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STEFAN IAVORSKII AND PROTESTANTISM

Simeon Iavorskii was born in 1658 w Iavor in the western Ukraine. In 1667, his family moved eastward to settle near Nezhin. Since 1673 he had studied in the Kiev Academy, and beginning in 1684 he continued his education in Polish universities after converting to the Uniate faith, when he assumed the name of Stanislav. After his return to Kiev in 1687 (or 1689), he converted to Orthodoxy, and after two years, he became a monk and assumed the name of Stefan. Soon after he started teaching poetics, rhetoric, philosophy, and theology in the Kiev Academy. In 1691, he became a prefect and professor of philosophy. In 1697, he became a hegumen, i.e., an abbot of the Holy Nikolskii monastery. At that time, he wrote poetry in Polish, Latin, and Russian¹. In 1700, Peter I heard and appreciated one of his speeches and soon after made him the metropolitan of Riazan' and Murom. He was nominated a protector of the Moscow Slavonic-Greek-Latin Academy introducing many reforms in it and also in the educational system in Moscow. After the death of patriarch Adrian in 1700, no new patriarch was nominated, but Peter I chose Iavorskii to fulfill the duties of the post. Iavorskii accepted hoping that this was a prelude for his becoming the next patriarch. Iavorskii advocated many social

¹ The little known poetic side of Iavorskii is presented by R. ŁUŻNY. *Stefan Jaworski – poeta nieznaný*. „Slavia Orientalis” 1967 nr 4 p. 363-376.

and economic reforms of the tsar but did not agree with the tsar's policy toward the church. In a 1712 sermon, he considered the tsarevich Aleksei to be the only hope of Russia, the son of the tsar who soon was later arrested for treason and died in prison. After this sermon Iavorskii was prohibited from having public sermons. In a letter to the tsar he still tried to defend himself and the independence of the church, and yet, although reluctantly, he signed the *Spiritual Regulation* in 1721 that gave the tsar the authority over the church, and he was nominated the president of the newly established Most Holy Synod. However, before and after that act, his influence on the life of the church steadily waned. He died in 1722.

1. THE ROCK OF FAITH

Iavorskii was known for his oratory skills leaving over 300 unpublished sermons². He was very well versed in the Bible and in the writings of the church fathers. He was very traditional in his theological views which are best expressed in his *opus vitae*, *The Rock of Faith*. The book, written in 1713-1715, and published for the first time posthumously in 1728, is a defense of the Orthodox church from the attacks of Protestants. The rock (камень) of faith is Christ who is at the same time the cornerstone (камень), the stone on which the true church is based, and the stumbling block (камень), on which all heretics stumble and their teachings are pulverized (KV preface)³.

² А.И. НИКОЛЬСКИЙ. *Описание рукописей, хранящихся в Архиве Святейшего Правительствующего Синода*. Vol. 2. Part 1. Санкт-Петербург 1906 p. 381-426.

³ The following references will be used:

KV – С. ЯВОРСКИЙ. *Камень веры православно-кефолическия восточныя Церкви, святыя сынам на утверждение и духовноя созидание, претыкающим же о камень претыкания и соблазна на востание и исправление*. Киев 1730.

S – Слова СТЕФАНА ЯВОРСКОГО, митрополита рязанского и муромского. *Труды Киевской духовной академии* 1874. Vol. 3 p. 72-121, Vol. 4 p. 123-154, 505-520; 1875, Vol. 1 p. 118-128, 631-647, Vol. 2 p. 486-505, Vol. 3 p. 463-492, Vol. 4 p. 124-145.

Z – С. ЯВОРСКИЙ. *Знамения пришествия антихристова и кончины века, от писаний Божественных явленна*. Москва 1703. In his: *Сказание об антихристе. Догмат о святых иконах*. Москва 1999 p. 29-112.

The Rock of Faith consists of twelve chapters that concentrate on twelve issues: the icons; the cross; the relics; the Eucharist; prayers to the saints; prayers of the departed; prayers for the departed; tradition; liturgy; fasting; good works; and punishment of heretics. The structure of all chapters is similar. First, the positive teachings of the Orthodox church concerning a particular issue are presented – and this is the part related to the cornerstone; then teachings of Protestants considered erroneous are refuted – which is the part related to the stumbling block; and finally some rational arguments are presented where rationality means deriving certain conclusions from the Biblical statements. *The Rock of Faith* is at the same time an apologetic work and a defense of the only true Christian teaching, which, to be sure, is for Iavorskii the teaching of the Orthodox church. The author did not strive for originality; actually, he refrained from it. His originality may stem primarily from the way he presented his arguments, from his greater reliance than his predecessors on logic, in particular, syllogistic reasoning⁴. Some examples he used may also be original. Over a thousand pages of the book are filled with many Biblical passages and with many quotations from the church fathers, in particular Greek fathers, with occasional references to the Latin fathers. *The Rock of Faith* belongs to the category of lightweight theology, concentrating on issues that divide Orthodoxy from Protestantism, which might in many cases be considered of secondary importance. Sometimes the discussion is carried to the extreme in bringing up issues of seemingly no importance at all: was Christ crucified on a four-pointed cross or on an eight-pointed cross, if the ends of the board with the inscription and the footrest are also considered integral parts of the cross (KV 249-252). This concern may trivialize theological issues, but, on the other hand, this issue led to a serious rift within the Russian church just as did another seemingly unimportant problem, whether people should cross themselves with two fingers or with three fingers. First

⁴ I. МОРЕВ. „Камень веры” митрополита Стефана Яворского, его место среди отечественных противопротестантских сочинений и характеристические особенности его догматических воззрений. Санкт-Петербург 1904 p. 279. *The Rock of Faith* is different from other polemical literature in „the scientific statement of the problem, [namely] on the level of the needs of the science of the time”. И.И. СОКОЛОВ. *Отношение протестантизма к России в XVI и XVII вв.* Москва: Лисснер и Роман 1880 s. 145.

principles of Christian faith are taken as givens and not scrutinized in *The Rock of Faith*: the nature of God⁵, of the Trinity, proofs of the existence of God, God's economy and energies, the nature of the Incarnation⁶, the origin of evil and the theodicy problem, and the like.

2. ICONS

An issue that well illustrates a doctrinal division between the Protestants and the Orthodox church is the treatment of icons. The Protestants criticized the Orthodox church for its veneration of icons which they likened to idolatry. This was far from a new problem, since already in the past, well before the Protestantism existed, iconoclasm had been a very strong movement inside the church, even leading to bloody confrontations (iconoclastic controversy from AD 726 to 843).

The major Orthodox argument in defense of icons is that there is a difference between the veneration of icons and the worship of God. Worship (*λατρεία*) is due only to God (KV 95, 108, 111), whereas icons are only venerated, which is done not on account of icons, but on account of what or whom they depict and signify. It is the same with the veneration of relics (285) and with the OT and NT sacrifices (791). Icons are thus intermediaries, whereby the venerating of icons turns into the veneration of the saints and the worship of God. Actually, any form of veneration is done on account of God, since everything was created by God and thus veneration is a form of worship of God (110, 111): in the Bible „honor and bowing is given to inanimate objects as much as they come from and are related to God Himself” (15-16). Idols are images of what does not exist – mythological gods that do not exist. Icons are images of what exists, lives, and what is holy in itself and thus worthy of honor (4-5, 124).

God did not order making images of Christ, but there is no prohibition of making His images (KV 5). Also, although making and venerating icons is not mentioned in the Bible, there are many things not

⁵ He agreed that God's nature cannot be exactly determined, but His nature cannot be expressed in more understandable terms. С. ЯВОРСЬКИЙ. *Філософські твори*. Київ: Наукова думка 1992. V. 1 p. 84.

⁶ A few remarks concerning the unity of two natures in Christ are made at the closing of the chapter on the Eucharist (443-456).

mentioned there in which Christians believe, and Iavorskii mentioned the same essence of God and the Son, which is the doctrine established by ecumenical councils, and so is the teaching about icons that comes primarily from tradition (141). The Protestants may not be altogether convinced by this argument, since they insist on using the Bible as the only source of Christian dogmas, not on tradition. However, if not directly, then indirectly the Bible does point to the possibility of venerating icons. For example, Israelites bowed to the cloudy pillar when Moses was entering the tent (Ex 33:10); if so, asked rhetorically Iavorskii, why one should prohibit bowing to and thus venerating icons? (8).

Veneration of icons is of particularly great benefit for simple people who cannot read but who surely can look at images of the suffering Christ, stated Iavorskii. Images of the last judgment and of hell led the prince Vladimir to accept the Orthodox faith (KV 17, 73). If so, it may appear that the more realistic icons are, the more strongly they speak to people. However, the tradition of iconography specifically prohibits realism. Do the stylized images of the suffering Christ or of hell really have the same power of conviction as very realistic images of Christ and hell present in Western art? Iavorskii said that when believers pray before icons, they direct their minds to the invisible (18). This is where the stylized character of icons may have more impact: their otherworldly depictions may more easily direct the mind toward the otherworldly originals than very realistic depictions could do.

Veneration of icons is confirmed by miracles (KV 41-47). „It is easier to count stars of the sky, leaves on trees, grass on all the earth, sand in all seas than to list miracles by icons of Christ, Mother of God, (...) and the saints of God” (45). True, there are false miracles, but true miracles are always for the benefit of people. Icons have power to bring people to the good (46, 135). Also, miracles are needed: 1. for pagans to be converted, 2. to strengthen the Orthodox faith, 3. to see that people believe in the same Christian church that at its origins performed miracles, 4. to show the presence of God in His church, 5. to glorify God, 6. to see that God cares for people (134-135). Miracles confirm the validity of icons as an objects of veneration, but the believers must constantly keep in mind that „an icon does not perform miracles by itself, but God performs miracles in the icon

or through the icon since only God can perform miracles” (175), whereby such an icon should elevate the mind toward the true author of the miracle. However, the Protestants stated that icons can very easily become more than just objects of veneration – idolatry is a constant danger. Iavorskii’s response was that only the new in faith or the weakly rooted can idolize icons, not an Orthodox believer. „For us, the holy icons are beneficial; but as for you, they [lead] you to disgrace and eternal perdition” (149), added Iavorskii in an ungainly comment. Is Iavorskii really convinced that no Orthodox believer can fall into the snares of idolatrous treatment of icons? He stated that no distinction should be made between new and old icons and only „mindless schismatics” believe otherwise (161). That would mean that an Orthodox believer will not make such a mistake, because, by definition, he would thereby automatically put himself outside the Orthodox church. And thus, no Orthodox believer can idolize icons since, in this way, he would cease to become an Orthodox believer. Such a solution, however, has an air of sophistry and of merely terminological explanation.

It is not any different in justifying an honor for other entities. For example, the Orthodox believe that „honoring relics of the holy saints of God is an act of piety” (KV 261). The Israelites worshipped a brazen serpent and a golden calf (283) to the point of idolizing them, particularly the latter, which indicated that they all too easily were becoming idolaters. In order to prevent them from worshipping the body of Moses, its burial place remained hidden from them: God through an angel buried it so that no one could find it (261, 276, 283). However, what would be bad for the Israelites is beneficial for Orthodox believers, „perfect men”, perfect in faith, that is, since they do not honor relics as gods (283). There is no danger of idolatry among Orthodox believers (276), simply by definition. However, why remnants of Joseph that were preserved and then carried to the promised land (261) were not exposing the Israelites to the danger of idolatry is not explained.

3. ESCHATOLOGY

Iavorskii did his best to remain within the limits of the traditional Orthodox teachings, but there are certain areas which this tradition does not define very firmly. These include the problem of eschatology, including the problem of salvation.

Iavorskii was particularly appalled by the Protestant teaching that faith would be sufficient for salvation. In his mind, the teaching that we are saved by faith alone means that we can steal, murder, etc. and be not afraid since faith alone will save us. True, faith saves us, but faith made alive by good works; otherwise, faith is dead (KV admonition). He was convinced that the Kingdom of God is not given for faith alone, without good works: good works along with faith lead to salvation (903-904). When Paul spoke about salvation without works of law, he meant pagan works and works under Mosaic law, not works done in Christ (928). However, even Iavorskii's contemporary, Prokopovich, disagreed with the role of good works in salvation by maintaining that salvation cannot be earned by good works⁷; good works can only earn a better reward – since „different levels of glory and joy are differently measured according to the virtue and works”⁸ – but not the reward itself. However, both views can be reconciled by viewing faith as the only condition for salvation, but the genuine character of the faith can be recognized by the life of the person, by the works which should be the fruit of such faith. In that sense, works are necessary for salvation since they testify about the existence of genuine faith. Iavorskii seemed to agree with this when he stated that our good works are the gift of Christ (940) and that they „stem not only from faith, but primarily from love for God” (994), i.e., they are not quite *our* good works.

The afterlife is divided between heaven and hell. However, residing in hell does not mean an eternal perdition. Members of the same body – the church – should care for one another, both for the living

⁷ Ф. Прокопович. *Разговор гражданина с селянином да певцем или дячком церковным*. In: П.В. Верховской. *Учреждение Духовной коллегии и Духовный регламент*. Ростов-на-Дону 1916 p. 72, 74. Cf. МОРЕВ. „Камень веры”. p. 351.

⁸ Прокопович. *Разговор гражданина с селянином*. p. 73.

and for the dead (KV 631). There is one church and it encompasses the believers on earth and in the afterlife. Therefore, the church should make an effort to improve the fate of the souls after death. This is done by the prayer for souls of the dead, by giving alms for them, and by bringing to God the bloodless sacrifice – the Eucharist – for them (603). In life, a priest forgives a penitent his sin and gives penance (613). If the penance is not fulfilled before death, the penitent must be helped by alms, prayers, and bloodless sacrifice of the living (614). The penitent who did not manage to make penance is saved but does not go to heaven. Iavorskii rejected the Catholic teaching about purgatory as the place for just such souls (660-663) by folding it into hell: just as there are many mansions in heaven and different rewards (J 14:2), so there are many different punishments in hell (667) and for some there is a chance for salvation, and it is the task of the church to pray for salvation of those in hell. In this way, purgatory simply becomes a part of hell. Actually, before the Incarnation, the departed OT saints „did not go to heaven and did not see God” (471); thus, hell was also their residence. Therefore, when Ezekiel spoke about Noah, Daniel, and Job, they were not in heaven but „they were locked in some dark place waiting for the coming of Christ” (516). However, the saints in the Old and the New Testaments are in the same place (577; 471). When Christ went to hell after death, he saved all those who believed in Him, which certainly included the OT saints.

The Orthodox teaching on the subject of eschatology is not quite settled. Some fathers said that a repented but not yet forgiven soul encounters various hurdles on its way to heaven, each hurdle associated with different sin and on each hurdle angels and demons bargain, as it were, about the amount of a particular sin in a person, which ends up either with angels lifting the soul to heaven or demons dragging it down to hell (KV 663-664). Presumably, there may still be a chance for some souls to be released from hell if assisted by prayers of the church. Some fathers teach that there is only heaven and hell (665-666/71), and some souls in hell are there for good, but some can be released. Either view is fine, stated Iavorskii, since it is just an opinion, not a dogma, although Iavorskii himself leaned toward the first opinion (667/72).

There are two judgments after death. One judgment takes place right after death, and so does a reward, if it is deserved (KV 578). Judgment after death rewards the soul only; the last judgment rewards both the soul and body (590). This is the time of resurrection, resurrection of some to eternal life and others to eternal perdition (Z 96-97). They will resurrect in their own bodies which are but dust by then, but God will put them together. Although in Iavorskii's view, the new body will be „of the same nature but with different qualities and quantities” (100), its nature seems to undergo significant transformation. The new body will be made immortal and in the blossom of its development – as a body of a thirty year old person – free of illness and bodily deficiencies, free from suffering, with no need of nourishment (although eating [for show?] is possible), able to pass through matter (98-102). The bodies of the condemned will also be immortal, but will be „a subject of suffering, cruelly tormented for eternity in inextinguishable flames” (102). Incidentally, demons suffer already now (KV 594), but they will suffer to the fullest after the last judgment (594).

4. THE CHURCH

There are several reasons Iavorskii mentioned why Protestants have no claim on representing the true church and only the Orthodox church is the true church. 1. It is old (KV 48). 2. The true church has no end; it cannot cease to exist and be reestablished; thus, by definition, Luther and Calvin did not reestablish the church (49, 52, 56-57). 3. The Orthodox church is a true church, although it is not based on the Bible, alone since the Bible and tradition have the same force just as „the written word of the king has the same power as his spoken word” (50). 4. Although there are invisible aspects of the church, the true church is also visible in the world and thus could not invisibly exist until Luther (50-51). 5. The Protestant church has many heretical teachings, and thus cannot be true: it rejects tradition; rejects the true presence of Christ's body in the Eucharist; rejects the sacrament of anointing with oil and repentance; teaches that the church was visible and then invisible; rejects veneration of icons; rejects prayer for the

dead; claims that Mary was not a virgin after Christ was born (58-60).
6. The true church stems directly from Christ and the apostles (60).

The second and the fourth arguments are related, and it seems that only these two arguments have some force in the context of the contrast between the Orthodoxy and Protestantism, although the Protestants could argue that what they reestablished was present as a weak undercurrent in the existing church. They can just as well claim the provenance of their teachings as originating with Christ and the apostles. They simply disagree with the role of tradition and did use that as an indication of perverting the purity of the original Christian teaching.

How can Iavorskii – or any Orthodox teacher – determine that the Protestants espouse heretical doctrines? This is the problem of the foundation of the church. On the one hand, Iavorskii defended the view that the Bible and the tradition form such a foundation: the Bible transmits teachings in a written form; tradition does that in an oral form which only later was put on paper (KV 50, 673). The Bible states that the church is the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim 3:15), whereby it cannot hold to erroneous doctrines (675, 681). In general, „the entire foundation of our faith, the bastion, and an immovable stone of the spiritual edifice is the true Word of God” (356). In particular, the Protestant objection that the fathers of the church are not authoritative since „every man lies”, as the Bible repeatedly states, is refuted with the statement that a man „as a leader of the church of Christ and as a teacher possessing true rule and being instructed by the Holy Spirit (...) cannot lie” (KV 64). Interestingly, Iavorskii did not apparently notice that his argument can be used in favor of the doctrine of the papal infallibility, which is the stumbling block for the Orthodox believers. He also stated that the Orthodox church has a teaching about the prayer for the dead; „can the Holy, Ecumenical and Apostolic Church include anything in its general institutions and laws that is contrary to orthodox faith?” If so, then it would be contrary to the assurance that the gates of the hell will not prevail against the church (Mt 16:18) (633, 53). The latter argument, however, can be appropriated by other branches of Christianity, too, to be used in support of their doctrines.

On the other hand, the church determines what is the Bible, i.e., what are canonical books of the Bible – and there are differences between the Protestant Bible, the Catholic Bible (which includes deu-

terocanonical books), and the Orthodox Bible (the Septuagint Bible, where the OT is translated into Greek, is the foundational text). Moreover, the church specifies the proper reading of the Bible. Improper interpretation is made according to „one’s own false understanding, without any careful testing, without looking at preceding and succeeding words, without looking at proper interpretation of the holy fathers – the lights and the pillars of the Church” (KV 494). Proper interpretation of unclear passages of the Bible comes from tradition (689, 734) and so does the explanation of apparent contradictions in the Bible (695). Iavorskii mentioned those who say that some Biblical passages can be clarified by other Biblical passages (738). This almost certainly was an allusion to Prokopovich who maintained that the Bible is clear enough for everyone to understand; the Bible itself can be used for clarification of passages⁹. This reliance only on the Bible is, however, an unacceptable Protestant teaching and should be rejected, according to Iavorskii.

The church also determines what tradition is and what are the extrabiblical dogmas which should be accepted by believers. „Tradition is necessary for faith since faith can be based only on tradition and the Holy Scripture without tradition is insufficient for faith” (KV 677). If the Israelite priests could establish new laws (Deut 17:10-12), then all the more Orthodox Church can do the same (839). If worldly rulers can establish new laws, why not allow ecclesiastical leaders to do the same? (843). Also, Christ said that what Christians bind on earth will be bound in heaven, where binding is interpreted as establishing new laws for believers (840). Therefore, the church is really the starting point of faith if it determines what is the Word of God, what is the Biblical canon (688-689). In this way, there is an unsettling problem of circularity: the Bible is what it is because of the decision of the church; on the other hand, by definition, the church cannot be mistaken since it is pronounced (more or less explicitly) as inerrant in the Bible. This important theological problem of circularity with the church determining the Bible and the Bible determining the church was, however, not addressed by Iavorskii.

Iavorskii also stated that Luther and Calvin did not perform any miracle to show legitimacy of their claims (KV 66), and, as for Luther,

⁹ МОРЕВ. „Камень веры”. p. 365.

his life was not particularly holy. He broke his monastic vows and got married to a nun; „even the gallows would be too little for such lawlessness” (67).

This is the tone which permeates *The Rock of Faith*. The Protestants are addressed as enemies, as opponents, as adversaries, not even as separated brothers. The tone is venomous, ill-spirited, with a disquieting absence of an expected Christian charity in someone who, effectively, was the head of the Russian Orthodox church. In that, Iavorskii followed the footsteps of his predecessors. From the beginning, Russian theologians considered Lutherans and Calvinists as heretics, as servants of the antichrist and satan. Starets Artemii was convinced that their teachings are suited for carnal life, and that they proclaim the name of Christ only for show. Ivan Nasedka claimed that they are even worse than Catholics. The Likhud brothers said that they should not be even considered Christians, and in Nasedka’s opinion, the Lutheran church is not the church of God but a house of the devil¹⁰. Iavorskii joined them with his statement addressed to the Lutheran church: it is „only a heap of damned heresies and true Babylonian adulteress that serves pleasures of your flesh, but leading you along wide and spacious way to perdition” (KV 59). Not surprisingly, the Protestant accusation that icons are a seduction, meets with this baneful rebuttal: this „seduction stems from you, not from us; and perdition awaits not us but you; which is not even worthy of pity, since the source [of seduction] is not your weakness, but your malice” (166).

Incidentally, when presenting his arguments in favor of the true church, Iavorskii concentrated on his polemic with the Protestants. Catholicism is also a heretical branch of Christianity for the Orthodox; however, Iavorskii would be very hard pressed to justify this, since the marks of the true church he listed can be applied to the Catholic church as well.

¹⁰ МОРЕВ. „Камень веры”. р. 3-8.

5. HERESY IN THE CHURCH

If the church is all-important, if the salvation can be only in the Orthodox church (Z 39), if this is the only true church, how did it translate into practical issues of ecclesiastical policy: the Orthodox church vs. heresies, and the Orthodox church vs. secular rule?

As for heretics who once have been Orthodox, then „for the benefit of the peaceful building of the church and for the undisturbed peace of the people, the heretics should be punished” (KV 1028). Iavorskii used many arguments to justify the punishment of heretics. Here are some of them. 1. Since a heretic should be a subject of an anathema, then he can even be put to death, since it is worse to be given up to satan than to endure any bodily suffering (1032). 2. „The experience teaches us that there is no other cure for heretics except for death”. They are not afraid of dispossession, and when they are exiled, they keep on deceiving others (1032-1033). 3. How come that money counterfeiters are put do death but not those who falsify church teachings? (1033) 4. Change of faith is a sin worse than cheating on one’s wife, and yet the cheater is punished by death (1033). 5. Criminals become useful for the state after they are executed as a warning to others, so it should be with heretics (1033). 6. Death is a blessing for the heretics as well, since it prevents them from becoming more sinful (1034). It may be actually puzzling why that matters since heretics are damned, anyway. However, as mentioned, there are different levels of damnation in hell, and heretics put to death early enough presumably will suffer in hell less than they would when living a longer life. 7. Christ did not command to kill heretics – only for them to be to the believers as „a heathen and a publican” (Mt 18:17) – but He also did not forbid it (1036). He also allowed his disciples to stop following Him (J 6:66-67), but it does not mean the free rein to every believer, and Christ found it more properly „not to avenge Himself for insults, but to leave the vengeance to His spiritual sons” (1038/1075ab, 1042/1079b). 8. Loving of enemies means loving „your enemies”, presumably, personal enemies, not the enemies of the church (1039).

In punishing the heretics, the church is concerned about the souls depraved by heresy and about their salvation (KV 1037, 1040), and the death sentence is applied only after all other means of conversion have

been exhausted (1043). Also, although „faith is God’s gift, God dispatches this gift in variety of ways, one way being punishment” (1043).

Iavorskii’s arguments may not convince many, some of them being tenuous, some verging on sophistry. Even the Orthodox church viewed them as too controversial and expressed too crudely since the chapter on the punishment of heretics was included only the first printings of *The Rock of Faith*¹¹. Iavorskii, however, was very concerned about the purity of the Orthodox doctrine and was convinced that even capital punishment should be used to maintain this purity in the minds of the believers. If the death of the few scares off the rest from diverging from ecclesiastical truth – so much the better for the living. But, in practical terms, who should perform executions? Certainly not the church, and this brings us to the problem of the church-state relationship and the role of Iavorskii, who by the fact of his exalted position in the church, willingly or otherwise, struggled with finding a proper balance for this relationship.

6. THE SYNOD

As already mentioned, Peter I did not allow for a new patriarch to be nominated, making Iavorskii first the patriarch’s stand-in¹² and then the head of the Holy Synod which was created to make the church a branch of the government answering to the state, i.e., to the tsar. Iavorskii was not accidentally called to these posts. Over the years, in his sermons, he acclaimed Peter I’s economic, cultural and educational policies, extolling him in lofty language, comparing him to just any important Biblical figure, so that he was, for example, the Russian Noah (S 1875.1.118), Moses (1875.4.129, 131-132, 143), David (1875.4.149-150, 152), and Samson (1875.3.476). Effectively, the tsar was also compared to Christ being, along with Christ, a cornerstone of Russia (1874.4.141-142). He was addressed thus: „O stone given from above, from heavenly mountain! O stone that gloriously crushed

¹¹ МОРЕВ. „Камень веры”. p. 298.

¹² He was not even that; he was „sort of an officer of the tsar for sacramental affairs”. В. ЖИВОВ. *Из церковной истории времен Петра Великого: исследования и материалы*. Москва: Новое литературное обозрение 2004 s. 123.

the iron legs of an idol! Who can glorify your firmness the way it deserves, your strength, your force, your love to your people? (...) [Peter,] the arch-courageous warrior acting magnanimously and ready to give his life for his people” (1875.3.488). Iavorskii commiserated with the tsar by pointing to the heavy cross the tsar has to carry: „he has to have constant and incessant care for his empire, to protect all his subjects from attacks of enemies, to listen to everyone, to be just to everyone, to defend everyone from offenders; on top of it, to listen to ill-spirited grumbling of some ingrates” (KV 257). Iavorskii actually found references to tsars in the Bible. The woman clothed in the sun with the moon under her feet (Rev 12:1) is „our Orthodox, Eastern Church”, and the two eagle wings on which she flew (12:14) are unmistakably the sign of the Russian tsars, the defenders of the church (S 1874.3.86). Peter I, who conquered the seven-headed Swedish snake is also referred to in a prophecy as a rider who brings salvation (Hab 3:8) (S 1874.3.94-95). Arguably, the main reason for Iavorskii to have authored his 1703 book about the antichrist was a defense of the tsar. One Grigorii Talitskii was spreading a heresy that Peter I was the antichrist and Moscow was Babylon (25). For Iavorskii, it was, of course, unacceptable, but acceptable was the view that the antichrist would be a Jew of a courtesan mother (53, 66) and that Rome would be Babylon (89).

In this adulation, Iavorskii was not unlike another major figure of the age, Prokopovich, who theologically justified pretty much anything Peter I fancied to have done. However, at least on one point there was a disagreement between them: Prokopovich promoted subjugation of the church to the state and was a driving force behind *The spiritual regulation* that led to the establishment of the Holy Synod. Iavorskii, on the other hand, did not abandon the belief that the church should be independent from the state, just as it was the case with the church in Russia in the past and is the case with the Catholic church in the West. He agreed that the rule of the tsar was of divine origin¹³, but he rejected the possibility of the secular rule to have a say in eccle-

¹³ KV 82; Cf. Iavorskii’s note „this is true” on a margin of Piotr Skarga’s book when Skarga stated that the Caesar „has his Empire from God Himself”. G.B. BERCOFF. *Stefan Jaworski a historia. Na podstawie dopisków na marginesach jego księzek*. In *Corona scientiarum: studia z historii literatury i kultury nowożytniej ofiarowane profesorowi Januszowi Pelcowi*. Warszawa: Neriton 2004 p. 389.

siastical matters since „ecclesiastical structure and boundaries and regulations of the ecclesiastical order as being a matter of faith God handed in to the Apostles and their successors” (KV 82). True, some ecclesiastical rules originated with emperors (e.g., Constantine and Justinian), but they were related to „civic trials and to building the well-being of the church, but not to articles of faith” and, Iavorskii assured the reader that policies of Peter I were no different (83). „We are always obligated to submit ourselves to the tsar in civic matters. In matters related to faith – to the highest pastor”. Tsars rule over people in matters related to the body, not to the soul; the spiritual authority is related to the latter, although, as Iavorskii added, „the spiritual authority is concerned about life and satisfaction both in the body and in the soul. (...) In fact, tsars are protectors of laws of God and of the church, but do not define them” (84). He quoted approvingly the words of Theodore the Studite directed to the iconoclastic emperor Leo V the Armenian: „Sire, it is not for you to scrutinize and nullify ecclesiastical commands. To your rule belong earthly affairs, ecclesiastical affairs belong to priests and teachers of the church and to you it is commanded to follow and subdue yourself to them” (102). Iavorskii believed that „the holy church has both spiritual and secular leaders, like two hands, so it has two swords, spiritual and material, one useful for another. Thus, when the spiritual sword has little success, the material sword should be used” (1038).

In his desire for an independent church, Iavorskii represented a conservative party of the church which was fairly strong. In order to prevent a complete alienation of this party from his tsarist policies, Peter I co-opted Iavorskii to the Synod, although Prokopovich seems to have been a more obvious candidate¹⁴. However, in practical terms, it did not matter since very soon Iavorskii became just a figurehead, and many – most – decisions were made without him, possibly with his rubberstamping them. He was weak and ill and yet by making him a nominal head of the synod, Peter I pacified many conservatives in the church. The fact that he was – as both Iavorskii and Prokopovich both agreed – divinely appointed was used by Peter I to the extreme. And, arguably, he stayed away from the doctrinal matters of the

¹⁴ Cf. Ю.Ф. САМАРИН. *Стефан Яворский и Феофан Прокопович*. In his: *Сочинения*. Москва: Мамонтов 1880. Vol. 5 p. 300.

church and thus, on the surface, he fit Iavorskii's vision of a ruler. But was Iavorskii satisfied?

A case can be made that, of course, *The Rock of Faith* was a religious treatise, an apology of Orthodoxy and a polemic with Protestantism and with heretical tendencies in Russia, but implicitly it was also a polemic with the tsar and with the type of religiosity the tsar espoused, which was Orthodoxy leaning toward Protestantism¹⁵. This was also a vision of Orthodoxy advocated by Prokopovich¹⁶. In that sense, such open and severe criticism of Protestantism was a bold move on the part of Iavorskii¹⁷. In this way, Iavorskii reciprocated in kind to Prokopovich and the tsar. They frequently criticized the papacy, which really was a thinly veiled criticism of the Orthodox patriarchy. They did it not only in word, but also in deed. The tsar crudely mocked the papacy with drunkards dressed as the pope and cardinals, and he even explicitly mocked the patriarchy with his most drunken council¹⁸. In that sense, *The Rock of Faith* is not only a religious statement, but also a political statement. Iavorskii, although he reached the heights in the hierarchy of the church, did not perform very well as a politician, and the loss of independence of the church under his watch certainly testifies to this. Although meeker in form, *The Rock of Faith* does speak about his opposition to the arrogance of the state and the tsar in respect to making the church a department of the government.

¹⁵ The book „was in reality directed against Peter” rather than against Protestantism, according Iurij Šerech, Stefan Yavorsky and the conflict of ideologies in the age of Peter I. „Slavonic and East European Review” 30:1951 p. 57. The view is contested by J. CRACRAFT. *The Church reform of Peter the Great*. Stanford University Press 1971 p. 131, on account of the fact that the tsar was ready to give his imprimatur in the preface. However, the fact that the tsar did not see the book as a slight against him does not mean that it may not have been so intended by Iavorskii. Also, the tsar simply may not have considered the book as a serious threat to himself.

¹⁶ Prokopovich was even accused of Protestant heresy, in which accusation Iavorskii participated, but the tsar ignored it and the whole affair ended with rather humiliating Iavorskii's recantation of the accusation and apology given to Prokopovich. П. МОРОЗОВ. *Феофан Прокопович как писатель*. Санкт-Петербург: Балашев 1880 p. 188, 192.

¹⁷ САМАРИН. *Стефан Яворский*. p. 265.

¹⁸ CRACRAFT. *The Church reform*. p. 11-13.

STEFAN JAWORSKI I PROTESTANTYZM

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Stefan Jaworski, biskup-metropolita riazański, jest tragiczną postacią w historii Kościoła rosyjskiego. W odróżnieniu od Prokopowicza, niezwykle ważną sprawą dla niego była niezależność Kościoła od władzy państwowej, a mimo to został prezydentem Świętego Synodu, który stanowił organ władzy cara Piotra I nad Kościołem. Jaworski był znanym oratorem, poetą, świetnie wykształconym człowiekiem. Dziełem jego życia jest *Skala wiary*, monumentalne dzieło stawiające sobie za zadanie odparcie ataków protestantów na wiele elementów doktryny Kościoła prawosławnego. W artykule pokrótce omawia się jego obronę ikon. Jaworski nie próbował wprowadzać oryginalnych interpretacji doktryn prawosławnych, starał się być jak najbardziej ortodoksyjny w tym względzie, lecz nie wszystko zostało jednoznacznie ustalone w tych doktrynach. Jedną z takich dziedzin jest eschatologia i artykuł prezentuje poglądy Jaworskiego na kwestię życia po śmierci. *Skala wiary* była wielokrotnie wznawiana, lecz wprowadzano często do niej zmiany, odrzucając pewne partie i dodając inne. Jedną z kontrowersyjnych części był ostatni rozdział omawiający herezję i rozdział ten jest pokrótce przedstawiony w artykule. W sumie *Skalę wiary* uważać można nie tylko za krytykę protestantyzmu, lecz, przynajmniej do pewnego stopnia, niejawną krytykę Piotra I i Prokopowicza, których uważano za wprowadzających protestanckie elementy do Kościoła prawosławnego.

Słowa kluczowe: Kościół prawosławny, protestantyzm, eschatologia, ikony.

Keywords: Orthodox Church, Protestantism, eschatology, icons.