiers from far-flung corners of the empire. In I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie...,* p. 8-9.
[39] T. Colton, *Moscow*, p.395.
[40] S. Semenenko, interview.
[41] The MMM fund which crashed in July 1994 was only the most spectacular example of this phenomena.
[42] Progress (e*tapnost')* and speed (*skorost')* were the two points stressed by the designer in charge of posters and calendars, during a meeting I witness in the Fund's office, Moscow, 24 September 1996.
[43] S. Semenenko, interview.

renovation of their particular parish buildings in the metro and underpasses.[44] Furthermore, products carrying the image of the cathedral on their labels (candy boxes, vodka, and Cahors wine bottles, to name a few) could confuse potential donors by taking on the appearance of fund-raising products while in fact simply exploiting for commercial purposes a now popular Moscow symbol (whose rights were wholly in the public domain).

In the face of these adverse conditions, people's faith and giving gestures were indeed remarkable. The genuine sacrifice involved in the process could be felt in the written testimonial recorded in the cathedral museum's visitors' book. One touching example was the extreme case of a modern-day pilgrim, able to contribute nothing more than his admiration because of rough economic times but grateful nonetheless towards the secular authorities which had made the cathedral's return possible. Writing in June 1996 (just before the presidential and mayoral elections), he stated: "Although difficulties with money and the price of a ticket to Moscow do not allow me to make a contribution, may Lord give you victory to continue on the path of reform ." But regardless of their personal and political worth, individual donations (*pozhertvovanie* or 'sacrifice' in Russian) could not capitalise enough resources to recreate a cathedral from scratch. By April 1997, individual donations had accounted for only roughly 3% of total contributions to the Fund[45].

Another source of direct funding which should be barred out, due to the lack of contrary evidence to date, is the federal budget. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the written request jointly signed by Luzhkov and the Patriarch, asking the President for financial help, was not met with approval; only a tax break was officially granted by Yeltsin[46] (and briefly rescinded when the country's fiscal situation reached a critical point). But by stating that the cathedral should be ready in its exterior

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[44] The Moscow Patriarchate has considered issuing official badges of accreditation to money collectors to solve this problem, according to Yu. Klitsenko, interview.

[45] By 9 April 1997, a total of 800 billion roubles had been collected from various sources by the Fund. (Sergei Semenenko, phone interview, 9 April 1997).

[46] Of course, a federal tax break (combined with a local tax break, voted by the Moscow City Duma) has distributive effects equivalent to direct funding: the tax burden is shifted from one type of industry to another, and citizens receive less from the slimmed-down coffers of the state.
State Duma deputy M. Seslavinsky reported rumours that with-held salaries were actually going towards the funding of the cathedral . But when asked whether the Duma had found substantial evidence to back these claims, he answered that it was useless trying: " although the cathedral of Christ the Saviour is nothing like Chechnya, it is an incredibly secret operation. " (M. Seslavinsky, interview). Available statistics for the first half of 1996 showed that wage arrears in the social sphere were indeed much greater than in the construction sector. But inferences were difficult to make since the construction sector was partly privatised, while employees of education, health and culture institutions depended almost exclusively on the state.
The argument regarding the cathedral's dent on the budget may seem sterile since most firms refused to pay all their taxes anyway, regardless of tax breaks doled out by the state, and since the money invested by them in the cathedral could have vanished abroad in closed accounts instead.
However, the tax break granted at a federal level was at measurably important. It produced a sudden increase in the sums of money collected in May 1995: sums jumped to 30 billion roubles, up from 5 billion roubles the previous month. (S. Semenenko, interview).

guise in time for Moscow's 850th birthday celebration in September 1997-- a jubilee partly backed by federal monies-- Luzhkov may have redirected some of the federal funding for the capital's general embellishment towards completing this particularly important construction. It was highly probable that Luzhkov had managed to strike some sort of financial deal with his ally President Yeltsin. Details, however, remained the object of mere speculation.

The Mayor's firm hand

The main key to understanding the cathedral's successful construction resides in Moscow government's relationship with various enterprises. The contrast between Alexander Vitberg's failure and Konstantin Ton's success had already proven in the past that more than great ideas are required to raise a cathedral. Historians noted that " what was needed was firm power, with a reliable directing *apparat* used to working with professional architects and builders."[47] In 1992, when Luzhkov started his career as Moscow Mayor, the city was also littered with Communist-era never-completed projects which could serve as forbidding precedents. Luzhkov would not have risked his political reputation and the city's finances on such a perilous adventure, without solid assurances that the cathedral could be built within realistic financial and temporal frameworks.

The Mayor reached this understanding after consulting specialists who told him that building the cathedral in reinforced monolithic concrete, like the recently completed gigantic St Savva Cathedral in Belgrade, would be " faster and cheaper " than building it all in brick like the original.[48] (In the end, a compromise solution was chosen: the concrete edifice was covered with a layer of brick, requiring thus 'only' 10 million bricks, instead of the 40 million used in the original). A commission of experts checked the quality of the Palace of Soviets' circular foundations (preserved throughout the years of the *Moskva* swimming pool), and concluded that they could be safely used for

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[47] A. Butorov, 'Kakim byl khram', op. cit., p. 7.

Indeed, although Emperor Alexander was enthusiastically in favour of Vitberg's project in 1815 and had put at the improvised architect's disposal 11,000 souls by 1821, the construction had to be stopped in 1825 partly because of the level of theft and embezzlement going on. Only a levelling of the site had been accomplished by then. The whole project was liquidated, occasioning a loss of 4,134,560 roubles. Konstantin Ton, on the contrary, was known for his steadfast wilfulness, and the cathedral ultimately owed its existence to the better collective organisation proposed by the Moscow general governor Prince D. Golitsyn and approved by the government. (A. Butorov, 'Kakim byl khram', op. cit., p. 7-10; R. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, p. 237).

[48] Yu. Mamoshin, deputy director of Mospromstroi, interview. In the same conversation, he mentioned that building the whole thing in bricks would have taken " 5 to 6 years "--a tempo which could be interpreted as unsatisfactory given the timetable of elections.

the cathedral and thereby reduce construction costs by up to 20%[49]. Modern technology could also slash further expenses. Only 20 kilos of gold were needed to gild the cathedral's domes instead of the original 312,6 kilos[50], by spraying a a fine layer of golden lacqer (including only microscopic particles of gold) between a layer of titanium nitrate (serving as a base) and a protective film of graphite.[51] (The Mayor checked that the effect would be roughly the same by asking the Patriarch to identify the real gold leaf covered metal scrap, among two unidentified samples, one cheap, the other authentic. According to the account I was given, the Patriarch chose the wrong piece and Luzhkov exclaimed " See! Even you can not tell the difference! "[52]) Artists' cachets could be lowered by having their able hands simply colour-in computer-generated outlines of the destroyed paintings[53]. And all sculptural works were to be executed in plaster instead of stone[54].

These and other management decisions were firmly kept in the Mayor's hand since gatherings of the Public Observation Council were no more than symbolic and generally tame.[55] The composition of this council was seen by some as proof of mock democracy since most appointed members were either officials strictly loyal to the Mayor, interested participants, or artistic and literary personalities with no claws and no real say[56]. The Council, for example, was in theory responsible for controlling the finances of the project but in fact did " not verify any details. "[57] According to one of its members, " the *soviet* is always in favour because everything in effect is prepared and defined by two people: the Mayor and the Patriarch. "[58] Even in the sphere of back-room decisions, all independent initiatives were not welcome. A sign that the Patriarch's wishes came second to the Mayor's shopping

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[49] N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya,* p. 220-221.
[50] E. Kirichenko, in L. Polinovskaya(ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya,* p. 27.
[51] A. Denisov, 'Ot Rozhdestva do Rozhdestva', op. cit. , p. 23.
[52] According to ingeneer on the site Valerya, interview, , Moscow, 2 October 1996.
[53] M. Moskvin-Tarkanov, interview.
[54] " Artists have agreed to work half price" and in 1997, no one had been paid yet for the early models produced in 1996. (Yury Orekhov, director of the reconstruction of the sculptural adornment of the cathedral, interview, Moscow, 8 April 1997).
[55] Their meetings, called 2-3 times a year on the initiative of Vassily Shakhnovsky (in charge of the city's admnistrative affairs), were more " events ", created by the charismatic presence of Mayor Luzhkov and Patriarch Aleksy II and recorded by a bevy of journalists than discussions of a functioning " *apparat* ", according to M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, interview.
[56] See Alla Bossart, 'Teatr vremen Luzhkova i Sinoda', *Stolitsa*, N°2, 8 January 1995, p. 12.
[57] M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov detailed his rationale for not interfering in economic affairs despite his function as Moscow Duma deputy, in the following words: " I have a rule of life: not showing up where I am not needed, and, as I understand, Yury Mikhailovich [Luzhkov] can supervise finances better than I. What I *could* do (and did) is convince the Duma that it should free enterprises from taxes. I try to keep my role to the basic minimum: I can give interviews, talk about the cathedral, and support the project morally, using my authority as a deputy. " (Interview).
[58] Ibid.

list, was given by the prompt dismissal of the cathedral's first architect Igor' Pokrovsky, who had mistakenly identified Aleksy II as the man in charge[59].

A golden manger?

The mission entrusted to Mosproekt-2, the Moscow architectural agency acting as the cathedral's commissioner, was to chose "fast, cheap, and quality solutions"[60], which would be implemented then by Mospromstroi and various sub-contractors, with money collected by the Fund and channelled to meet expenses by an organisation called Investistroi. "At all stages, contracts were awarded on the basis of competitive bids"[61], claimed Aleksei Denisov, head of studio N°12 (which co-ordinated the work of other studios for this project) at Mosproekt-2. But there were many signs that work in progress was in fact the fruit of more incestuous and imperious relationships between the Moscow authorities and various firms.

The description of contemporary Moscow as a fiefdom ruled by the city executive, an order in which the Mayor grants privileges, real estate, favourable tax rates and precious city orders to business companies which prove supportive and obedient, was largely validated in the case of the cathedral. A peruse down the list of corporate donors (whose names were inscribed in golden letters on marble plaques, flanking the cathedral's entrance doors since January 1996) made this plain.

First on the honour roll, after the City Hall and the City Duma, the building company Mospromstroi was listed on this plaque for "giving money"[62]. But what did this mean? An AO corporation (*Aktsionarnoe Obshchestvo)* of the closed type in which the city had a 25% share, Mospromstroi was given the project in 1994 without competition. "There was no serious alternative to the company at the time", given its mass and experience (40,000 employees, 5,000 pieces of heavy equipment), argued Yury Mamoshin, its deputy director.[63] With most of the building services available in-house (electricians, brick-layers, sewage experts, etc.), work was carried out without formal contractual relations. Typically, Mospromstroi built up debts with suppliers of material like

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[59] See A. Bossart, 'Teatr vremen Luzhkova i Sinoda', op. cit., p. 13. Mikhail Posokhin, appointed chief architect of the project after Pokrovsky's departure, explained the switch simply in terms of having personally "more possibilities and capabilities." (Quoted by A. Solntseva, 'Na fundamente Dvortsa Sovetov', *Ogonek*, N° 18, April 1996, p. 46).
[60] A. Denisov, 'Ot Rozhdestva do Rozhdestva', op. cit., p. 23.
[61] A. Denisov, interview.
[62] S. Semenenko, interview.
[63] Yu. Mamoshin, interview.

Mospromstroimaterialy (in which Moscow government also had shares), while accomplishing much of its own work for the city on credit.[64] Would the municipality pick up Mospromstroi's bills in the future? Or did it already write 'paid' on them? Moskvin-Tarkhanov, one of the 35 deputies of the City Duma and member of the Public Observation Council of the cathedral, conceded that the city budget financed the cathedral's infrastructure (water, electric and heating systems, etc.).[65] The Fund was merely collecting " enough to pay [Mospromstroi] workers' salaries--nothing more "[66]. By September 1996, even the payment of salaries was lagging behind schedule[67] because of a slump in corporate donations after the victory of Yeltsin in the presidential election and the lull of summer months spent in out-of-town dachas. The case of Mospromstroi, the most important professional actor in the cathedral's construction, goes to show that it was often difficult to establish who was helping whom--work was done but accounts would have to be settled later[68].

The names of other companies listed as donors-- but donors which happened to have Moscow government as their client-- also bore an ambiguous and disconcerting character. Inkombank gave money and 25 icons as a return of favour to the city authorities who helped the bank put its hands on choice real estate for its offices and as a token of gratitude for the privilege of managing some of the city's cash accounts[69]. Significantly, when the Stolichny Bank of Savings announced that it was offering 53 ingots of gold to gild the cathedral, it informed the press in the same breath that it had also just secured an agreement to handle all the Patriarchate's accounts[70]. In addition, it was reliably reported that money from sales of the city's real estate stock and revenues from Moscow-owned companies, the so-called 'non-budgetary resources', were disguised as bank donations to fund the cathedral's construction[71].

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64 Ibid.
65 M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, interview.
66 S. Semenenko, interview.
67 According to Sergei, a Mospromstroi invigilator guarding offices on the construction site, Moscow, 30 September 1996.
68 "The input of every participant will be judged for its merits once the construction is over", wrote M. Posokhin, architect-in-chief of the cathedral, 'Vosstanavlivaetsya v istoricheskom oblike', *Arkhitektura i Stroitel'stvo Moskvy*, N°4, 1995, p. 28.
69 Obtaining the designation of 'authorised bank' was what made banks rich. It meant that they could handle huge transactions (generated by natural resources monopolies) and pay interests on the city's multibillion-dollar deposits at profitably low rates. See for example, L. Hockstader, 'Moscow is a Haven of Haves Amid Russia's Sea of Have-Nots', op. cit.
70 Ellen Barry, 'Bank Offers Bullion to Gild Savior Cathedral', *The Moscow Times,* 10 August 1995.
71 See Steven Erlanger, 'Moscow Resurrecting Icon of Its Past Glory', *The New York Times,* 23 September 1995, p.8. In addition, a staff member of the Fund conceded that money had come from " the sale of real estate owned by important Moscow construction firms and structures ", but " only at the beginning of the project, when a huge initial effort was required--practically not any more today. " (Phone interview, 4 October 1996). A.Denisov, stated brutally that, so far " 90% of the money has come from non-budgetary resources, 9% from the Fund and 1% from the Patriarch " --an over-simplification surely, but an indication of

Management of the construction was emblematic of " state capitalism *à la* Moscow "[72] with its lack of true competition and absence of *glasnost'* to balance and check the importance of political protection. When ZIL, for example, won the right to design the cathedral's 14 bells, observers cried foul play[73]. And indeed a few months later, Luzhkov vowed to bail out the maker of trucks and limousines to keep alive one of Moscow's most important source of employment[74]. But the bias was denied and the matter closed. Investigation may have been discouraged by the Mayor's track history of successful libel actions[75]. In fact, both TV and printed media were generally supportive of the Mayor's management, going so far as to provide free air time and space to circulate appeals for public donations to fund his pet project. Was this public charity or professional cynicism on the media's part? Aleksei Komech, director of the Art History Institute, railed in an interview that society was " closing up again " and critical-minded behaviour fast disappearing after the brief interlude of intellectual daring known as *glasnost'*. "People turn a blind eye to what is going on. (...) Everybody wants to eat caviar by the spoonful. "[76] Participating in the cathedral campaign was one of the services which the media could not realistically refuse a Mayor who thoughtfully styled himself as their protector, doling out " low rents, tax breaks, and discounts on electricity bills "[77].

Thus, it seems fair to say that the cathedral was built not only on credit but also through the trade of municipal favours. Moskvin-Tarkhanov of the Moscow City Duma was candid about the fact that companies pitched in because they wanted to have " good access and good relations with those in power" by participating " in a project which interests the mayor and President. "[78] Others acted out

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the important part played by Moscow government's real estate and business resources. (Interview, 30 September 1996).

[72] For a description of how Moscow government functions as the country's biggest entrepreneur, see Sergei Rybak, 'Mosgorbiznesimperiya', *Kapital,* 9 November 1995.

[73]Charles Hecker, 'Bells Herald Cathedral's imminent Rebirth', *The Moscow Times,* 14 March 1996, p. 1.

[74] See Valeria Korchagina, 'Luzhkov Orders City to Buy Ailing ZiL's Wares', *The Moscow Times* , 1 October 1996. " Rather than top-to-bottom restructuring, Luzhkov's plan has a state capitalist angle: the city will be ordered to buy more ZIL trucks, tax breaks will be doled out, parcels of land sold off, and advertising created for ZIL ", commented David Hoffman in 'The Man Who Rebuilt Moscow', *The Washington Post,* 24 February 1997.

[75] In addition to systematically winning trials against the 'rabble-rousers' amongst the media (25 suits to date, according to D. Hoffman, 'The Man Who Rebuilt Moscow', op. cit.), Luzhkov, in a princely gesture, donated some of the compensation money to the cathedral's good cause, thus attracting further sympathy from the public.

[76] Aleksei Komech, interview, Moscow, 23 September 1996.

[77] Luzhkov has stated that the city's support of (selected) media is equivalent to a subsidy of approximately $15 million a year. See D. Hoffman, 'The Man Who Rebuilt Moscow', op. cit.

[78] M. Moskin-Tarkhanov, interview.

of caution, under the impression that " maybe unpleasant things would occur " in their dealings with authorities if they didn't[79].

These corporate donations could be interpreted as simply an acceptable form of otherwise contemptible corruption (funding the cathedral bought companies privileged municipal services including access to valuable property). Or, allowing wordplay to reveal hidden truths, some mused that the holy contributions made by businesses were a step on the path towards salvation: a way of obtaining the safest *krysha* ('roof' or mafia protection) of them all, by pleasing Moscow's Godfather[80]. In that case, calling donations 'voluntary' would be very naive. But donations were also a reflection of the Mayor's success in drawing private firms into the realm of public action (firms' super-profits were creamed for the apparent benefit of the public)[81]. Foreign firms were not absent from his dragnet, on the contrary: the Dutch firm Philips Electronics, the fast-food outlet McDonald's and the beverages company Coca-Cola, for example, all paid tribute to the concept of " good citizenship "[82].

An important objection to the Mayor's systematic recourse to sponsoring remained in that the practice monopolised corporate resources for city projects, thus depriving of support a plurality of private initiatives.[83] Indeed, in the competition to attract capital, the Mayor had an unbeatable rent position, sitting at the top of vast bureaucratic riches, negotiable real estate, and a formidable business empire. His behaviour may have helped raise the public profile of patronage and incited religious or cultural actors to seek out their own benefactors[84]. But although Luzhkov's overt aim was to inspire other entrepreneurs --not to eliminate them-- Moscow was clearly no level playing field.

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79 Ibid.

80 " You know Palermo? You know Naples? Construction is always a big mafia business. " commented dryly M. Shvydkoi, interview.
It was reported that at least one crime boss, " Mikhas of the Solnstevo group, who lives in Vienna ", paid his dues to the Mayor's project by making " a generous contribution ". (Maksim Sokolov, 'The Barbarization of Eastern Orthodoxy', *Kommersant-Daily*, 9 September 1995, in *CDSP*, Vol. XLVII, N° 36, 1995).

81 The benefit may be only apparent. In all likelihood, citizens will bear the brunt of the cathedral's costs when these ultimately rise from their sunken state (as inter-enterprise debt) into the open. But in the meantime, Luzhkov could claim that the construction of the cathedral was " being carried out not at the expense of the city and Muscovites " since the number of schools, hospitals and housing being built was growing(speech reported by Interfax, 7 January 1996).

82 The expression was used by a spokesman for Coca-Cola, quoted by Phil Reeves in 'Why Moscow's new cathedral is the real thing', *The Independent*, 25 October 1996, p. 14. The same article specified that Philips agreed to provide free lighting for the cathedral and that McDonald's contributed about $100,000. Coca-Cola donated $ 100,000 for eight rondels (circular sculptures) out of the 20 which should adorn the cathedral's exterior. (Valeria Korchagina, 'Cathedral Planners Turn Eye to Decor', *The Moscow Times*, 22 October 1996).

83 The cathedral was but one example of the Mayor's recourse to sponsoring: anything from Christmas street decorations to Moscow Day festivities were financed in large part by foreign and domestic firms.

84 Father Georgy, for example, complained that the Mayor was drying up available sources. But at the same time, he was busy trying to convince star TV anchorman Viktor Balashov to sponsor a new iconostasis for the Troitsa church on Sebryansky Pereulok (a meeting I witnessed on 9 October 1996).

As a show-case of Luzhkov's management skills, the cathedral played an important part in securing the Mayor's sweeping re-election in June 1996. The image of the cathedral surrounded with cranes, which Yeltsin's team used to signify the renaissance of Russia's Orthodoxy (in a poster seen in Novgorod), was slotted in Luzhkov's campaign discourse between snapshots of improved roads and new apartment housing in a two-page pre-election manifesto.[85] For M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov the " cathedral of Christ the Saviour is precisely what elected the Mayor.(...)--not so much the cathedral but the fact that Luzhkov is building it. It is important for electors that 'at the top' sits a person capable of doing this ."

Owing to its beautiful central location, the cathedral seemed to have been brought to life in the effortless stroke of a magic wand, but reality was more amazing. Work started before architectural plans were finalised to speed up the construction process (presumably with an eye on the electoral calendar although this assumption is difficult to substantiate). Legends were taken at face value in the early stages of the construction[86]. Blueprints were constantly being revised thereafter. And funding, as discussed earlier, was eminently problematic. Luzhkov's 88% re-election score was thus the political reward handed to someone willing to take entrepreneurial risks, as exemplified in a project fraught with major uncertainties, and capable of keeping his promises. In the broader political context, Luzhkov's demonstrated ability to pool resources and support locally gave him valuable political autonomy. But it also underlined Moscow's uniqueness in Russia-- something which could play against him in a hypothetical race for the country's presidency.

The centre of Moscow

The construction of the cathedral could also be interpreted as a 'tax on centrality'. Indeed, financially, it was supported by firms desiring access to central power or central locations for their

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[85] See the Mayor's programme, 'Yury Luzhkov: My vmeste sdelaem nashu zhizn' dostoinoi moskvicha', published in *Trud-7*, 17 May 1996, p.12-13.

[86] I. Pokrovsky declared smugly in *Ogonek* (N° 48-49, 1994), for example: " we know that the altar was taken apart and put in boxes. And then Anastas Mikoyan sold it to Eleanore Roosevelt who, in turn, gave it to the Vatican. I spoke with the ambassador from the Vatican: they don't deny the fact, but solving this question requires dealing with them at a higher echelon. " This led Luzhkov to visit in person the Vatican (as noted in a previous chapter). In turn, Yeltsin, following the ceremony of laying the last stones of the building's outer wall, declared to Interfax on 7 January 1996 that " the Russian secret services are now trying to find the altar of the church". In fact, the unique chapel-shaped altar was dismembered and partly destroyed according to Marina Tsvetaeva, a specialist from the Union of Restorers, working for A. Denisov in the cathedral's studio (Moscow, 30 September 1996). Rumours and lack of professionalism irritate restoration experts like her who must track down sketches and actually reconstitute the extremely sophisticated altar and iconostasis from scratch, while obeying amateur (political) deadlines.

businesses. It was partially funded through the sale of municipal property (whose prices reflected geographical proximity to Moscow's centre). And in return, it was hoped that the sheer presence of the cathedral would reinforce the prestige and value of the centre and of the capital as a whole. By adopting the cathedral idea as his personal priority, Yury Luzhkov (" a great psychologist!" enthused Moskvin-Tarkhanov)[87], was apparently combining a utopian belief in the effects of urban planning[88], marketing know-how aimed at keeping the Moscow property market on its all-time high, and down-to-earth concerns for the city as a functioning system.

An old slogan like " Moscow--Third Rome ", which resurfaced in books and discussions in preparation for Moscow's 850th birthday, equated the cathedral of Christ the Saviour's core importance for Orthodoxy with that of St Peter's cathedral for Catholicism, (despite Kiev's St Sofia greater place of pride in Eastern Orthodoxy). 'Centrality' struck distinctively Russian chords, since the leitmotiv was one which ran throughout Russia's tsarist history (as a balancing force to counter the dissolution of power and statehood over the empire's wide expanses) and had been reinforced in Soviet times (with Moscow's claim to lead the Communist world, the Soviet Union's fear of 'encirclement', and the institution of central planning).

Both the first cathedral and the Palace of Soviets could be called central in several respects. In the 19th century, Konstantin Ton's cathedral, with its Byzantine cross layout and its five domes, served as a model for tens of churches around the country by operating a shift back to the origins of Russian church architecture after the interruption created by Peter the Great[89]; its design was also adopted by Nicholas II to operate an ideological retreat around the empire's core values. Even greater ideological and architectural ambitions were invested in the Palace of Soviets. On paper at least, it consolidated the status of Marxism-Leninism as the Soviet Union's victorious new religion, launched a new official architectural style (in rupture with the modernism and relative creative diversity of the 1920s), and was the point from which wide avenues were to radiate in the 1935 master plan for new Moscow.[90]

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87 M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, interview.

88 A well publicised declaration of the first Five-Year Plan (1928-1932) had called town planning " the mightiest factor for organizing the psyche of the masses." [S. Frederick Starr, 'Visionary Town Planning', in Sheila Fitzpatrick's *Cultural revolution in Russia, 1928-1931* (London: Indiana University Press, 1978), p.208].

89 E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve*, p. 54.

90 See K. Schlögel, in *Naum Gabo*, p. 178-183.

Opinions diverged strongly on whether the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II would turn out to be as central a project on both religious and artistic counts (although there were many reasons for believing that it would *not* be seminal, as the next chapter will show). In practical terms, however, the cathedral was at the centre of City Hall's policy for raising Moscow's credit abroad and local real estate value.

A centre for the rich? The fate of the Moskva pool

Even a cursory trawl through the late days of the *Moskva* reveals the change of priorities brought about with the transition to a market economy. Without indulging in sacrilegious nostalgia, it seems fair to say that the *Moskva* pool built under Nikita Krushchev genuinely contributed to the masses' welfare (in contrast with the Stalinist Palace of Soviets which chiefly served to hail the glorious victory of Communism personified in Lenin). According to its long-time director, Nikolai Portnov, " every season, up to 6,000 children were taught how to swim there. It was the only place uniting people from so many varied backgrounds. All sorts of people came: children, adults, old age pensioners; workers and embassy staff. The pool was frequented by all Moscow, by provincial people, and by the city's foreign guests."

N. Portnov (now confined to heading a modest pool in Moscow's southern periphery), correlates a dive in the number of visitors to the Moskva, with the moment when life became materially difficult and politically uncertain in the early 1990s: " although the price of swimming there was low, people preferred to stay home. They stopped going to concert halls and cinemas too". By the end of 1992 the number of visitors was down from the dizzying summer heights of 15,000 a day, to " no more than 5-6,000 people "[91]. Creeping algae was another explanation. The pool's ageing equipment was deliberately left to rust by Moscow authorities who had their hearts set on more lucrative real estate deals.

In the wake of Moscow's highly profitable privatisation process, room for public swimming was considered a waste of expensive space[92]. " No new municipal pools are foreseen for at least the next two years " confided Vladimir Semionovich, Head of the Moscow City Swimming Department, in

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91 Nikolai Portnov, director of the *Moskva* for the last 15 years of the pool's 34-year existence, phone interview, Moscow, 10 October 1996.

92 Building a whole new pool on the spot of the *Moskva* would have cost " $100 million " according to V. Resin, in 'Moskva nachinaet. Gorozhane vyigryvayut?', op. cit.

October 1996[93]. Instead, exclusive-membership pools were expected to fill the gap. Ironically, one such example was a three-star hotel and fitness-club complex planned for the prestigious area near the rebuilt Cathedral of Christ the Saviour-- provided that foreign capital would flow in[94].

Displaying a 'civilised' new Moscow

Along with luxury hotels and restaurants, culture, not open-air swimming pools, would make Moscow look 'civilised' or, in other words, a nice city to do business in. In his efforts to make the centre of Moscow a favourable environment for the creation of wealth, the Mayor was opting for the same strategies of gentrification, embellishment and animation of city centres adopted elsewhere by municipalities (in competition with each other for tax resources, investments, and jobs).

On this point, there was a meeting of minds between Luzhkov and Russian companies. A spokeswoman for Stolichny Bank (the donor of 53 kilograms of gold) stressed that sponsorship of cultural events and investment in Russia's patrimony and social charities were important domestically to change people's perceptions and give capitalism " a human face " after years of negative propaganda. But they were also essential as weapons against foreigners' prejudices, by showing Westerners that their Russian counterparts were not " barbarian " businessmen, but rather people who cared about the refined, the precious, and the spiritual[95].

The show-case function of the cathedral was assured by its very convenient prominent location, making it a sight impossible to miss even for busy visitors, high-flying businessmen, and diplomats[96]. Faith in Moscow's renewal, singled out by Luzhkov[97], was not only important for Muscovites but for private and public foreign investors who needed to be constantly convinced that Russia's prospects were solid and improving. Opponents of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour

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[93]Vladimir Semionovich, phone interview, Moscow, 9 October 1996.
[94] A. Denisov, interview.
[95] Marina Loshak, Cultural Attaché of the Stolichny Bank of Savings, interview, Moscow, 24 September 1996. Her office (one of the bank's numerous), happened to be actually *in the City Hall* itself --a graphic illustration of the bank's very good relations with the Moscow government, and a convenient location given that both the Fund and the Committee for Moscow's 850th anniversary were lodged in the same building. Other Luzhkov allies (bank Most, for example) had offices there too.
[96] Just in case some might miss the cathedral and overlook its triumphant message, posters reproduced the cathedral's effigy with the slogan " Cathedral of Christ the Saviour--Symbol of Russia's Renaissance ". In addition, Luzhkov sometimes personally tended to the task, taking, for example, Arnold Schwarzenegger for a private viewing of the construction site at midnight on the eve of the opening of VIP restaurant 'Planet Hollywood', according to Sergei, a Mospromstroi security guard on duty that night.
[97] See quote at beginning of this chapter.

sometimes mentioned the commendable tradition of building charity institutions on the site of destroyed churches. But given the general policy towards the homeless in Golden Moscow, this was never considered a serious alternative. [98] Luzhkov's gamble for Moscow, built partly on loans (including Eurobonds), required good interest rates, pegged indirectly to the perceived risks inherent in Russia's future[99].

The construction industry was also eager to use the cathedral of Christ the Saviour as evidence of its *savoir-faire* (increased thanks to new and foreign building techniques), by showing that Russian firms were capable of more or less respecting deadlines and putting up massive and sophisticated structures[100]. Sixty years after the "assault on the skies" launched with the erection of the Palace of Soviets in a (failed) attempt to compete with the United States, the Russian cathedral builders still referred to the Empire State Building as a construction which could be emulated and out-done (in terms of building speed, not height this time)[101].

Lastly, the cathedral made sense in Moscow's competition with St Petersburg and other European cities to attract a larger share of the lucrative world tourism industry.[102] To further this aim,

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[98] To maintain this illusion of progress and accord, the Mayor did not hesitate to adopt tough measures, moving the 'losers' of the economic transition story out of the centre of Moscow or even deporting them out of sight. In a megalopolis of 10 million inhabitants, there was only one night shelter with 24 beds for the homeless (numbering roughly 100,000 in 1995), situated at the very northern edge of the city's periphery, off Yaroslavl Shosse. In addition, the Mayor's decree N°400 (7 May 1996) requested that special searching groups " remove the homeless living as vagrants from public areas " and that transport authorities " prevent the homeless (...) from coming to Moscow on suburban trains, passenger and cargo trains, airway and waterway transport ." *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), interview, Moscow, 25 September 1996.

[99] With 85% of all banking capital concentrated in Moscow, the city made sure it would tap into global currents of mobile capital.

[100] The deputy general director of Mospromstroi, Valentin Voskoboinikov, made this ambition clear in 'Mospromstroi mozhet vse', *Moya Moskva* (a glossy illustrated journal), N°3, July 1996, p.16-17. Note that in the drive behind the Palace of Soviets, rivalry with the West was also a question of demonstrating industrial might (measured in head-spinning numbers of tons and metres) not only ideological superiority. But in post-Communist Russia, the introduction of competitive bidding meant in theory that Russian firms would have to show real evidence of their competence, assessed against foreign standards and foreign competitors-- not paper statistics. In practice, domestic firms could still be protected and favoured through the mechanisms of state capitalism.

[101] Vasily Shaknovsky, head of the administrative offices of the Moscow municipality, made the comparison, between the cathedral II and the Empire State Building, built in two years. (See Alla Bossart, 'Teatr vremen Luzhkova i Sinoda', op. cit. p. 10). The Palace of Soviets was also supposed to be completed in two years, by 1933 " in time to celebrate completion of the First Five Year Plan ", but the final design received approval only in February 1934. (See Antonia Cunliffe, 'The Competition for the Palace of Soviets in Moscow, 1931-1933', *Architectual Association Quarterly,* vol. 11, N°2, 1979, p. 36-49).

[102] " We must remember the future of Moscow "--it is " the only old European capital not included in the UNESCO list of monument-cities ", which means that " Moscow every years loses billions of dollars because of the absence of tourists attracted by well preserved old cities ", lamented a supporter of the deed, arguing that " we must put on Volkhonka [street] not a faceless standard-American shopping centre, but the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. " [Deacon Andrei Kuraev, *Razmyshleniya pravoslavnogo pragmatika o tom, nado li stoit'*

Moscow took steps in the first months of 1997 to have the cathedral included on UNESCO's World Heritage list[103].

But the authenticity of this cultural crusade, driven at full speed by Luzhkov in order to meet the 850th-birthday deadline he had set himself to revamp the façades of his city, was a subject of contention and despair among part of Moscow's thinking elite. Debates over the construction of the cathedral produced interrogations regarding the place of the Orthodox Church in contemporary Russian society and the meaning of historical memory, preservation, and culture. Were all of the above threatened by authorities' heavy hand? The next chapter looks at the structure of the cathedral opponents' arguments (at odds with the majority's indifference or approval) and at conflicting interpretations of the cathedral's importance as a national monument.

Khram Khrista Spasitelya, (Moscow: Otdel religiosnogo obrazovaniya i katekhisatsii Moskovskogo Patriarkhata, 1995, p. 15)]

The whole of old St Petersburg was included in the list in 1990. The Moscow Kremlin and Kolomenskoye were included in the list in 1990 and 1994 respectively.

[103] Inclusion usually entails being mentioned as a site of special interest in touristic brochures. More importantly perhaps, inclusion also means benefitting from the World Heritage Fund's financial and technical support (to fight deterioration for example), and it puts moral pressure on governments to conserve and renovate what has been declared a world treasure. For Valery Chestakov, of UNESCO in Moscow, the cathedral's eventual inclusion on the list was " highly probable " although the application procedure was still at an early stage and the cathedral unfinished. Interview, Moscow, 10 April 1997.

CHAPTER V--Viewing the Cathedral.

In what terms was the cathedral debated?

A new vertical in the Moscow cityscape, a product of the Mayor's power and of businessmen's wealth, the modern copy of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour could not possibly escape the critical eye of the intelligentsia.[1] Indeed, the cathedral was not only cement, stone, and bricks, but a statement with artistic and religious pretensions which called for expert scrutiny and interpretation.

What were the opinions of most people beyond the rather narrow circle of attentive critics? Was power mobilising art and casting the people in the role of silent spectator in yet another show of public theatre?[2]

This chapter considers both the substance and the shape of debates which made the cathedral such an important socio-cultural phenomenon from the moment its reconstruction was decided by political authorities.

The cathedral debate's intensity curve

The cathedral provoked an unusual storm of criticism and discussion in the Russian press. The number of articles[3] which flared up can be explained partly by the fact that the project was presented to the public at an early script stage, which gave critics time to focus on the basic defective elements of the scenario without being stunned or convinced by the production itself.

Indeed, the peak of discussions was reached in the last months of 1994 and early in 1995. Later, for one thing, the subject had lost its novelty and been so thoroughly gone over that there seem to be nothing more to add. (This was perceptible in interviews too: by 1996, people knew by rote

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[1] Using this term, I group together the capital's free thinkers, critics, editors, and artists, as well as the general cultivated reading public, united solely in their desire to see through manipulation and retain their freedom of thought.

[2] See Eric Hobsbawm on dictators and art, in 'Art of Darkness', *The Independent,* 21 October 1995.(In connection with the exhibit 'Art and Power' curated by the Hayward Gallery in London).

[3] A measure of the extraordinary volume of writing produced by debates surrounding the cathedral project is given by the 33-page brochure entitled 'Reflections of an Orthodox pragmatic on whether it is necessary to build the cathedral of Christ the Saviour', written by Deacon Andrei Kuraev (an Orthodox thinker generally respected for his breadth of views)--it lists (and counters) 14 separate substantive arguments (*Razmyshleniya pravoslavnogo pragmatika o tom, nado li stoit' Khram Khrista Spasitelya,* Moscow: Otdel religiosnogo obrazovaniya i katekhisatsii Moskovskogo Patriarkhata, 1995) . A bibliography in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya* refers to more than 250 articles pertaining to the discussion of the cathedral's rebuilding.

what they disliked about the cathedral). And secondly, the construction of the cathedral automatically rendered all past and future criticism rather futile. The building's stolid and massive shape answered the intelligentsia's talk, as if to say, day after day, " you are as irrelevant as wind to me". Previous sceptics made peace with the building: " I was opposed at the beginning, but since then the building itself has convinced me"[4], or " the cathedral has not turned out to be the all-out Moscow catastrophe that we expected"[5] were statements which could be heard and read in 1996.

There were other explanations for the passionate high-level debate launched by this construction. One resided in the singularly intense symbolic charge invested in the hallowed spot, a central piece of land which had been dug, and carved, and cemented-over, to suit succeeding governments' ideological designs. Scrutinising the new cathedral was thus a way of understanding the core of the new regime's ideology. Also the Orthodox Church, a relatively new actor on the political scene, was at such a problematic and crucial cross-road of its history that any step taken by its hierarchy was deemed a sign of things to come and viewed with heightened attention.

Views of the intelligentsia

In keeping with its traditional mission of enlightenment, the intelligentsia's criticism of the cathedral hinged on the notion of deception on both aesthetic and moral, ideological grounds. But because these two fronts did not necessarily overlap, the effectiveness of attacks was sapped. In the end, debates revealed the group's weakness and disunity since far from the majority of the intelligentsia opposed the cathedral, for reasons which will become apparent in this chapter.

The fact that these views were unrepresentative of mass opinion does not make them less important. By definition, " the intelligentsia's role has always been to criticise and analyse things which are not day to day matters and escape ordinary people's eyes"[6]. Although intellect and belonging to the intelligentsia are two separate things, data from the poll conducted by VTsIOM in

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[4] M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, interview.
[5] Mikhail Tumarkin, 'Ne podkhodite blizko: ozhideamoi katastrofy ne proizoshlo', *Ogonek*, N°18, April 1996, p.44.
[6] Masha Lipman, deputy editor-in-chief of *Itogi*, interview, Moscow, 9 April 1997.

September 1994 corroborated this by indicating that the more highly educated strata of the population was the group which objected most to the project[7].

The illusion of an old cathedral

In seeking to establish distinctions between masquerade and authenticity, the intelligentsia's duty ran directly counter to the cathedral builders' brief which instructed restoration specialists and workers to do everything humanly possible to recreate the illusion of the return of the historical original. In fact, both camps considered " *novodel*" ('new thing') a swear word, and referred to the same detailed descriptions of the original cathedral's features to argue their respective cases[8]. Historical facts were mobilised by the construction's opponents to denounce the gross caricature which authorities were purporting to pass off as the real thing, while participants underlined how faithfully and painstakingly they were following the original design--and even *improving* it[9].

The project was laden with contentious details. The extreme thickness of the original brick walls (3.2 metres)[10], for example, was mentioned as something marvellous which sadly would not be reproduced-- the opposite camp reciprocated that, in accordance with the Charter of Venice, usage of contemporary materials was authorised in the hidden parts of restored building, so that the cathedral, with its brick-and-stone-covered cement body, was actually fulfilling " top international requirements"[11]. Slighted for changing the origin of the stone used to face the cathedral's exterior, A. Denisov from Mosproekt-2 retorted that the marble they decided to employ instead would be " eternally white"[12] and thus, closer to the original than the original itself.[13] The domes' gilding had an aspect and colour which a restoration specialist described as " revolting"[14], but which, again, were

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[7] 65.8% of the group with a higher education thought that the construction should be " postponed" or " not undertaken at all", while 60.7% of the group with a lower than average education thought it should be built immediately. (VTsIOM poll conducted on 12 and 13 September 1994).

[8] To date, the most authoritative studies on the cathedral were by M. Mostovsky and by E. Kirichenko.

[9] A. Komech notes that " *My vse sokhraniem i dobavlyaem*" has become the new slogan championed and applied in many other instances by Luzhkov (in 'Novaya staraya Moskva', *Itogi,* 8 October 1996, p.59).

[10] I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie...*, p. 10.

[11] Opponents had in mind the meticulous post-war renovations of the Novgorod and Pskov churches which took decades to be completed. Note that the brick and stone laying process took 10 years in the original construction of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

[12] A. Denisov, 'Ot Rozhdestva do Rozhdestva', op. cit., p. 26.

[13] Had the cathedral not been taken apart and blown up, it would have become greyish with time and pollution, judging from the colour of the walls of the State Duma building at Okhotny Ryad which were lined with granite stone taken from the original cathedral. (A. Denisov, 'Ot Rozhdestva do Rozhdestva', op. cit., p. 26).

[14] Valentina Dediukhina, restoration expert specialised in churches, member of the Russian Institute of Restoration, interview, Moscow, 27 September 1996. She said this after casting an expert glance at the shard

vaunted as extremely close to the original, and longer lasting than if proper gold leaf had been used[15]. The list went on and on.

Throughout the construction, 'same but better' was the official message and answer to criticism. In this logic, the destruction of the cathedral was almost a welcome occurrence since it made it possible to perfect what past generations had done. Contemporary choices which seemed to obey a chiefly financial or calendar logic (" cheap and fast") were wrapped up in historical justifications enunciated with professional seriousness[16]. Only rarely did participants lose patience with these detailed but ultimately sterile exercises in argumentation, and declare openly, like V. Resin, that " just because we are dealing with stones does not mean that we have to build as in the Stone Ages."[17]

A new cathedral, hiding the on-going destruction of old Moscow?

The greater relevance of this masquerade would have been minimal if the superficial understanding of historical heritage manifest in the cathedral's rebuilding were not representative of trends changing the face of Moscow and worrying art historians, restoration specialists, and architects alike.

On the one hand, the end of Communism in Russia was comparable to a post-war situation, with heaps of rubble created by 'enemy' fire, waiting to be swiped to make room for new constructions or reproductions of particularly sacred and symbolic buildings. Building copies of monuments and churches destroyed by wars or cataclysms was a well-established practice in many places around the world. It was unfair to compare the cathedral's reconstruction with the thought of rebuilding " the Acropolis in Athens, Cartage, or the Roman forum", argued architect I. Pokrovsky[18], " their time has past". In contrast, he added, the contemporary Russian generation was the first to be given the

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of golden metal sheet that I brought back from a visit to the construction site; she then scraped it with a delicate scalpel and decreed that it would " deteriorate fast".

[15] A. Denisov, 'Ot Rozhdestva do Rozhdestva', op. cit., p. 23.

[16] M. Tsvetaeva (the cathedral's chief restoration specialist, in charge of finding archival material on which the new cathedral's designs are based), took her professional mission so seriously that she stubbornly denied the existence of two stories of parking places in the pedestal, although they were practically visible from the studio where we spoke, on the construction site! Her boss, A. Denisov, enjoined her to relax and " tell the truth". (Interview, Moscow, 30 September 1996).

[17] V. Resin, 'Moskva nachinaet. Gorozhane vyigryvayut?', *Moskovskie Novosti*, N°62, 4-11 December 1994, p.27.

[18] I. Pokrovsky, in an *Izvestiya* article reproduced in N.Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 242.

opportunity to rebuild an edifice which had been destroyed by " Stalin, Molotov, Beria, Ordzhonikidze and Kaganovich"[19]--and probably the only one: " it's today or never, let's face it", he wrote[20].

But on the other hand, thousands of crumbling churches screaming for solicitous attention, made the cathedral's drain of precious resources outright criminal in many people's opinion[21]. Historian Evgenia Kirichenko concluded her monograph on the cathedral with an urgent call for the restoration of Russia's numerous abandoned churches: " we must save them today, tomorrow it may be already too late"[22], she wrote, arguing that the reconstruction of the cathedral, on the contrary, was a task which could await a future generation. Academician Dmitry Likhachev, an authoritative writer on Russia's cultural heritage, and a person who " campaigned strenuously for two decades for the restoration of Russia's churches", even declined a seat on the Public Observation Council, " arguing that it was more important to restore existing places of worship than to rebuild the cathedral ."[23]

While authorities were busy arising from the dead a few central and extremely visible token monuments, federal funds for the restoration of monuments had all but dried up[24]. The cathedral was parading as old when, in fact, everything but the building's design and the Palace of Soviets' foundations (preserved by the pool) was new. It was thus perceived and resented as an optical illusion, a trick aimed at diverting people's attention from the disfiguring of Moscow taking place nearby[25]. Copies were becoming so ubiquitous in the capital that historical understanding was lost in favour of vulgar and simplistic simulations of the past[26]. Rare individuals, like A. Komech, one of the

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19 The five signatures which can be found on a document indirectly underwriting the destruction of the cathedral. This document shows the outline of the Palace of Soviets drawn over a map showing the emplacement of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour. It is dated " 22/IV- 1935", in connection with the Moscow master plan. See Isaak Eigel', 'K istorii postroeniya i snosa khrama Khrista Spasitelya', *Arkhitektura i stroitel'stva Moskvy,* N° 7, 1988, p.33.

20 I. Pokrovsky, in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve*, p. 242.

21 The dissident priest Gleb Yakunin's opinion can be summarised as follows: when so many people are famished, when so many churches are dying from disrepair, this cathedral is siphoning resources in a gross mockery of repentance and spirituality--the Church has not repented and the institution is spiritually bankrupt. (Gleb Yakunin, interview, Moscow, 16 September 1996).

22 E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve*, p. 270.

23 Jan Cleave, 'Raising Funds for Christ the Savior Cathedral', *Transition,* 1 December 1995, p. 65.

24 A. Komech and M. Shvydkoi both confirmed in separate interviews the downward trend of federal budget figures over the years and said that " not a single rouble" was doled out for restoration work in 1996. In 'Postroim dvorets Khrista Spasitelya?', *Moskovskie Novosti*, N°56, 13-20 November 1994, A. Komech complained that the cost of the cathedral (estimated by him at "10 trillion roubles"), represented "100 times the federal budget for restoration" that year.

25 The nearby construction of the Manezh shopping centre near the Kremlin (a centre threatening the foundations of the decaying Historical Museum) or the gutting of the classified monument building Gostiny Dvor (also to house a shopping centre) were examples of this.

26 The cathedral joined the ranks of fakes, next to the Kazan church and the Gates of the Resurrection, for example, both additions of the 1990s looking onto Red Square. Ironically, all three are mentioned as " striking examples of the renaissance of the historical aspect of the capital and of Russia" by A. Barkhatov, in the Moscow government publication *Pravitel'stvo-Gorod-Lyudi*, N°10, 1996, p.58.

loudest voices raised in alarm against the " New old Moscow"[27], made a point of proclaiming the truth regarding Moscow government's ostentatious but superficial respect for the city's architectural patrimony.

In all fairness, the 'cathedral effect' (supposed to cloak destruction and fool the inattentive masses)[28] was only partly responsible for the contrast between the despair of cultural pundits and the satisfaction of a hood-winked majority[29], when both groups looked back on the city's recent transformations.

For one thing, people could not be blamed too severely for failing to see the causal link between the cathedral's construction and Moscow's new patrimonial losses--it was certainly the weakest in the sacred spot's history. The *Moskva* was legitimately mourned by some as a site of happy private memories[30], a testament to one of Russia's favourite sports, and the victim of " yet another round of destructive acts"[31]. But its disappearance could not compete in cultural and social significance with the act of psychological terrorism occasioned by the cathedral's destruction in 1931: the cathedral's explosion had been the opening salvo in a full-scale campaign to remodel Moscow according to Stalin's plans. Nor could it rival the tragic loss of the Alekseevsky nunnery and the nearby All Saints church mandated by Nicholas I's designs in 1838[32]. The *Moskva* pool had been built using cheap materials and always called " temporary", according to its director.[33]

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[27] A. Komech, 'Novaya staraya Moskva', op. cit., p. 57-60.

[28] In 'Luzhkov's Moscow: Sold', *The Moscow Times*, 21 September 1995, Alexander Shatalov (editor-in-chief of the publishing house Glagol) lambasted the Mayor's huge building projects, which " flatter and please many Muscovites", only to better " distract them from the vulgar and criminal destruction of the cathedral's infrastructure. But we weren't born yesterday. We will wait and see how beautiful the mayor's new Moscow will be."
His stance brings to mind Chatsky's reply to Skazolub and Famusov who express awe for the beauty of 19th century Moscow after the Great Fire: " New streets, but prejudices old as ever./Rejoice my friends! No lapse of years,/Nor fashions, no, nor fires, from them can sever." in Griboyedov's play *The Mischief of Being Clever* (London: School of Slavonic studies in the University of London, 1925), p. 24.

[29] Yu. Luzhkov's book *My deti tvoi, Moskva* ends with 50 pages of photographs (including 3 pages devoted to the cathedral) in lieu of conclusion, showing "what has been achieved (restored, built, rebuilt) in the past few years in Moscow " and enjoining: "why don't you judge for yourselves, readers, my dear Muscovites (*dorogie moi moskvichi*"." (p. 289).

[30] Yelena, a passer-by, gazing with nostalgia at the doomed pool in October 1994, told me how much she liked to " sunbathe with her children" in the green areas of the *Moskva* complex. Anna Kuprina-Shishkanova, a guard at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, lamented: " it's too bad they are cementing a pool thanks to which many elderly people kept fit." (interview in *Trud,* 28 December 1994). Masha Gessen remembers the pool as " one of the four elements (along with the Lenin Library, the Pushkin Museum and school N°57) which constituted an oasis of liberalism in the centre of Moscow. It was also an important meeting point for the capital's gay community." (Interview, 10 April 1997). For a complete picture of the personal and collective joys associated with the pool see also 'Khram vosstanovim, bassein vzorvem' , *Izvestiya,* 29 January 1994.

[31] A.Golovin, interview.

[32] E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve* , p. 49. The church of All Saints, a building of the XIV th century which had managed to survive countless fires and times of trouble, was destroyed " so that it would

Secondly, the terms of the alternative were somewhat artificial: the choice was not between a mammoth cathedral and several smaller, prettier, repair jobs, since money invested in the cathedral belonged to sponsors, who unfortunately " are not saints"[34]. As Deacon A. Kuraev noted, " they prefer to give money to loud projects which will give them publicity."[35] In fact, as seen in the previous chapter, looking for sponsorship was a reflex which seemed to have caught on, so that even small back-alley churches[36] were given face-lifts in the run up to Moscow's 850th anniversary festivities. Far from the hypnotising gleam of the cathedral's cupolas, not all was stark and sombre[37].

As a result, criticism of the deceptive nature of Moscow's metamorphosis was seen as excessive. The criteria of absolute authenticity, cherished by critics like A. Komech who complained that " we understand the city as pure façade"[38], was an ideal impossible to put into practice given the commercial pressures and legitimate concerns for comfort driving the conversion and modernisation of interiors. In extreme cases, reconstruction, winning over preservation and restoration for practical and financial reasons, was indeed amounting to Moscow's destruction "at no slower a pace than in past years"[39]. But simultaneously, the city's extensive facelift meant that for the first time in decades Muscovites were experiencing joy walking or driving down the streets.

The construction of the cathedral-- a process visibly big, shiny, and fast-- was a keynote in the production of this new feeling of pleasure. " Moscow used to be a dreary city on the outside; the only comfort came from inside people's apartments, and the underground, a contained space *under* the city, was the only public space bringing joy to the people!(...)Luzhkov was the first to cater to people's bourgeois instincts (remember that pleasure was sinful in Soviet days)", commented Masha Gessen[40], editor of the 'Society' section for the Russian news magazine *Itogi.* And indeed, Muscovites

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not obstruct Nicholas's view from the Kremlin and hinder his supervision of work in progress", according to the popular legend told by Vadim Kozhinov, writer and historian, interview, Moscow, 21 September 1996.

[33] N. Portnov, interview.

[34] A. Kuraev, *Razmyshleniya...*, p.11-12.

[35] Ibid.

[36] By 1996, 350 Orthodox churches were active in Moscow--up from only 48 in 1988. The Orthodox Church naturally received the lion's share of restored and reconstructed religious buildings promised by Moscow government. (Data from the Moscow Patriarchate, published in 'Kto on, Yury Luzhkov, kogda osenyaet sebya krestom: bogomolets, prikhozhanin, mer?', *Obshchaya Gazeta,* op. cit.).

[37] Beyond Moscow, the situation varied from province to province: local restoration and building success stories alternated with absurd lows. In Viktor Chernomyrdin's native village of Cherny Otrog, in Orenburg region, money for the construction of a new church was donated (unsurprisingly) by Gazprom (*Itar-Tass* wire, 6 September 1996). Meanwhile State Duma deputy M. Seslavinsky reported that in Dzerzhinsk (included in his circumscription), " there are 300,000 inhabitants but not a single church--priests perform services inside an abandoned railway wagon." (M. Seslavinsky, interview).

[38] A. Komech, 'Novaya staraya Moskva', op. cit., p. 58.

[39] A. Komech, interview. See also V. Apenin, deputy director of the Moscow section of VOOPIK, on how "reconstruction is being carried out with a bulldozer in historical Moscow, in 'Eto strashnoe slovo: reconstruktsiya', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta,* 16 August 1996.

[40] M. Gessen, interview.

responded to their Mayor's paternalism with words of thanks in the cathedral museum's visitors book. Entries in September 1996 read simply " Thank you Luzhkov !" or " Thank you Yury Mikhailovich for everything you are doing for us in Moscow."

An artistically abhorrent project

Besides disliking the Potemkin effects, many commentators deplored the project's lack of artistic life and its inability to relate in a contemporary idiom with its surroundings. This view combined two sets of problems: the fact that Moscow had greatly changed since the first cathedral was raised and therefore its resurrection could not possibly be a welcome solution for the new urban setting; and the anachronistic, unimaginative task being offered to artists in this monumental copy job.

The first cause for alarm, the supposed inadequacy of the construction in terms of urban environment, was fast dismissed as the building (roughly 35-storey high) resumed its position in the Moscow landscape. Indeed, while fears that the cathedral would relate poorly with its surroundings and would dwarf the Kremlin had been legitimate in the 19th century (although in the end historians agreed that it did not compete with but *balanced* the city's red core), the bell tower of Ivan the Great[41] was no longer an important point of reference in the 1990s. The intervening Soviet years had adorned Moscow with its famous Tall Buildings and lined Kalininsky Prospekt (now Novy Arbat) with rows of apartment blocks 25-storeys high. And immediately opposite the cathedral lay the huge mass of the House on the Embankment, built on a scale designed to complement the 415-metre Palace of Soviets. M. Tumarkin acknowledged that the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II " enters in normal dialogue with other big objects"[42] in Moscow.

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[41] The original cathedral's altar and iconostasis (merged in one chapel-shaped object) was 27, 5 metres high--the same height as the Ivan tower measured from the ground to the base of its cupola (its cross measures 8,5 metres). In contrast, the cathedral (cross included) was 103, 48 metres high. (A. Butorov, 'Kakim byl khram', op. cit., p. 13.)

[42] M. Tumarkin, 'Ne podkhodite blizko', op. cit., p. 44.

Old cliques...

The fact that the cathedral would be a copy was not only an insult to the sense of authenticity valued by some (against the current wave of Epcot-isation of historical sites), but perceived as an occasion lost for Art.

In contrast with the first cathedral which had brought together an impressive array of talented painters and sculptors[43] and resulted in the production of a very interesting cultural whole, the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II was believed to be " not culturally alive"[44]. " It will not be recorded in art history books", said M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov (otherwise sympathetic to the cathedral's cause). Avoiding euphemisms, Lev Levinson commented scathingly, that it could only be " a living corpse", and " an illustration of the lack of cultural orientation of our times"[45]. (Sergei Romanyuk, echoing Walter Benjamin's views in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, dismissed the cathedral as " strictly political" and having " no artistic value, because it is a copy".)[46]

The question of whether or not contemporary artists were capable of even approximating the mastery of their ancestors was generally answered with pessimism and sarcasm. Articles ran with titles like 'Did we really expect any better?' or 'Don't get near' and invariably invoked the names of Ilya Glazunov and Zurab Tsereteli as the paragon representatives of exasperating bad taste and court art. This was partly the result of in-fighting among artists. Given Luzhkov's tough bargaining skills, only well organised and competitively cheap artists could expect to win in the project's various rounds of competition-- and this placed Zurab Tsereteli with his excellent personal contacts, huge manufacturing company and 450-people strong Design Centre, well in place to receive a maximum

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[43] A look at the list of the painters and sculptors involved can confirm this for those who are familiar with Russian art. Among the approximately 40 painters (who worked for more than two decades starting from 1860), were V. Makovsky, T. Neff, I. Pryanishnikov, G. Semiradsky ,V. Surikov; among the sculptors, were Baron P. Klodt--known for his horses on Anichkov bridge in St Petersburg--, A. Loganovsky, N. Ramazanov. Alexander Ivanov and Karl Bryulov (more famous to a lay audience) also participated in the first round of commissions but were already dead in 1859 when new orders were issued. Even very casual tourists may gather an impression of the wealth of artistic treasures which the cathedral contained from the mural sculptures (by Loganovsky) kept in Moscow at the Donskoi monastery, and from the oil painting by F. Klagec, *Vnutrenny vid Khrama Khrista Spasitelya* , ('Interior view of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour', 1883), on display at the Russian museum in St Petersburg. See E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve,* for details, photographs, and drawings.

[44] M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, interview.

[45] L. Levinson, 17 September 1996.

[46] S. Romanyuk, interview.
Walter Benjamin in his famous essay wrote that " the instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practise-- politics." *Illuminations*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1968), p. 226.

number of orders.[47] The fact that he was a member of the Public Observation Council (supposed to approve the general lines of artistic choices) was also viewed as a rather suspect and incestuous occurrence[48]. If the same group of architects and artists was repeatedly reaping big contracts[49], it was a small wonder that criticism should rise from the many others excluded from the banquet.

Finally, Tsereteli's association with the cathedral project was seen as the living proof that the practice of keeping court artists, despite its long and noble antecedents (Konstantin Ton, for example, had been a prolific court architect) had definitely run amok.[50]

In the hands of past Party leaders, endorsed art had scarred the common landscape. Change might have been expected in the realm of cultural management in the post-Soviet era, in line with those conducted in economic and political fields. However, as a rule, " politicians tend to stick to the few big artists that they or their predecessors have tested" (for reasons of security, in a field in which they are not experts)[51], so the accessible artistic mediocrity (sold to bosses as socialist realism) promised to perpetuate itself well beyond the date of extinction of the socialist system.

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[47] By 1996, Zurab Tsereteli's Design Studio had already made the crosses atop the domes and had received the order to produce 14 massive doors for the cathedral and its bell tower, as well as wall frescoes. Yelena Lebedeva explained (in 'Tsereteli's Wonderland', *Moscow News*, N°51, 26-31 December 1996, p. 15), that not only can Zurab Tsereteli " see the most difficult projects through, using his own resources and at his own expenses, he can also afford to wait a long time for government payment ."

[48] " Of couse Tsereteli will not say that there are already too many Tseretelis..." commented M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, also member of the Council, interview.
Paintings were the only orders for which a competition was organised (by a Commission for the Artistic Decoration of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, directed by Metropolitan of Krutitsky and Kolomensky Yuvenaly and comprising a number of figures from Russian academies).
Note also that Tsereteli's daughter is married to the son of Mikhail Posokhin, the cathedral of Christ the Saviour's chief architect (who replaced I. Pokrovsky).

[49]Having finished work on Poklonnaya Gora, efforts and personnel were shifted to attend the cathedral front. Using the same 'professional brigade' was something vaunted as a key factor of success in the speedy realisation of various Moscow projects (Yu. Mamoshin, interview).

[50] Under Luzhkov's rule, Tsereteli's creations have sprouted all over Moscow (from the obelisk, chapel work and monument 'Tragedy of the People' on Poklonnaya Gora, to the bronze bears and deer of the Manezh shopping mall, the Moscow Zoo's portal, the coats of arms for the government White House, the monument to Georgian and Russian friendship, and the statue of Peter the Great near Krymsky Most). Note that I. Pokrovsky, the cathedral's initial architect, also participated in the building of the Palace of Congresses in the Kremlin (the Palace of Soviets final, prosaic embodiment) and had a hand in designing the high rises on Kalininsky Prospekt. (Mark Deich, 'Khram Khrista ili pamyatnik Meru?', *Ogonek*, N° 48-49, December 1994).

[51] S. Romanyuk, interview.
In the case of the victory memorial of Poklonnaya Gora, Luzhkov's efficient management skills meant that after endless rounds of competition, a design was finally picked out by the Mayor himself and most of the complex was ready in time for the 1995 Victory Day celebrations. But the downside of worshipping speed was the ugliness of the result. Tsereteli's sculptural ensemble 'The Tragedy of the People' unveiled on May 9 Victory Day in 1996 was thought *a posteriori* to be "too depressing" by the Mayor himself and moved the same year to a less prominent spot of Poklonnaya Gora "at an overall cost of 30 billion rubles ($5.5 million) ." (Nick Allen, 'Unloved Monument on the Move', *The Moscow Times* , 27 September 1997).

Furthermore, the creative intelligentsia who had fought to get rid of artistic councils (panels approving both the ideological and aesthetic acceptability of works) in the *perestrioka* days, was now disarmed in its opposition to political authorities' artistic choices.[52].

...bad art?

In critics' catastrophe scenario for the cathedral, the spectre of commissioners making injudicious choices was compounded with the probable threat of poor artistic execution. The foundations and traditions of the 19th-century academic schools of painting and sculpture which had nurtured the talent of the cathedral's past artists were felt to have been irremediably lost. Figurative art " trampled by modernism and by the Soviet power", could only barely rise to expressions of " pseudo-national naive" and remained otherwise distressingly reminiscent of socialist realism. " Is it acceptable if saints look like partisans and archangels remind us of the soldiers with automatic machine guns decorating the underground station 'Komsomolskaya'?"[53] Works by Ilya Glazunov were expected to adorn the cathedral's interior in the most hideous fashion.

In fact, much of this rested on little but internal rumours and premature envy[54] while competitions were still going on. The scare-crow artist Ilya Glazunov, in the end, did not even submit an entry[55]. Judging the cathedral for its imagined interior and sculptural appearance was perhaps the most insubstantial of views. When the results of the painting competition were announced in August 1996, a critic, judging at last from evidence, commented: " *Ne genial'no, no vpolne khorosho*" ('Not a

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[52] This was best demonstrated by the unsuccessful campaign waged by the media (especially *Stolitsa* magazine) and a group of citizens (led by gallery owner Marat Gelman), against the 60-metre statue of Peter the Great, an unsightly new work by Tsereteli, erected just in front of the cathedral. On the one hand, elitism in artistic matters ran the danger of reintroducing a nomenklatura; while on the other, using democratic procedures like a referendum would have made the 'uneducated majority' rule-- a giant leap which the cultural elite was not ready to take given its prejudices against the masses' tastes. Luzhkov used this fear to convince the petitioners to drop their case. Fear that vandals might blow up Tsereteli's statue (after a statue of Nicholas II by Vyacheslav Klykov in north-eastern Moscow was blown up on April 1, 1997), and reluctance to play the game of Luzhkov's political rivals also pressured campaigners into retreat. A non-binding poll on the question of Peter the Great was suggested (to bury the issue). For accounts of the protest and its outcome, see Chrystia Freeland, 'Statue is a liberty, Muscovites tell mayor', *The Financial Times*, 27 February 1997, p. 2. and Andrei Zolotov, 'Tsereteli Critic Retreats From Fray', *The Moscow Times*, 8 April 1997, p.4.

[53] M. Tumarkin, 'Ne podkhodite blizko', op.cit., p.45.

[54] A. Kuraev notes disapprovingly that "much of the anti-cathedral noise" comes precisely from artists feuding: " Is it possible that the paintings will not be executed by *us*, not by the April group? Is it really for Glazunov and his patriots?" (*Razmyshleniya...*, p.5.)

[55] I. Glazunov's withdrawal was perhaps the result of a wounded ego since the quality of Russia's (and his) academic school of painting was endlessly criticised (people suggested a switch from mural paintings to mosaics for the interior decoration of the cathedral as a measure of anti-Glazunov caution).

work of genius, but fully satisfactory'). The same author put a spin on the argument about Christ resembling " a hungry and skinny partisan" by remembering that " in the 1970s, artists painted the same partisan with the secret (but obvious to all) intention of giving him the face of the divine ."[56]

Moreover, there was ground for believing that artists would rise to the occasion since the time-table for the cathedral's decoration was less strict than the building's 1997 deadline[57], and many artists were returning to the Russian pre-Revolutionary masters to learn from them and meet contemporary taste in things imperial, religious, and grand[58]. " All 50 sculptors are dealing with religious themes for the first time", conceded Yury Orekhov, a sculptor in charge of allotting all sculptural works for the cathedral, " but I can guarantee that the result will be high quality"[59]. Some, drawing a historical analogy with the Renaissance, hoped that the mix of " previous socialist practice with today's unconscious attraction towards religious renovation will bear quaint fruits, unknown up to now."[60] Optimists added that gross decoration, based, more or less successfully on preserved sketches and black-and-white photographs of the destroyed works, could later be replaced and improved. (Yury Orekhov was also convinced that the cheaper plaster works ordered by Luzhkov for now would eventually be switched to marble ones.)[61]

Yury Seliverstov or the impossibility of modernism

Addressing the disappointingly anachronistic aspect of the cathedral project, figures of the intelligentsia frequently brought up the name of Yury Seliverstov and reviewed in a favourable light his concept of a see-through metallic cathedral[62], holding a more intimate full-fleshed chapel like a bird in a cage. Its airy structure was discussed in the press along with a few other ideas like projecting

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[56] Lyudmila Lunina, 'My ozhidali bol'shevo?', *Ogonek*, N°37, September 1996, p. 52.
[57] The tempo imposed on artists was less strict since decoration was due for the double-millennium of Christianity, a date which, so far, bore no political meaning (it reflected the Patriarch's concerns, but did not engage Luzhkov's responsibility and reputation, unlike the 1997 deadline), and could easily be extended.
[58] I.Glazunov became rector of a new All-Russian Academy opened in 1989 with precisely that aim. V. Mokrousov also took care to study and teach religious themes in sculpture " to prepare a new generation of sculptors." (V. Mokrousov, interview).
[59]Yury Orekhov, sculptor, member of the Russian Academy of arts, director of the reconstruction of the sculptural adornment of the cathedral, interview, Moscow, 8 April 1997.
[60] L. Lunina, 'My ozhidali bol'shevo?', op. cit. p. 52. She recalls that the Italian Renaissance merged antique forms with the religious experience of the Middle Ages.
[61]Yu. Orekhov, interview.
[62] See photo of model in appendix.

a hologram outline of the cathedral over the *Moskva* pool, but was never considered an alternative at an official level[63].

The stark quality of Seliverstov's design was thought to better commemorate the century's destruction by making the cathedral both visible and intangible. It did not attempt to reverse the current of time unlike the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II. It was also more modern, a solution reminiscent of the one adopted by Robert Venturi for the Benjamin Franklin museum-house in Philadelphia[64]; or, in the way Seliverstov preferred a conceptual approach to literal representation, a monument similar to the sobre black slabs listing the names of dead soldiers at the Vietnam war memorial in Washington DC[65].

That the Orthodox Church and national-patriotic circles[66] should oppose Seliverstov's project was understandable given the defensive and conservative postures they most naturally adopt. As noted earlier, religious buildings had for long periods of time been the only repository of national forms[67] which meant that, while the Catholic Church could be relaxed about having Le Corbusier design its churches, the Russian Orthodox Church, a bastion of traditional Russian culture weathered but unbroken by secular assaults, judged prudent and wise not to. For the nationalist wing of the intelligentsia, anything modern would connote the radical culture which had caused the cathedral's death in the first place; Seliverstov's modernity was therefore anathema.

Indeed, what had started out as creative experimentation with Mayakovsky, had become a force of destruction by the 1930s, preparing the grounds for the cathedral's final explosion. A poem by Dem'yan Bedny which started by asserting that the heart of Moscow and of the Union was "*ne*

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63 M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, interview.

64 The similarity may explain why the cathedral outline was attributed to R.Venturi (by mistake?) in *Arkhitektura i Stroitel'stvo Moskvy* , N°3, 1989
Robert Harbison describes Benjamin Franklin's house as "one of the wittiest negative monuments (...); it is the generalized outline of a house carried out in over-scaled metal tubes painted hypothesis-grey ." *The Built, the Unbuilt and the Unbuildable* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), p. 50-51.

65 Note that the Vietnam memorial by Maya Lin built in 1982 only barely survived the opposition of veteran associations who wanted something more figurative. An over-life-size bronze, showing two soldiers helping a third wounded comrade, was erected nearby as a measure of compromise.

66 Fr. Georgy assured me (interview, 9 October 1996) that Yury Seliverstov (who died in 1990) had intended to "flesh the carcass gradually" and not leave it standing like a skeleton. Yu. Seliverstov however, spoke of his project in different terms, leaving no doubt that he wanted to represent the physical absence of the cathedral and the way it was haunting collective memory. Seliverstov said: "I was amazed by how, although the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour had been blown up, only its body had been destroyed, only its visible part, whereas the spiritual component of its being, its invisible frame had remained. I even think that there are people on earth who see this Cathedral. And all the huge space which the Cathedral used to occupy has somehow been engraved [in the air] ever since". (Quoted by E. Lazarev, 'Nezrimoe da stanet zrimym', *Nauka i religiya*, N°1, 1996).

67 Although Russia came in contact with Western architecture long before Peter the Great, and the Mongols exerted no direct influence on architecture, the continuity of the Orthodox Church's traditions were doubly cherished under foreign domination. See Lindsey Hughes, 'The West comes to Russian architecture', in Paul Dukes (Ed.), *Russia and Europe* (London: Collins & Brown, 1991).

belokamennogo, krasnokamennogo" ('not white-stoned but red-stoned'), ended with the words: " *Moshchnym klichem ne raz na vec' mir progremit/ Nashikh slov dinamit/ Dinamit nashei tvorcheskoi voli.*"[68] Gleaming white, the cathedral of Christ the Saviour was both physically and symbolically the natural target for the Reds.

The *tabula rasa* slogans produced by the artistic avant-garde had been taken literally and fuelled the enthusiasm of iconoclastic brigades made up of uncultivated peasants and workers. Although Russia's elite had grown to appreciate the value of historical monuments and culture all along the 19th century, " masses were not educated and did not care. If you look at the archival film footage of the cathedral's destruction, you can see people actually laughing and cheering with every new explosion rocking the edifice", emphasised M. Shvydkoi[69].

The irony of this cultural history rested in that, come the time to build the Palace of Soviets, artistic experimentation had fallen out of favour and the two-round competition heralded the victory of a new wave of historicism and pompous monumental forms. As a result, modernism was twice doomed[70]: squashed by socialist realism and later snubbed for its leftist connotations. At both junctures, the promotion of more academic styles combined the personal preferences of those in charge with the claim that grandiose architecture best represented the taste of the people[71]-- then called 'masses', now the 'majority'. (No doubt, had the people been polled and asked to chose between a copy of the cathedral and Seliverstov's abstract rendition, it would have chosen the more literal and uplifting of the two).

Lastly, calling for a more modern building than the reproduction of Ton's eclectic Byzantine cathedral made critics look inconsistent in some people's eyes: "those who fault the Patriarchate for including a lower chapel which did not exist in the old original" (displaying thus a passion for historical accuracy), are ready to build an " entirely new cathedral, chosen after organising an architectural competition, or even to erect the mere silhouette of the cathedral" (Seliverstov's modern project)[72]. That novelty could be preferable to an illusory copy of the past so as to preserve an understanding of history was a concept too subtle to grasp.

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[68] 'More than once the whole world will tremble from a powerful call/the dynamite of our words/the dynamite of our creative will'. Dem'yan Bedny, quoted (in Russian) in I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie*...p. 28.
[69] M. Shvydkoi, interview.
[70] Laura Mulvey, interview.
[71] See A. Cunliffe, 'The competition for the Palace of Soviets', op. cit., p. 46.
[72] A. Kuraev, *Razmyshleniya...*, p. 23-24.

Destructive criticism?

The popularity of Seliverstov's idea among certain members of the cultural elite was also a reflection of their distaste for Konstantin Ton's original design. But the commonplace view that his cathedral lacked artistic merit had problematic origins. Authoritative critics of the 19th century had led the way in deriding the cathedral as " a giant samovar"[73], and Herzen in his memoirs expressed virulent contempt for a project which had superseded his friend Vitberg's design[74]. After the revolution, art historians had hammered in the notion of its pompous gracelessness[75]. By taking out of context these negative stances and relying on them to justify their contemporary opposition, critics exposed themselves to charges of intellectual dishonesty, plagiarism, and pedantic posturing[76].

Furthermore, seeking to outwit the authorities and masses, they were in fact falling victim to past ideological wars: Herzen's antipathy for Tsar Nicholas I tainted in no small measure his judgement[77], while opinions of the 1920S smacked of the kind of propaganda required to forward the aims of " militant atheism"[78]. The idea that there reigned a consensus against Ton's cathedral was partly backed by evidence gathered from Boris Iofan's personal archives.[79] But how trust-worthy a

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[73] Count E. Trubetskoi in his work *Dva mira v drevnerusskoi ikonopisi* called Ton's cathedral "a huge samovar around which gathered piously all patriarchal Moscow". Quoted by Ivan Denisov, 'Za neimeniem gerbovoi', *Segodnya,* 17 December 1994.

[74] Herzen characterised Ton's churches as stiff, hypocritical and anachronistic. Aleksandr Gertsen, *Byloe i dumy* (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1946), p. 149.

[75] Viktor Nikolsky wrote in 1923: " A vivid example of the Ton style is the Muscovite cathedral Saviour (1839-1881)-- it is a russified St Isaacs, but much more cold and dead than its St Petersburg model. There is no trace here of Byzantine nor of Old Russia: in relation with general currents of architecture it is simply " disguised", a catholic cathedral masqued with onion bulbs and kokoshniks, partly disharmonious...bulky and crude, far from any form of originality in its conception and execution." (Quoted by L. Levinson in *Ekspress khronika* , N°32, 9 August 1996).

[76] For a criticism of some of the intelligentsia's negative attitudes, see I. Denisov, 'Za neimeniem gerbovoi', op. cit.

[77] Herzen deplored "the leaden hand of the tsar" which had crushed a great project -the first cathedral on Sparrow Hills- and destroyed Alexander Vitberg's creativity and very name. For a description of Vitberg's unnecessary plight see A. Gertsen, *Byloe i Dumy*, p. 148-155.

[78] The blowing up of the cathedral coincided with the fourth year of Yemelyan Yaroslavsky's anti-religious five-year plan. By 1932 his union, *Soyuz Voinstvuyushchikh Bezbozhnikov* ('Union of Militant Godless'), counted 5.5 million members. That same year, the newspaper *Bezbozhnik* and the more scholarly journal *Antireligioznik* also reached very high circulation. (G. Kline, *Religious and Anti-religious Thought in Russia,* p. 151).

[79] A member of the committee which sat 6 times in 1931 to consider the question of the location of the Palace of Soviets, B. Iofan wrote in his memoirs that when Stalin opted for the site of the cathedral, " many architects were worried by the incorrect configuration of the plot of land and by its relatively small size; perhaps there were even some who in their hearts felt sorry for the cathedral; *but it is improbable that anyone could have defended its artistic merits...*" Quoted in I. Eigel', 'K istorii postroeniya i snosa khrama...', op. cit., p. 33. (The italics are mine).

guide to understanding prevalent opinions could the main author of the Palace of Soviets be?[80] A 1931 official brochure of the Department of construction of the Palace of Soviets stated as received wisdom that " arch. Ton, author of the removed church, mechanically enlarged a small five-bulb chapel to the grandiose size of a cathedral". But at the same time, architects were being sent off to camps for upholding the contrary opinion[81].

Thus, despite efforts to keep the two apart, aesthetic and ideological causes were woven together and made even criticism on physical grounds, morally suspicious. Architecture demonstrated once again that it is " the most governmental of arts"[82]-- a book of stone into which socio-political conceptions are projected[83].

The intelligentsia's moral dilemmas

Because the cultural elite was *perceived* as having been unanimous against the cathedral and responsible for its destruction (despite the fact that it was largely indifferent to the cathedral in tsarist times and was regimented to serve a regime hostile to religion in the Soviet era), negative views were not welcome. Deacon A. Kuraev, expressing an opinion commonly held in the Church[84], equated all criticism with nihilism and members of the " fourth power" (the media) with followers of Woland (of *Master and Margarita* fame). " The echo from the explosion of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour has not subsided yet"[85], he wrote. " The explosion of the Cathedral is a metaphysical event-- it draws in ever more participants"[86]. Still today " you can get a *propusk* [an entry pass]for the tribune" which was erected on the opposite bank of the Moskva river for spectators of the show, and " the largest box there is marked with a sign saying 'Reserved for the Press"'[87].

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80 I. Eigel' mentions in his article that Iofan's recollections were drawn from an unsigned rough draft apparently written in 1936.
81 I. Pokrovsky, in an *Izvestiya* article reprinted in N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 243.
82 E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve*, p. 53.
83Architectural style in itself does not mean much. But, since Romanticism, judgement of architecture has been tainted by moral and social concerns. See Geoffrey Scott, 'The Ethical Fallacy', in *The Architecture of Humanism* (London: The Architectural Press, 1980), p. 126.
84 In a similar fashion, the cathedral's sacristan, Fr. Mikhail, dismissed the fact that people were opposed to the cathedral's rebuilding by saying that " the advocates of materialism and those of spirituality" will always be at odds. (Interview). " Priests who had voiced opposition to the cathedral idea were forced into silence like soldiers, from the moment the Patriarch accepted the project." according to E. Kirichenko, interview.
85 A. Kuraev, *Razmyshleniya...*, p. 22.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.

The intelligentsia itself felt the dilemma acutely. It was easy enough to find the new cathedral aesthetically appalling, but criticising its ideological dimension was a much more complex affair.

Indeed, it was hard to rise against the naked symbolism of the cathedral since it was " precisely the sort of thing the intelligentsia had pushed forward"[88]. In the 1970s the intelligentsia of the Soloukhin type and of the liberal-type were united in their crusade to restore Christian values and return Church property, because the Church was seen " more as a group repressed by the state, than as an institution repressing the people."[89] But in the post-Soviet context, deciding what attitude to adopt towards Orthodoxy as an element of the new governmental ideology and towards the Russian Orthodox Church itself was one of the thorniest question plaguing and effectively dividing the intelligentsia.

The new state's alliance with the ROC forced the intelligentsia into an uncomfortable position: it was torn between its sense of personal loyalty, its political and religious ideals, and its identity as a critical-minded check against state power and a servile Church hierarchy. As a result, the group was roughly split in two.[90]

One contingent of individuals felt that the risks of facilitating the return of Communists (or the pain of turning their back on the regime they had helped, as dissidents, usher in) outweighed the gains to be drawn from criticising the state or from questioning the integrity of the ROC's top clergy. Among them, for example, were the people who gathered to mourn the death of writer and activist Vladimir Soloukhin and stood close to Patriarch Aleksy II and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn during the burial ceremony in the cathedral's lower chapel on 8 April 1997.

A smaller part of the intelligentsia stuck to its 'negative' mission. It continued to find faults in the government's attempt to impose a new ideology and continued to draw people's attention to the wide gap existing between exacting-but-noble ideals and imperfect reality[91]. Sergei Romanyuk who stated sternly that " no democratic-minded person should support the cathedral project"[92] was a good representative of this second type.

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[88] M. Gessen, interview.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Guilt for having somehow caused the godless 1917 Revolution as well as animosity caused by the restitution of cultural treasures to " uneducated priests" (V. Dediukhina, interview) were other issues which loomed large in the intelligentsia's contemporary dilemmas and explained its problematic relationship with the Church.
[92] S. Romanyuk, interview.

The amazing tempo of the cathedral's rebuilding was an appropriate match for the speed of people's conversion to the Orthodox faith during the Soviet/post-Soviet transition. Taken together, they were interpreted as a sign of the superficiality of religious feeling: " Renaissance of spirituality? I don't see that Russian society has become more moral and spiritual in the recent years--quite the contrary!", exclaimed A. Komech, debunking official slogans. Repeating patterns of opposition of the past century, God-seeking individuals denounced the state's God-building scenario, on the count that it amounted to the " barbarization of Orthodoxy"[93]. In writer Vadim Kozhinov's view, " the cathedral of Christ the Saviour represents a lop-sided view of spirituality; it is in the Great Orthodox Power tradition, whereas in fact Orthodoxy is a humane religion. By its size and style, the cathedral's aim is to inspire fear and impress people, showing them that they are nothing." [94] Thus, once more, the state's sole interest in backing the Church was to demand blind obedience from the people.

By accepting the cathedral as Moscow's present, the Russian Orthodox Church may have further compromised itself in the eyes of purists who reviled the submissive attitude such a costly gift entrenched. But in the eyes of the people, the Church only stood to profit from official approval. E. Kirichenko analysed the dynamics of mass psychology as being ruled by " a thirst for existential guidance" and " a love for strength"[95]. The state-backed cathedral of Christ the Saviour was precisely what could make the Church strong in people's hearts.

The depth of people's religious beliefs, like their faith in the previous Communist ideology, was an open question[96]. But from taxi drivers to learned ministers, there was a consensus that Russian people will always need to believe--at least formally--in 'something'. While maximalists decried that the current regime's attempt to rule from above through a new ideology was a continuation of Bolshevik practices[97], pragmatists noted that it was " better for people to believe in God than in Communism"[98], and nationalists of all stripes took pride in the fact that " Russia has

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[93] Maksim Sokolov, 'Barbarization of Eastern Orthodoxy', *Kommersant-Daily* , 9 September 1995, in *CDSP* Vol.XLVII, N°36, 1995.
[94] Vadim Kozhinov, interview with the author, Moscow, 21 September 1996.
[95] E. Kirichenko, interview.
[96] A survey conducted for the Moscow government among a sample of 1236 people in May-June 1996, found that only 11% of respondents knew religious tenets and traditions "sufficiently well". On the other hand, only 5,3% declared having "no need for such things". 'Moskvichi o religiosnom vozrozhdenii Rossii', sociological brochure *Pul's* (published by the Moscow government), N°26 (110).
[97] See Romanyuk's opinion cited in Chapter III for example.
[98] E. Kirichenko, interview.

always been and will always be the most spiritual nation in the world"[99]. The Communist experience, with its utopian streak, was no exception to this culturally deterministic rule. Years of propaganda had taught all and sundry that societies in the West, by contrast, were basely materialistic. The cathedral demonstrated Russia's spiritual superiority.

" *Religious kitsch*"

Was the rebuilding of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour a measure of Russians' spiritual aspirations? Shvydkoi, Deputy Minister of Culture dismissed it as " religious kitsch" given the deeply secular nature of Russian society[100]. In Kozhinov's opinion, there could be no doubt that " any minuscule new or restored church in the dead of the countryside has more meaning than this cathedral. The cathedral represents no spiritual quest. It is the product of leaders who want to impress themselves with an image of their power and grandeur, that's all." [101]

There was some evidence to back the contrary view. In the Spring of 1997 for example, it was common to see people crossing themselves at the mere sight of the cathedral, as soon as they exited the nearby 'Kropotkinskaya' metro station. Messages addressed to God in the visitors' book which was kept in the cathedral's museum provided further indication of the fact that the building stirred feelings of pious humility and gratitude. At the very least, polls showed that most people related to religion with respect, and hoped, like Boris Yeltsin himself, that " gradually this [respect] will grow into greater religiosity."[102] If so, Moscow's poor-but-genuine attempt to recreate the cathedral was a perfect metaphor for contemporary society's mainstream attitude towards religion. The danger was that the cathedral, for all its triumphant glitter and glory, would be " not a palliative, but really a *surrogate* for spiritual rebirth"[103], by producing easy self-satisfaction[104].

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[99] Both M. Tsvetaeva (restoration specialist) and Yu. Grimov (Creative Director in an advertisement agency) made this point in separate interviews.

[100] " I am convinced that Russian society is secular. Yes, there have been great Russian writers inspired by faith but their faith was complex--it can not be boiled down to golden bulbs ." M. Shvydkoi, interview.

[101] V. Kozhinov, interview.

[102] B. Yeltsin quoted in J. Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, p. 148. See also 'Moskvichi o religiosnom vozrozhdenii Rossii', in *Pul's*, op. cit.

[103] M. Shvydkoi, interview.

[104] The decision to replace the planned Sunday school in the cathedral's lower quarters with a high-tech media centre to broadcast masses and important ceremonies, was an ominous sign that the circulation of symbols (communication) would have pre-eminence over the diffusion of meaning and faith (evangelisation). The switch followed I. Pokrovsky's dismissal as architect-in-chief.

Timofei, a recent convert and staff member of the External Relations department of the Moscow Patriarchate, cast a different light on to the relationship between imperfect form and spiritual content by referring to the Orthodox understanding of icons: "they are more than memory-devices; they are windows through which one sees the other world and through which God sees you. So the quality of an artist's spiritual experience at the time he is representing a religious scene *is* very important." [105] But at the same time, God can shine through " even the most poorly executed icons. During the Soviet era, priests may have belonged to the KGB, but people continued to take part in genuine communion and attend liturgy --it was the believers' experience which mattered."[106] For the imperfect cathedral to achieve religious meaning and gain spiritual aura, much depended on these same believers, who would flock to pray in it (or not). Chances were that they would ignore the quarrels regarding the place's profane amenities (such as the underground 600-car parking lot, or the expensive lifts-- including one for VIPs, behind the altar)[107] and forgive the political ambitions of its builders.

Synchronicity

There were other ways in which the cathedral was in fact very much in tune with the spirit of the times. In its superficial brilliance, with its usage of marble and gold (" office taste", scorned A. Komech[108]), it mirrored a new social class's flashy concerns. Igor' Ptichnikov, the Fund's young director (a former advertising agent) summarised the cathedral's appeal for the *nouveaux riches* by saying: " A Mercedes can vanish with one explosion. This is an investment in the eternal."[109] Jokes circulated about this social group's ignorance of even the most basic Christian tenets[110]. In this logic, supporting openly the cathedral was like sporting a fashionable brand-- the costlier, the better.

The entrepreneurial message of the cathedral was also very well received from the moment individual success stories confirmed that " Yes! We can do it!" was not another round of wishful

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[105] Timofei (working with Yu. Klitsenko at the Danilovsky monastery), interview, Moscow, 4 September 1996.
[106] Ibid.
[107] According to Gleb Yakunin, *Podlinny lik Moskovskoi Patriarkhii*, p. 19.
[108] A. Komech, interview.
[109] Quoted by J. Cleave, 'Raising Funds for Christ the Savior Cathedral', op. cit., p. 64. " We benefit from the kind of people who buy icons without knowing what they are" also acknowledged S. Semenenko (my interview).
[110] A wealthy New Russian wishes to acquire a golden crucifix: the larger and more expensive, the better. He nags the shop clerk until he is shown the largest item in store, and says: " that one will do--but could I please have it without the *gymnast*?" (referring to Christ on the cross).

thinking and empty propaganda. To demonstrate allegiance and gratitude towards a regime which allowed private fortunes to blossom (at least in Moscow), it was best to refrain from scrutinising the cathedral's defects and blemishes. Yury Grimov, the young creative director of Premiere SV (an advertising agency which worked to re-elect Yeltsin), argued that " you should not show a cathedral in the process of construction; a cathedral is supposed to appear ."[111] His eagerness to present the cathedral as an transcendental object, removed from the realm of human question and reproach, could be interpreted variously. On the one hand it was a mark of total subservience to the reigning ideology (" supporting the cathedral is a patriotic imperative", he said). On the other, producing " political kitsch"[112] was simply the rule of his image-making trade[113].

Against this background, the intelligentsia's stances and interpretations had a necessarily narrow audience. Arguments about how the rebuilt cathedral lacked a common idiom with contemporary Moscow, were countered by the fact that most people responded to the construction's *rhythm* (which was fast-moving, just like the city around them), more than they noticed the historicist style of the stones being raised. Thus, criticism backfired on the cathedral's opponents who were classified as " retrogrades"[114], a " newspaper-reading"[115] group, with nothing valuable to say to people who increasingly took their cues and drew their views from other sources (chiefly television and street publicity)[116]. Happily, given that political communication in the post-Soviet era had to compete with a multiplicity of personal, commercial, and international messages, the same trend which diminished the importance of the nation's self-styled interpreters (the intelligentsia), also effectively sapped the possibilities of establishing a new dominating ideology.

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111 Yu. Grimov, interview.

112 Fantasies, images, words and archetypes form " political kitsch" in Milan Kundera's classic analysis. " Kitsch excludes everything from its purview which is essentially unacceptable to human existence. (...)In the realm of totalitarian kitsch, all answers are given in advance and preclude any questions (...). the true opponent of totalitarian kitsch is the person who asks questions. A question is like a knife that slices through the stage backdrop and gives us a look at what lies behind it." *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (London: Faber & Faber, 1984), p.248-254.

113 Apparently benign expressions of loyalty can also conceal low obedience for the sake of " living in harmony with society". See Vaclav Havel's essay written in 1978 on the manager of the fruit and vegetable shop who displays in his window the slogan 'Workers of the World unite!' in 'The Power of the Powerless', *Open Letters, Selected Prose* (London: Faber & Faber, 1991), p. 132-134.

114 In the opinion of V. Chestakov, interview.

115 " *Chitateli gazet*" is used in a pejorative sense by Deacon A. Kureav, following Marina Tsveateva's famous poem against newspaper readers. (*Razmyshleniya...*, p. 28)

116 On how the positions of the creative intelligentsia have become irrelevant in politics, see Aleksei Khanyutin, 'C kem vy, mastera kul'tury?', *Itogi* , 11 June 1996, p. 72.

Victory over Communism?

The cathedral's relationship to the Communist past was the source of many paradoxical views. On the most immediate level, the cathedral was seen as the gleaming proof that " the Communist period is over"[117]. *Not building it* once the idea had been launched and discussed in society would have signalled that "Russia's seventy years of spiritual impoverishment, callousness, and oblivion of history and culture were still not over."[118] Its renewed presence was seen as a "triumphant resurrection over the forces which destroyed it ."[119] That it was intended precisely so, as a monument definitively sealing off the Communist past, was beyond doubt. This interpretation permeated many political discourses and was generally well received, especially in the period of heightened tension before elections: " Lord, save us from idiots and Communists", wrote a pilgrim in June 1996.[120] In contrast, Seliverstov's project would have produced only negative emotions, argued A. Kuraev. The metal outline would have reminding people daily: "look at what a beautiful object the vermin (*"gady"*) destroyed!"[121] Building the cathedral was a way of forgiving, forgetting, and moving on.

But putting the Communist experience between parentheses was also what some opponents most reproached the rebuilding. In an essay published in *Segodnya*, Dmitry Shusharin argued that beyond the financial, artistic and legal problems raised by this undertaking, the rebuilding was " yet another attack on history, on the march of time, which can only lead to national and religious degeneration .(...) There is only one objective: to make the things the way they were before, so that it will be possible to pretend that nothing ever happened, that there wasn't any destruction." However, "what happened, happened. And what happened requires analysis and thoughtful interpretation."[122] A. Skokan also maintained that the cathedral would give people "the illusion that anything which is destroyed can be rebuilt"[123] and perpetuate irresponsible behaviour. Following a similar line of thought, designer and critic Vladimir Paperny judged that "it will be possible to talk about democracy

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[117] M. Moskvin-Tarkhanov, interview.
[118] Patriarch Aleksy II, address to the Council (6 September 1994), in N.Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, p. 211.
[119] William Brumfield, 'An Elephant or Savior?', *The Moscow Times*, 25 January 1997, p.8.
[120] Cathedral's museum visitors' book.
[121] A. Kuraev, *Razmyshleniya...*, p. 10.
[122] Dmitry Shusharin, 'A New Babylon', *Segodnya*, 17 September 1994, p. 15. Translated and printed in *CDSP* Vol. XLVI, N° 37 (1994).
[123] A. Skokan in a roundtable discussion, 'Postroim dvorets Khrista Spasitelya?', *Moskovskie Novosti*, N°56, 13-20 November 1994.

only after Russia develops a free historical conscience, allowing different elements and layers [of the past] to exist side by side ."[124]

A portrayal of Communists as foreign enemies from a distant past not only failed the test of historical accuracy; it was also contradicted by the visible hangovers from this very same past. Opponents underlined the Five-Year-Plan flavour of Luzhkov's tempo and method, detectable, for instance, in his appeal to selfless labour and in his choice of an anniversary date as the target for the building's completion. Surreptitiously, the Communist past would even be present in the execution of the cathedral's monumental art since sculptors and painters could not be trained to create differently overnight. In street-side interviews, people's superficial enthusiasm was also an expression of years of practised conformist behaviour and solidarity in the face of questioning foreigners.

Doing justice to the past [125]

An interpretation of the rebuilding as a ritualistic act of justice tried to reconcile these differing views. Victory over Communism could not be a clean-cut operation, since society as a whole was 'contaminated' and the disease's origin difficult to pinpoint. But architecture's muffled voice (like a witch-doctor's formulas) could help the healing process. " Remember that we have had no Nuremberg trials, no lustration laws," Aleksei Kravchenko pointed out[126]. The cathedral's theatrical rejection of the Communist past was the equivalent of a court's verdict, both symbolic and retributive. By repeating what existed before, the building sought to reaffirm collective norms and values.

It is probable that the imposing presence of the cathedral will eventually stamp out the memory of its destruction. In 1997, however, Muscovites could usually come up with a narrative tracing all episodes of the place, both tragic and glorious[127].

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[124] Vladimir Paperny, interviewed by Marina Kaminarskaya, in 'Kak by kul'tura, kak by Dva', *Itogi*, 28 May 1996, p. 69.
[125] Title of a conference on the comparative benefits of information, catharsis, and amnesia for fledgling democracies. Exeter College, Oxford, 26 February 1996.
[126] Aleksei Kravchenko, architect (and my host), interview, Moscow, 22 September 1996.
[127] Personal memories of the *Moskva* pool, although dearer and less contrived than events recorded in official history books, will probably vanish first.

CHAPTER VI-- Conclusion.

In summary, the cathedral owed its renewed lease of life to a plurality of actors whose efforts were deployed in the following sequence. First, a Russian nationalist intelligentsia used *glasnost'* as an opportunity to discuss widely questions of national and cultural heritage which had already begun to gain salience in Brezhnev's time. Agitation for the rebuilding of Russia's holy shrine was fuelled by groups with national-patriotic political agendas, encouraged to some extent by members of the Soviet state who wished to forestall disintegration of the USSR. Although these groups failed to gain mass support for their political ideas, they helped rediscover the history associated with the destroyed cathedral. Its myths and tragic episodes captured people's imagination and fired hopes that Russia would one day see the building standing again.

When the democratic successors of the Communist regime adopted the idea to suit their own designs, they were able to use the mass petition campaign started by the nationalist lot as an expression of popular will. This official endorsement occurred after the chaotic events of October 1993 (and worrying electoral results in December) underlined the new state's fragile legitimacy. As a symbol of continuity with the tsarist past, the cathedral was useful to place Yeltsin's regime in a Great Russian genealogy. As a gift to the Russian Orthodox Church, it was also an important step towards defining a new ideology for the masses, supposedly "left at bay" since the demise of Marxism-Leninism. Both symbolic gestures were crucial power- consolidating measures: the cathedral was a cheap price to pay if it could rally the patriots and take people's minds off day to day difficulties. That religion effectively alleviated people's earthly burden is questionable, but increasingly patriotic discourse on the part of state authorities calmed the regime's foes. Many were co-opted and willing to participate in the cathedral's construction.

In Moscow, the desire for social peace was rooted in a pragmatic vision of the city's interests. The show-case cathedral was meant to signal economic revival and to reassure investors that the Moscow Mayor and selected enterprises were solid, lasting partners. Portrayed as a collective act (funded by popular subscription), the building process was also supposed to give people the self-confidence and will to roll down their sleeves and build post-Soviet Russia.

The Russian Orthodox Church had wanted a large conference room and new headquarters all along, but welcomed the popular and political initiative with reticence. The cathedral risked stultifying true religious revival by making the Church seem excessively dependent on the state and indifferent

to local parish needs. The intelligentsia was divided between its duty to criticise and loyalty to various patriotic and religious sentiments. And the majority of Muscovites, distracted by other things but generally pleased, applauded.

This is the history of the *political decision*. Because of the issue considered, a one-off "holy deed" with great ideological significance, its mechanisms are not necessarily representative of the way most decisions are taken in the Moscow community. It does however, illustrate, albeit as an extreme case, certain trends at work in the management of Moscow's municipal projects, big and small.

Among the worrying aspects from a pluralist, democratic point of view, the lack of financial transparency stands out. This follows from the complexity and murkiness of enterprise relationships with the Moscow government and from the fact that citizens have relinquished their right to scrutiny in the belief that "Luzhkov knows best" what is good for the city and for taxpayers' pockets. The press was decisive in bringing to light the idea of rebuilding the cathedral (chapter II). Later, it opened its columns to the lively debate touching the meaning and worth of the construction (chapter V). However, it remained a disappointing check on the Mayor's extremely centralised rule. The advantages of patronage and the risk of being drawn into clanish power battles (Luzhkov vs. Chubais, for example) were compounded with readers' veneration for Yury Mikhailovich Luzhkov, and thus made the unsavoury details of the cathedral's rebuilding simply not worth investigating. Besides the press, representative bodies at the city and federal level were also rendered powerless: the State Duma was circumvented thanks to the myth of voluntary donations, while the City Duma, in Luzhkov's fatherly care, was so tame as to be meaningless.

For these reasons, I disagree with William Brumfield who sees in the cathedral a sign of "the triumphant resurrection over the forces that destroyed it"[1]. The lack of countervailing forces, the philistine spirit with which artistic quality has been traded for tempo, and even the cult of Luzhkov which the building has amplified, do not warrant such optimism.

Equally disquieting were the remarks made by the projects' apologists regarding the relationship between times of popular hardship and great works of architecture. Pokrovsky, the cathedral's initial architect, argued that a "well-fed man creates poorly", praising instead the slaves

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[1] W. Brumfield, 'An Elephant or Savior?', *Moscow Times*, 25 January 1997, p.8.

which produced Egyptian pyramids[2]. It showed that Russian leaders were still counting on the masses as a bottomless reservoir of free labour--and indeed, why not? 1996, the second year of the construction, will be remembered as the year when the state and enterprises stopped paying wages in many sectors of the economy[3]. The Mayor, meanwhile, will be praised for being a model 'doer', a man who gets things done with stormy energy --regardless of the hidden costs.

Throughout the undertaking, reference was made to the "people's will". However, that "will" had only been expressed in a petition campaign in 1989 and a 1994 poll had actually revealed a majority *against* the immediate rebuilding of the cathedral. Over-ruling these technical details, History was there to sanction the project.

In M. Tsvetaeva's view, "Luzhkov is the product of a historical need. Had Luzhkov not existed, Russia would have invented him or rebuilt the cathedral a bit later-- but in any case, the cathedral would have been rebuilt"[4]. Politically motivated groups introduced the idea but did not have the resources to take it further. Yury Luzhkov had the necessary organisational skills as well as the clout to see the rebuilding through, but was a "leader type"[5] (a boss) --not a unique personality. In Tsvetaeva's interpretation, both the people and the Moscow government were mere agents of the historical Great March, encoded in Russia's genes. "The cathedral realises the return to Russia's roots without which it would lose itself as a country."[6] Russia's destiny and self-identity are that of an essentially spiritual nation. In Deacon A. Kuraev's words: "a Russia which does not build rockets is still, however weak, Russia. But a Russia which, following the majority's will, decides not to build churches-- it is not Russia at all."[7] Both Hegelian philosophy and Orthodox doctrine predisposed Russians to think in *troika* terms: after construction and annihilation, resurrection was inevitable.

Does my study legitimate this reasoning in terms of *historical necessity*? At first glance, it does not, since I have focused primarily on the accidents, on the coincidences, and on the individual efforts which brought different streams together and made the cathedral rebuilding an issue, a

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[2]I.Pokrovsky, 'Khram Khrista ili Pamyatnik Meru?', *Ogonek*, N°48-49, December 1994, p. 11.
[3] Note that in one year just before the war, the foundations of the Palace of Soviets had engulfed 17 per cent of the country's steel production --"an example of a people nearly killing itself to symbolize something." R. Harbison, *The Built, the Unbuilt, and the Unbuildable*, p. 62.
[4] M. Tsvetaeva, interview.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] A. Kuraev, *Razmyshleniya...*

decision and finally a reality. In passing, I have noted the lasting desire to compete in might and ideological fervour with the West (Kirov's speech at the Bolshoi in 1922 remains a model in this favoured genre)[8]. But a longer and more thorough survey of the different contexts which produced the present cathedral's predecessors (the pool, the Palace, Ton's cathedral and even Vitberg's project) would be needed to reveal the long-term cultural continuities (and ruptures) which run like a seam through Russia's turbulent political chronology. It would be a very worthwhile scholarly endeavour.[9] Meanwhile, a few conclusions can be drawn from the reconstruction case itself.

From the start, rebuilding was envisaged with the territory's whole historical past in mind. It was a place charged with powerful collective memories: the memory of those who had died for the Fatherland, in 1812 and beyond; the memory of the Church's martyrdom in a militantly atheist regime's hands-- memories thus both painful and sacred (or perhaps, *doubly sacred* because so painful). The past was probed for answers to contemporary questions: what was the Russia worth dying fo back then, in terms of frontiers and political system? what was the importance of Orthodoxy in society and mentalities? Although national-patriots and democrats assessed the past differently, both looked back to the pre-revolutionary times for a sense of collective destiny over-riding political antagonisms. A keystone in the vaulted shrine of myths because of its tragic history, the cathedral's significance was therefore above politics.[10]

The lasting quality of stones which escape the futility of individual lives, explains why people erect architectural monuments in the first place: they are collective testaments, marking the passing of time to preserve its eternal memory. The stakes are high because such buildings affect people's basic self-representation and limit their ways of thinking in lasting subconscious ways. In the case of

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[8] "Let us show our friends and foes, that we, 'half-Asians', we, upon whom they continue to look down, are capable of adorning the sinful earth with monuments of a kind our enemies haven't even dreamt of". Kirov's speech at the Bolshoi theater 31 December 1922, in I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie* ..., p. 27.

[9] The site certainly qualifies for a study of the type favoured in Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de mémoire.* In this work (which runs in several volumes), a group of French historians have looked at how national identity has been maintained through acts of collective memory. Their conclusion is that national patrimony and national identity are far less contingent on political chronologies than one would imagine from reading only traditional histories of the French nation-state, thanks to the collective memory of monuments, institutions and mythical individuals.

[10] Ryzscard Kapuscinski captures the feeling of awe created by the lasting power of the first cathedral of Christ the Saviour: « Czars came and went, old generations died off and new ones populated the earth, Russia threw herself into the chaos of consecutive wars and conquests or suffered recurring waves of famine and epidemic, and yet nothing could interrupt, or even delay, the labour on this unique and extraordinary structure. » *Imperium*, p. 97.

the cathedral, the chains of culture[11] were tangible in the fact that even Seliverstov's project used the cathedral's form to design something new. A contrario, it brings out the uniqueness of the revolutionary experience which sought to break the mould of traditional language and construct from scratch. For many, the early Bolsheviks were literally *barbarians* speaking an uncomprehensible tongue. They reached a cultural impasse. In a certain sense, Stalin's rule and the invention of socialist realism marked a return to a discourse which the masses could understand-- the discourse of 'monumentality'.[12]

Soon after the cathedral had been "*varvarstvo razrushen*", the building of the Palace of Soviets was the first attempt to recreate a sacred collective shrine --albeit in an altered guise[13]. So far, Luzhkov's efforts have been more successful[14].

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11 "Man is born genetically free, but is everywhere in cultural chains", writes Ernest Gellner in 'Culture, Constraint and Community', *Anthropology and Politics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p. 48.

12 See A. Cunliffe, 'The Competition for the Palace of Soviets, 1931-1933', *Architectural Association Quarterly*, Vol. 11, N°2, 1979, p. 45-47. Also: Karl Schlögel, 'The Shadow of an Imaginary Tower' in *Naum Gabo*, p. 179; and *Nine Points on Monumentality* (1943) in Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), p. 223.

13 To conceal what was obvious to all--the building of a new religion (centered around almighty Stalin) which would sustain the masses through terrible hardship -- architects were instructed to keep away as much as possible from church-like motifs. (See I. Ilovaiskaya-Alberti, *Razrushenie...*, p. 38.) See also R. Kapuscinski on "the principle of the cult" which continues to operate in the foreground while "the background scenery changes". *Imperium*, p. 106.

14 In April 1997, the cathedral of Christ the Saviour II was still in the process of being faced with white stone, but its main outline was complete. The temporary museum had been moved to a more permanent room in the pedestal of the cathedral, and services were regularly held in the lower chapel. The state of other elements of the vast Russian Orthodox Church headquarters was unknown.

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APPENDIX

Chronology

Models and Buildings

Kino Rossiya invitation

VTsIOM survey

Public Observation Council

Moscow government poster

Chronology

<u>The first, abortive, cathedral of Christ the Saviour</u>

1812 Victory over Napoleon's troops

-7 January 1813 (25 December 1812): Alexander I's Manifesto.

-25 (12) October 1817: stone-laying ceremony on Sparrow Hills (A. Vitberg's project).

<u>The long building of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour</u>

Decembrist uprising

-1825: A.Vitberg sent in exile to Vyatka.

-1826: Nicholas I closes down work on Sparrow Hills

-23 (10) September 1839: stone-laying ceremony (K. Ton's project)

-1859: building completed in its exterior guise.

-1881: artwork finished.

Alexander II assassinated.

- 8 June (26 May) 1883: cathedral's consecration on the occasion of Alexander III's coronation.

War and Revolution

-25 February 1918: founding of the Brotherhood of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour to protect the church from decay and vandalism.

Civil war

-30 December 1922, Kirov at the first congress of Soviets of USSR, expresses the need for a monumental building commemorating the unity and victory of the people.

Death of the Prophet Lenin

-1924: association of new architects ASNOVA suggests a Lenin memorial on the site of the cathedral.

<u>Building Communism and the Palace of Soviets</u>

Collectivisation, Terror and Five Year Plan

-1931: establishment of a Commission for the building of the Palace of Soviets.

6 meetings (sittings) of a Temporary Technical Council to decide where to build the Palace.

Stalin approves the idea of using the cathedral's site.

-13 July 1931: competition for the building of the Palace on the site of the cathedral announced in 'Izvestiya'.

The cathedral is laboriously disassembled.

-5 December 1931: final destruction of the cathedral, using explosives.

-5 May 1933: B. Iofan's project is selected.

-1935: General Plan for the Reconstruction of Moscow.

-1939: construction begins-- work stops in 1941.

Great Patriotic War

-1944: creation of the Russian Orthodox Church Patriarchate.

1953: death of the Palace's chief commissioner, Stalin.

<u>Down-scaling dreams</u>

-1957: Moscow underground station ceases to be called 'Palace of Soviets'.

-1957-1959: new architectural competition 1957-1959.

-1959-1961: Palace of Congresses (M. V. Posokhin), built within the Kremlin.

-1957-1960: swimming pool 'Moskva' (D. Chechulin), filling in the Palace's abandoned foundations.

Waking up the ghost of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour

Gorbachev's glasnost' and perestroika

-May 1988: competition for a Great Patriotic War memorial on Poklonnaya Gora. V. Mokrousov presents a model of the cathedral. Yu. Seliverstov proposes a see-through version of the cathedral.

-1988: Obshchina of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, founded by sculptor Mokrousov, Fr. Georgy, architect V. Berezutsky, sculptor N. Rozov and others.

1988 Millennium of Russia's Christianity

1988-1989: petition campaign.

Fund for the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour established by 'Literaturnaya Rossiya'.

-24 September 1989: charity evening at cinema 'Rossiya', for the commemoration of the 175th anniversary of the 1812 patriotic war and the 150th anniversary of the cathedral's stone-laying. ceremony.

-5 December 1990: laying of a commemorative stone near the pool.

-15 March 1991: erection of a two-metre plaster cross (V. Mokrousov) on the stone. From that time on, people regularly congregate and pray near the spot.

The August coup

-5 December 1991: Yeltsin's address to the head of Church, " I hope that ...our descendants will restore the memory of the cathedral of Christ the Saviour, under one form or another...".

Death of the Soviet Union.

-16 July 1992: Presidential decree listing the cathedral as a priority amongst Moscow restoration and building projects.

Obshchina of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour registered.

-16 December 1992: Moscow government upholds the chapel-building project commissioned by the Obshchina.

Rebuilding the cathedral: the search for a new ideology

October 1993 clashes

-23 February 1994: Moscow government, in agreement with the Moscow Patriarchate, decides to rebuild a copy of the destroyed cathedral.

-7 September 1994: establishment of the Public Observation Council and the Fund for the Reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

Cathedral's design: first by I. Pokrovsky, then by M. M. Posokhin (son of M. V. Posokhin).

War in Chechnya

-7 January 1995: symbolic first stone ceremony.

-5 May 1995: Presidential decree liberating participating firms from taxes.

-7 January 1996: symbolic last stone ceremony.

Easter 1996: gilding of the cathedral's domes.

June-July 1996: re-election of Moscow Mayor Yu. Luzhkov and President B. Yeltsin.

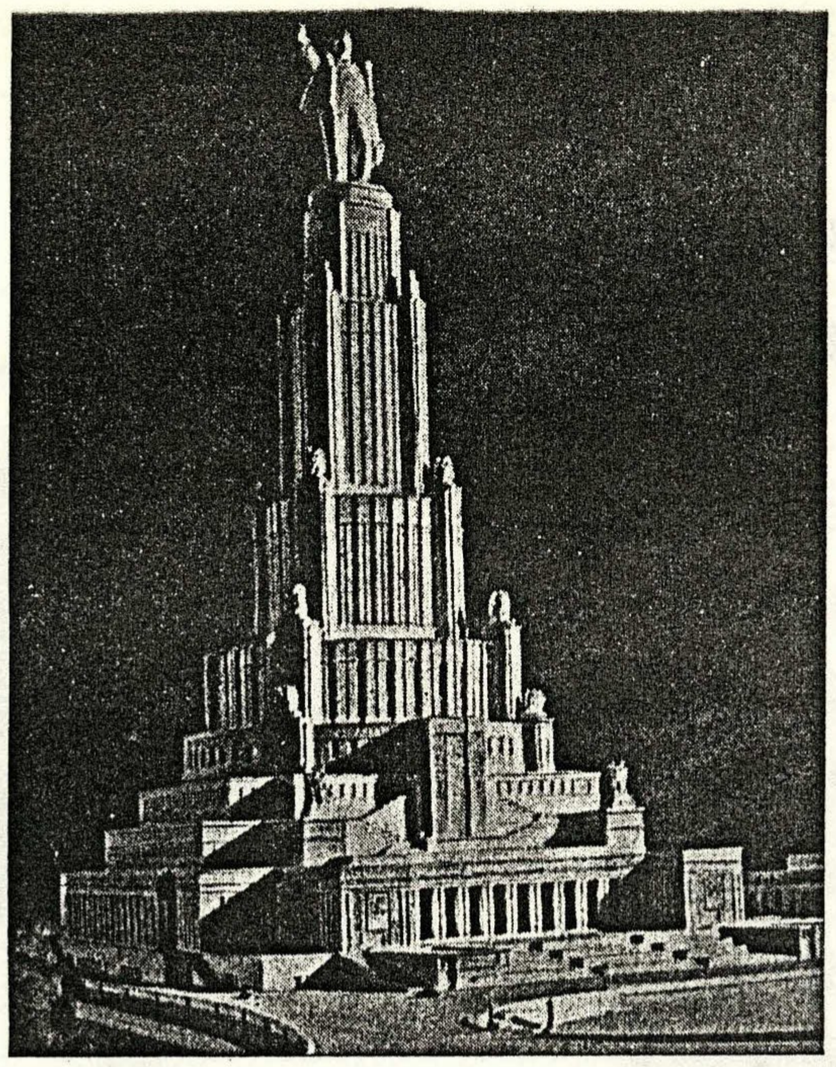
-September 1997: completion of the cathedral's exterior due for Moscow's 850th anniversary.

-2000: interior decoration due for the bi-millennium of Jesus Christ's birth.

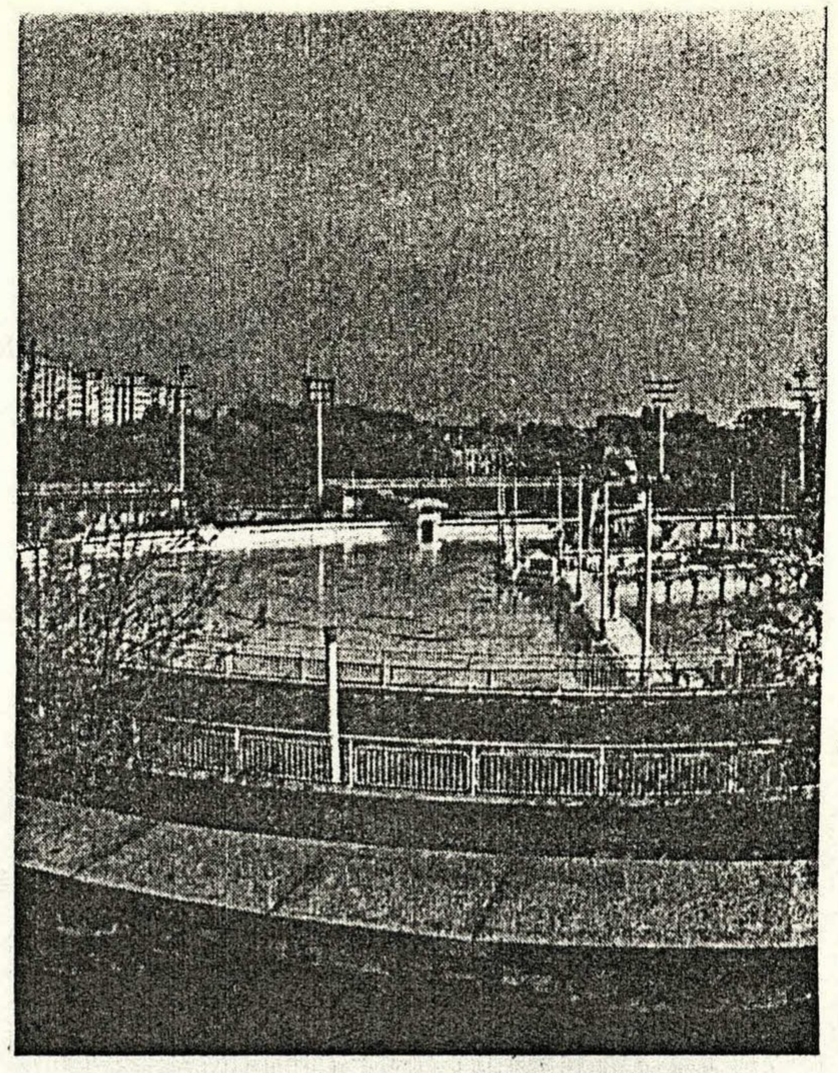
[Main sources: E. Kirichenko, *Khram Khrista Spasitelya v Moskve*, N. Guglyar (ed.), *Khram Khrista Spasitelya*, T. Colton, *Moscow*.]



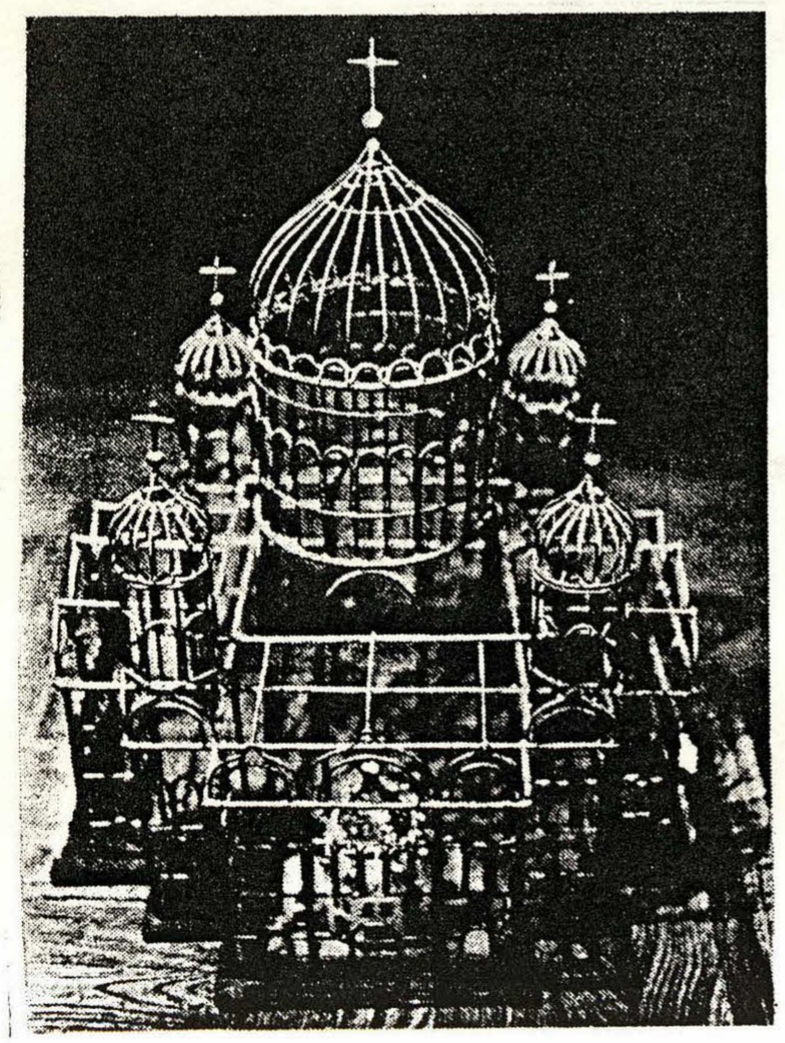
Храм Христа Спасителя



Проект Дворца Советов

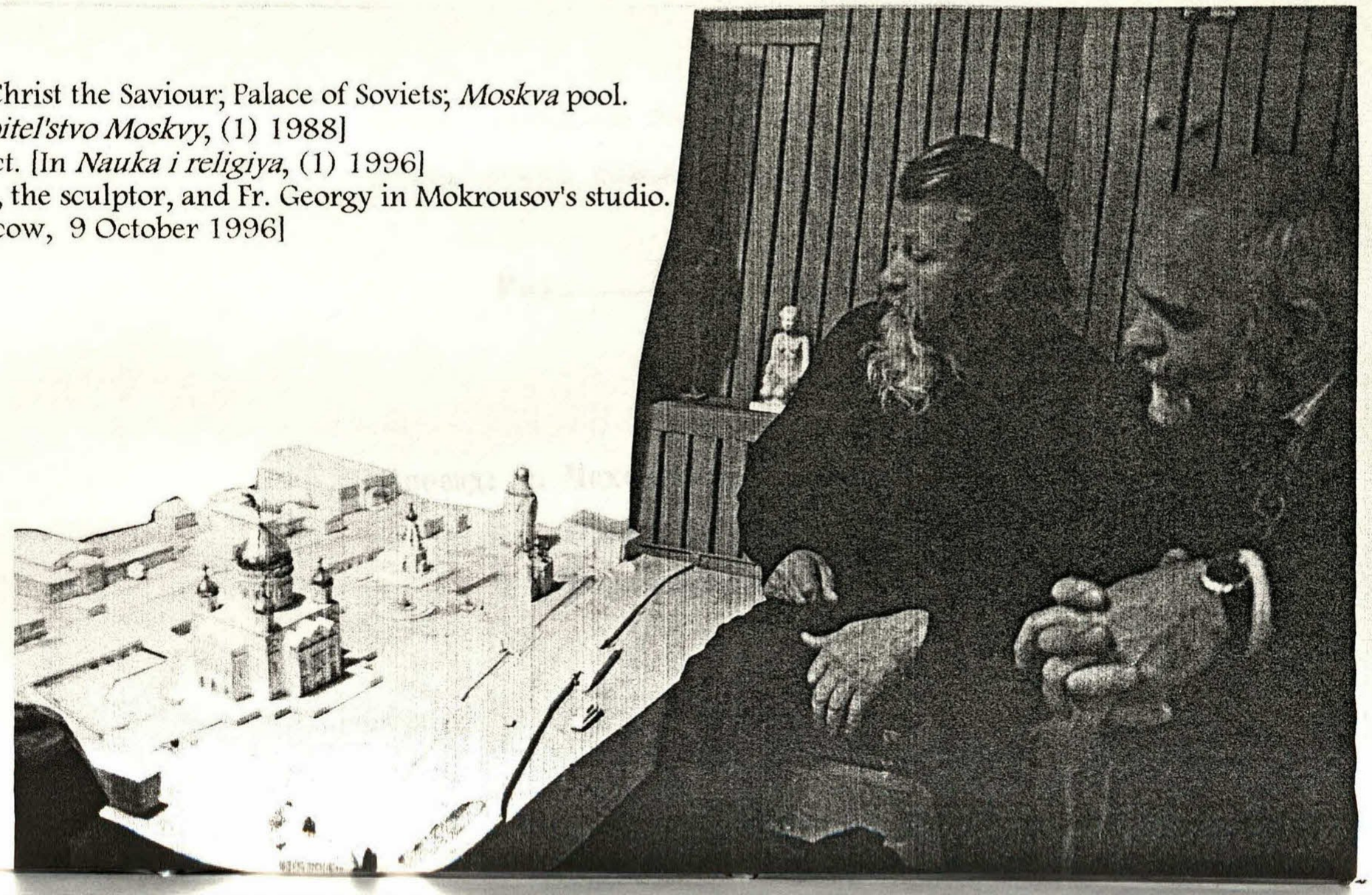


Бассейн «Москва»



Ю. Селиверстов. *Проект воссоздания объемного контура Храма Христа Спасителя.*

19th-c. Cathedral of Christ the Saviour; Palace of Soviets; *Moskva* pool.
[In *Arkhitektura i Stroitel'stvo Moskvy*, (1) 1988]
Yu. Seliverstov's project. [In *Nauka i religiya*, (1) 1996]
V. Mokrousov's model, the sculptor, and Fr. Georgy in Mokrousov's studio.
[My photograph, Moscow, 9 October 1996]





Дорогие
соотечественники!

Если для Вас свято дело возрождения культуры русской Вы можете стать учредителями фонда
храма ХРИСТА СПАСИТЕЛЯ, приняв участие в благотворительном вечере, посвященном 150-летию закладки храма, построенного в благодарность ГОСПОДУ за защиту Отечества.

Вечер состоится 24 сентября 1989 года в помещении кинотеатра „Россия“.

Ряд_____ Место_____

Проезд: м. Чеховская,
Пушкинская,
Горьковская.

Fr. Georgy's (rejected) invitation for the *Kino Rossiya* event on 24 September 1989.

Опрос: БЛИЦ 94-21 (12.09-13.09.94) (Взвешенные данные). Просчитано 14 Oct 1994
Выборка: Все Число опрошенных: 1722

В ПРОЦЕНТАХ К КОЛИЧЕСТВУ ОПРОШЕННЫХ ПО СТРОКЕ

ВЫ СОГЛАСНЫ ИЛИ НЕТ С РЕШЕНИЕМ МОСКОВСКИХ ВЛАСТЕЙ О ВОССОЗДАНИИ ХРАМА ХРИСТА СПАСИТЕЛЯ?

1.нужно заниматься сейчас 2.нужно заняться позже 3.не нужно заниматься вообще, против этого решения
4.затрудняюсь ответить 5.нет ответа 6.Всего

% к числу опрошенных	39.6	32.6	17.3	10.4	0.0	1722
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 ПОЛ						
1. мужской	41.1	29.9	20.7	8.3	0.0	765
2. женский	38.4	34.9	14.6	12.1	0.0	957
нет ответа:	--	--	--	--	--	0
N8 ВОЗРАСТ						
1. 16-25 лет	48.0	29.8	10.0	12.2	0.0	238
2. 25-39 лет	33.6	32.5	21.2	12.6	0.0	479
3. 40-54 года	32.7	34.9	19.7	12.8	0.0	434
4. старше 55 лет	46.4	32.3	15.3	6.0	0.0	570
нет ответа:	--	--	--	--	--	0
N9 ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ						
1. высшее	26.4	39.0	26.8	7.7	0.0	525
2. среднее	40.6	34.9	13.3	11.3	0.0	910
3. ниже среднего	60.7	13.9	12.8	12.6	0.0	288
нет ответа:	--	--	--	--	--	0
10 РОД ЗАНЯТИЙ						
1. предприниматель	36.8	31.0	21.9	10.3	0.0	50
2. занят в комм. структур	28.6	39.9	22.3	9.2	0.0	149
3. руководитель	31.3	35.9	23.5	9.3	0.0	44
4. ИТР	30.0	34.6	26.7	8.6	0.0	201
5. специалист-гуманитарий	30.5	38.2	19.9	11.3	0.0	180
6. военнослужащий	39.8	26.6	25.7	7.8	0.0	42
7. служащий	30.9	37.8	12.9	18.4	0.0	60
8. квалифицированный рабочий	34.0	37.3	18.8	9.9	0.0	269
9. неквалифицированный рабочий	47.6	15.8	13.2	23.4	0.0	93
10. учащийся, студент	46.7	26.7	11.7	14.9	0.0	123
11. пенсионер	53.0	29.3	12.0	5.7	0.0	393
12. домохозяйка	50.0	36.4	5.5	8.1	0.0	68
13. безработный	42.8	22.9	15.5	18.9	0.0	51
нет ответа:	--	--	--	--	--	0
N17 СРЕДНЕДУШЕВОЙ ДОХОД						
1. низкий	43.1	30.1	15.1	11.7	0.0	331
2. средний	38.9	33.0	17.1	11.0	0.0	1000
3. высокий	36.3	35.7	19.6	8.4	0.0	334
нет ответа:	50.4	23.5	21.1	5.0	0.0	57

VTsIOM survey
"Do you agree with the Moscow authorities' decision to rebuild the cathedral of Christ the Saviour?"

СОСТАВ

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List of the members of the cathedral's Public Observation Council. [*Vestnik merii Moskvy*, N°18 (1272)]



Moscow government's poster: "Cathedral of Christ the Saviour-- Symbol of the Renaissance of Russia". [My photograph, September 1996]